



ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE
AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
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Statement

by

**H.E. Ambassador Kazem Gharib Abadi
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and other International Organizations in Vienna**

before

The sixty fourth session of the COPUOS

on

Agenda Item 4: General Exchange of Views

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In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

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Mr. Chairperson,

At the outset, I would like to reiterate our full cooperation and support in discharge of your responsibilities as Chair of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS). I would also like to further take the opportunity to thank the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, Ms. Simonetta Di Pippo and her team for the excellent preparations made for this session amid the difficult situation. My delegation also aligns itself with the statement delivered by H.E. Alejandro Solano Ortiz, Ambassador and permanent representative of Costa Rica on behalf of Group of 77 and China and I would like to add the following in my national capacity.

My delegation reaffirms its commitment to the peaceful use and exploration of outer space and re-emphasizes on the following principles: universal and equal access to outer space for all countries without discrimination regardless of their level of scientific, technical and economic development, the equitable and rational use of outer space for the benefit of all humankind; the non-appropriation of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies by claim of sovereignty, use, occupation or any other means; responsibility of States for their national space activities carried out by both governmental and non-governmental entities; the non-militarization of outer space; the prevention of the installation of weapons of any kind in outer space; the strict use of outer space, as the common heritage of

humankind for peaceful purposes; and international cooperation in the development of space activities, in particular those referred to in the Declaration on International Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space for the Benefit and in the Interest of all States, taking into particular account the needs of developing countries.

In the area of international cooperation and capacity building, I would like to inform you that a workshop on the “Space Technology Applications for Drought, Flood and Water Resources Management” was jointly held by the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER) and Iran’s Ministry of I.C.T. (The Iranian Space Agency) on Aug 2021. 370 experts from over 45 countries attended the workshop and explored ways and means by which current space technologies help identifying and monitoring the effects of a changing climate. I would like to seize this opportunity to appreciate UNOOSA’s efforts and support in organizing this workshop.

Mr. Chairperson,

The Islamic Republic of Iran in line with two Conference Room Papers that it has submitted to the previous Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and Legal Subcommittee sessions regarding the right of equitable access to GEO, believes that the current utilization of Low Earth Orbit (LEO) through the placement of mega and large constellations, prevents developing countries from equitable access to this orbital resource. Several private companies plan for stationing networks of satellites in low earth orbit to

enable global access to internet. Providing world-wide internet via mega-constellations from space entails both opportunities and challenges.

While offering the prospect of a more efficient and inclusive global internet access, they carry the risk of high occupation of LEO which is a significant disadvantage in the use and explorations of space by developing nations and their access to congested and already overcrowded LEO. There are questions and challenges around the launch of mega-constellations by private companies in terms of consistency of their plans and projects with International Space Law as well as associated risks of collisions and even their implications for astronomical science and discoveries.

Furthermore, the different launching plans of mega-constellations will occupy the total frequencies assigned by ITU very soon. Even at present, LEO is so congested that a few orbital slots are left for new entrants. This will severely hamper and prevent developing countries from access to space and ultimately would result in monopolization of space by a few countries and their private companies to largely utilize outer space mainly to their own benefit.

There are many open questions and challenges for developing countries in this regard. The risk of impinging national sovereignty and risk of interference and regulatory inconsistencies and infringements would be substantial without proper regulations. While many companies have declared that their goal is to offer users direct connections to satellites, issuing licenses shall be subject to certain conditions including inter-alia respect for national sovereignty and national laws and regulations of states that has to be

addressed by COPUOS and ITU. My delegation will further discuss this issue in the context of other agenda items to generate more exchange of views.

Mr. Chairperson,

Recent attempts by some States to promote their national vision and norms such as vague subjective concepts like “responsible behavior” or portray their national legislations for long term sustainability of outer space as accepted international standards is a matter of concern, such actions could lead to conflicts among participants of space activities and negatively affect the entire system of safety and security in outer space. The I.R. of Iran reiterates that measures, obstacles and overly high standards aimed at limiting the access to space for nations with emerging space capabilities should be avoided and that States should refrain from further developing the international political framework in a manner that set overly high standards or thresholds that could hinder the enhancement of capacity-building for developing countries.

I thank you **Mr. Chairperson.**