



ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS
AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
JAURÈSGASSE 3, 1030 VIENNA

Statement

before

**The sixtieth Session of The Legal Subcommittee of the
Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space**

on

Agenda Item 3: General Exchange of Views

31 May-11 Jun 2021

Vienna, Austria

“In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful”

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Madam Chairperson,

It's a great pleasure for our delegation to participate in the annual meeting of the Legal Sub Committee of the Committee on the Peaceful Use of Outer Space. We are pleased that you have taken on this responsibility and are confident that under your leadership we will have a successful session of this Subcommittee. We would also like to commend the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs and her staff for their hard-work as they prepared for our meetings throughout this session.

Madam Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates,

The extraordinary record of success achieved by this Subcommittee in developing and advancing of space law has, substantially, been due to its ability to address any practical problems via a consensus-based process. Matters relating to the definition and delimitation of outer space are considered as great importance to the Islamic Republic of Iran and we believe that no flexible and pragmatic approach toward the definition and delimitation of outer space may be taken unless all States, regardless of their level of scientific, technical and economic development, find synergy and a common vision to arrive at consensus based agreed standpoint by taking into account all positions and views of Member States.

Madam Chairperson,

The International Telecommunication Union which is managing and regulating the geostationary orbit as a limited natural resource allocates the orbital slots on the basis of so called rational and equitable, economical and efficient use. Obviously, the different capabilities of countries have caused the allocation of the orbital slots not to be done logically and equitably. In clearer words, developing countries do not have the capability to use and maintain their orbital slots.

The Islamic Republic of Iran believes the current conditions and rules governing the geostationary orbit prevent developing countries from achieving their rights and it is in clear contradiction with the universally agreed principle that outer space

is the common heritage and province of all mankind. The first come first serve principle result in use-it-or-lose-it rule has deprived these countries of the opportunity and possibility of rational and equitable exploitation of outer space that must be explored and used exclusively for peaceful purposes and for the benefit of all nations irrespective of their economic, social or scientific and technological development.

This kind of allocation violates the rational, equitable use and access of all countries to the geostationary orbit. Developing a legal regime with ITU involvement that guarantees the rights of all countries regardless of their level of development in all aspects is a good way to solve the problem. Such a legal regime should lead to the creation of appropriate regulations within the framework of ITU.

In this connection, in line with our CRP.26 which my delegation presented in STSC 58, taking into account the proposal made by some delegations that we should address this discussion in this Legal Subcommittee, we have prepared another new CRP which will be distributed for consideration of this subcommittee. In this regard we call upon distinguished member states with the same identical position who voiced their similar concern yesterday afternoon and before, if so wish, to be co-sponsor of our CRP.

Madam. Chairperson,

On 6th December 2020, at the United Nations First Committee, a draft resolution “Reducing Space Threats through Norms, Rules, and Principles of Responsible Behavior” that refer to space activities of all Space faring countries adopted, notwithstanding of negative numbers of votes. It is worth mentioning, all measures that would limit access to space for nations with emerging space capabilities, should be avoided and some States should refrain from further developing the international subjective political framework in a manner that set overly high standards or thresholds that could hinder the enhancement of peaceful outer space exploration and use and capacity-building for developing countries.

Madam Chairperson,

The Islamic Republic of Iran, as a country with a full cycle of space technology, pays special attention to the issue of national space legislation with the aim of

developing the exploration and peaceful use of outer space. In this regard, the Iranian Space Agency has drafted the text of the National Space Law of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Co-ordination with the relevant national entities for the final review, formulation, and approval of this draft in the legislature is underway.

The Islamic Republic of Iran reaffirms the importance of preventing both an arms race and placement of weapons of any kind in outer space, and calls upon all States, in particular those with major space capabilities, to contribute actively to the peaceful use of outer space in order to prevent an arms race in space, and to refrain from placing weapons of any kind in outer space and from any other actions contrary to that objective.

Madam Chairperson,

Last but not least, as all members of this UN august body are aware, the development of international cooperation in outer space peaceful activities is among the main pillar provisions of the five outer space treaties and its governing principles and is the central mandate of the UNOOSA in accordance to the adopted UN GA resolution 51/122 of 1996.

Any preventive or restrictive measures in the form of unilateral coercive measures against member states is not only an obstacle to international cooperation in peaceful space activities which are intrinsic to our daily life; let alone it is a clear contradiction to the universally agreed principles of space law including the principles of the right of free access to outer space as well as promotion of international cooperation on non-discriminatory basis for peaceful purposes.

Member States should refrain from promulgating and applying any measures that impede or prevent the peaceful activities and programs of civilian space agencies of COPUOS member states.

Against these universally agreed governing principles, three Iranian civilian space agencies on September 3th 2019, have been subject of unlawful, illegitimate unilateral coercive measures and sanctions. These three entities have merely the mandate and responsibilities to serve and support civilian peaceful applications of space technology for public services such as natural disaster management and to work with academic society and private sector to promote peaceful outer space applications for daily life of our society. They are focused on designing, manufacturing and launching or even acquiring satellites providing civil services and exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

As the Islamic Republic of Iran is among the countries extremely prone to natural disasters such as earthquake, flooding, drought, etc., it is struggling against the prevention of these disasters or to minimize (mitigate) their effects through space science and technology.

Therefore, exerting maximum pressure and unilateral sanctions are not only economic terrorism against social development of Iranian people, but they are intended attempts, to prevent community of member states, from cooperation with Iranian space entities, to hamper Iran's indigenous endeavors of having access to space knowledge, science, technology and data through disseminating false accusations, which is in defiance of the principles of international cooperation in outer space.

Consequently, we expect that all UN members to be vigilant of such abuse of International Law and strongly condemn illegal and illegitimate unilateral sanctions on Iranian space agencies and continue their cooperation with Iran in its peaceful space program and activities.

As launching satellites, in particular small satellites, is the first inevitable prerequisite step for developing countries' development of national space technology application, the Islamic Republic will continue its space peaceful activities as definitive right of all countries and unilateral sanctions of certain countries, would not prevent the progress of the Iranian peaceful space activities.

Thank you for your attention