



Statement by the European Union and its Member States

**Fourth Committee, Agenda item 49:
International Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space**

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**Delivered by
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Mr Chairman,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.
2. I would like to thank Mr. A. Ousedik, the Chair of COPUOS, for his comprehensive presentation today and commend the significant work undertaken under his chairmanship.
3. The EU would like to congratulate Ms Simonetta Di Pippo for taking office as the new Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs and wish her success in her activities.
4. The EU fully supports the granting of COPUOS membership to Luxembourg, as foreseen by the draft resolution A/C.4/69/L.2.
5. Space is a driver for economic growth and innovations for the benefits of all people. Space activities and technologies contribute to tackling major challenges such as climate change, scarce resources, health and ageing, and boost the competitiveness of industry well beyond the space sector, thereby contributing to job creation and socio-economic development in almost all economic areas worldwide. In the European Union, we have developed strong and unique space capacities, which place us among the world class space leaders allowing us to take part in major space endeavours.

Mr Chairman,

6. Key priorities for European Space Policy lie in the area of global navigation and earth observation with the involvement of the EU in two flagship programmes: Galileo and Copernicus. The EU co-funds the developments of the Galileo programme, which is Europe's initiative for a state-of-the-art global satellite navigation system, providing a highly accurate, guaranteed global positioning service under civilian control.

The ambitious Copernicus Programme has got off to a flying start, quite literally, with the launch of Sentinel 1A on the 3rd of April, the very first of a series of dedicated Copernicus satellites. Copernicus has a global dimension, we intend to share what we have developed with partners abroad.

7. In 2013 the EU adopted a new Regulation for the European Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) programmes for the period 2014-2020 with a corresponding new financial framework. In addition, most recently the amendment of the Regulation setting up the European GNSS Agency was adopted.
8. On 22 March 2014, the satellite ASTRA 5B was successfully launched. It carries a hosted L-band payload for EGNOS (the European Union's European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service). To date, more than one hundred precision landing procedures using EGNOS in the EU have been published.
9. The Galileo satellite navigation system will allow improved services ranging from inter alia more precise in-car navigation, effective road transport management, search and rescue services, more secure banking transactions as well as reliable electricity supply, which all

rely heavily on satellite navigation technologies. In fact, it is estimated that 6 to 7 % of the EU GDP relies on positioning, navigation or timing services provided by GNSS. Galileo will provide new business opportunities in a wide variety of applications in many sectors of the economy in the EU and worldwide. For this purpose a GNSS Service Centre was inaugurated in Madrid on 14 May 2013. It allows users to be informed regularly of the Galileo constellation status.

Mr Chairman,

10. Copernicus is the long-term European Union Earth observation programme initiated in 1998. It is built on partnerships between the European Union and its Member States, the European Space Agency and other relevant European stakeholders such as the European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites. Recently, on 24 April 2014, the regulation establishing the Copernicus Programme was published on the EU Official Journal and entered into force on 25 April 2014.
11. Copernicus is already partly operational. The emergency service and the land service are already functioning on an operational basis and the other pre-operational services, such as marine and atmosphere services, will transition to operations in early 2015. The data and products generated by the operational and pre-operational services are already available to the public on dedicated Copernicus websites. Our Copernicus data policy guarantees free and open data access for everyone and therefore contributes to the overall aim of bringing benefits of space to humankind.
12. Moreover, a major milestone was achieved with the successful launch of the first Copernicus observation satellite, Sentinel-1A, on 3 April 2014 from Europe's spaceport in French Guyana. The first images provided by its powerful "synthetic aperture radar" demonstrate the vital role the satellite will play in the largest civil Earth Observation programme ever conceived. These images are very promising and will support multiple application domains such as: monitoring sea ice for a safe navigation, monitoring the evolution of tropical forests, monitoring floods, oil spill detection, vessel detection and climate change monitoring. The next Copernicus satellites will be launched from 2015 onwards.

Mr Chairman,

13. In order to mitigate the risk of collisions it is necessary to identify and monitor satellites and space debris. On 27 May 2014, the EU adopted a Decision establishing a Space Surveillance and Tracking (SST) Support Framework. This decision will help support the networking and operations of the SST assets owned by some of the EU Member States as well as the EU satellite Centre with a view to providing SST services to the EU Member States, the EU bodies, spacecraft owners and operators, and civil protection authorities. In the future, the SST services of EU Member States will be better suited to assess the risks of in orbit collisions, detect and characterize in-orbit fragmentations, break-ups or collisions, and assess the risks of the uncontrolled re-entry of space objects and space debris into the Earth's atmosphere.

Mr Chairman,

14. The EU is committed to developing an International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities, in an open, transparent and inclusive manner, offering all interested UN Member States the opportunity to participate in the process and share their views. To advance progress on the Code, the European External Action Service has convened three rounds of international Open-ended Consultations in Kiev (May 2013), Bangkok (November 2013) and Luxembourg (May 2014). Participants from more than 60 UN Member States participated in each of these meetings, which were conducted in a transparent and inclusive manner. Based on the comments and suggestions received at the consultations, the European External Action Service has prepared three revised versions of the Code and is now prepared to move the process to a final phase. The EU thus calls on all states to join it in working towards a speedy and successful conclusion of this multilateral process, as it considers the International Code of Conduct for outer Space Activities to be an indispensable contribution to enhancing the safety, security and sustainability of outer space activities.

Mr Chairman,

15. Over the last decades, COPUOS has laid down a firm legal basis for all forms of space activities which provides for the application of international law and promotion of international cooperation and understanding in the peaceful uses of outer space, to which the EU and its Member States are strongly committed.

16. We welcome the adoption by the General Assembly of its resolution 68/74 on recommendations on national legislation relevant to the peaceful exploration and use of outer space. This resolution was a result of successful cooperation among Member States of COPUOS.

17. The EU supports the restructuring of the agenda and organization of the Legal Subcommittee (LSC) and notes in this regard the proposal for renewal submitted by Germany and discussed during the 53rd session of the LSC. We trust that the 57th session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space will give opportunity to continue the discussion on the Proposal with a view to find consensus during the 54th LSC in 2015.

18. We appreciate the work of the Working Group on Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities and we are looking forward to its results. Moreover, we would also like to express our appreciation to the Chair of the Working Group, Mr Peter Martinez, and to the Co-Chairs. We commend the Chair for presenting the revised version of the guidelines to this session. We look forward to participating actively in the debates on this important subject and support the proposed extension of this Working Group for another year in order to finalise and adopt the final report.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.