



STATEMENT OF THE G-77 AND CHINA DURING THE SIXTY-FOURTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE, 25 AUGUST – 3 SEPTEMBER 2021, DELIVERED BY H.E. ALEJANDRO SOLANO ORTIZ, AMBASSADOR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF COSTA RICA

AGENDA ITEM 7: REPORT OF THE LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE ON ITS SIXTIETH SESSION

Mr. Chairman,

1. The Group of 77 and China would like to comment on some issues discussed during the last session of the Legal Subcommittee which the Group deems of utmost relevance for developing countries.

2. The Group underscores once again that the definition and delimitation of outer space is a very important topic that should be kept on the agenda of this Subcommittee and that more work should be done in order to establish the legal regime applicable to airspace and outer space. In this regard, we commend all the efforts made by the Chair of the Working on Definition and delimitation of Outer Space and encourage all delegations to contribute to the discussion in a constructive manner.

3. Regarding the issue of geostationary orbit, the Group would like to reiterate that such a domain shall not be subject to national appropriation, by means of use, repeated use or occupation, or by any other means, and that its utilization is governed by applicable international law. Furthermore, we reiterate that this orbit needs to be used rationally, efficiently and economically, in conformity with the provision of the international space laws and relevant regulations, so that countries or groups of countries may have equitable access to those orbits and frequencies, taking into account the special needs of the developing countries and the geographical situation of particular countries.

4. The Group considers that capacity building in space law is a fundamental tool that should be enhanced through international cooperation. Therefore, the Group calls for a greater support by UNOOSA and Member States to foster both North-South and South-South cooperation to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and expertise in the field of international space law.

Mr. Chairman,

5. The Group believes that 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’ is important as it further promotes international

cooperation in a bid to maximize the benefits in the utilization of space applications for all States and calls on all space-faring nations to contribute to promoting and fostering international cooperation on an equitable basis. It also underscores that particular attention be given to the interests of developing countries and that the Committee should be strengthened in its role as the main platform for the exchange of information in the field of international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space.

6. Considering the essential roles of space objects, regardless of their size, in the socioeconomic development of the Member States, the Group is of the view that the Committee and its Subcommittees should not create an ad-hoc legal regime or any other mechanisms, which might impose limitations on designing, building, launching and using of space objects. The Group is of the view that in general, all international rights and obligations of the States with respect to satellites regardless of their perceived sizes are equally relevant for the conduct of space activities with the use of small satellites.

7. The Group also welcomes the decision to establish a Working Group under the Legal Subcommittee agenda item "General exchange of views on potential legal models for activities in the exploration, exploitation and utilization of space resources" and looks forward to fruitful deliberations on this timely and pertinent issue in accordance with rules of procedures, methods of work and established practice of the Committee. The Group believes that all countries need to engage in this discussion in COPUOS to propose constructive ways that help us develop an approach for the utilization of space resources in line with the principles enshrined in the Outer Space Treaty, that is constructive, collaborative and the product of consensus.

8. The Group is of the view that in light of the increasing participation and the evolving potential of the private sector in space activities, the negotiation of an international legally binding instrument that clearly defines and guides commercial activities in outer space could play an important role in expanding the use of outer space and stimulate space activities for the benefit of humanity. The Group considers that, besides the need for a broad debate about the implications of these activities, the developing countries shall not be excluded from the benefits of space exploration and their rights shall be considered in the discussion.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.