



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THAILAND  
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**Statement**

**by**

**His Excellency Mr. Norachit Sinhaseni**

**Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Thailand**

**on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)**

**before the Special Political and Decolonization Committee**

**(Fourth Committee)**

**of the 69<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

**on Agenda Item 49: International cooperation in the peaceful uses**

**of outer space**

**15 October 2014**

**The United Nations, New York**

***Please check against delivery***

Mr. Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) which comprises Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Vietnam, and my country, Thailand.

Mr. Chair,

First of all, I take this opportunity to express ASEAN's warmest congratulations to you on your well-deserved election as Chairman of this Committee, as well as to the other members of your Bureau. We wish you every success in carrying out your responsibilities and look forward to working closely with you and the Bureau members.

We sincerely thank Mr. Yasushi Horikawa of Japan for his diligent leadership and tireless efforts during his tenure as Chair of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) for the past two years.

We congratulate Mr. Azzedine Oussedik of Algeria, who was elected Chair of COPUOS, and thank him for his statement. We also thank the other distinguished panelists, Ms. Simonetta Di Pippo and Mr. David O'Connor, for the presentations made before the Committee today.

Mr. Chair,

Forty five years ago, humanity accomplished a once-impossible quest. On 20 July 1969, Apollo 11 successfully landed on the moon. In the words of Neil Armstrong it was "One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." The event marked an important chapter in the history of space exploration, and still captivates our imagination.

As mankind now sets its sights on another celestial body, Mars, the Apollo 11 Mission remains a source of inspiration for us to continue to push the boundaries of space technology and achieve our common goal.

Mr. Chair,

ASEAN stands committed to working and cooperating closely with COPUOS to promote the peaceful uses of outer space. We recognize the work of COPUOS and its Members as presented in the report of its fifty-seventh session document (A/69/20).

In particular, ASEAN notes with appreciation the Committee's discussion on the agenda item "space and sustainable development". Space technology and space-derived data can be applied to help us address many development challenges that we face in such areas as land and water management, health care, climate change, disaster risk reduction and emergency response, as well as agriculture and food security.

ASEAN encourages United Nations Member States to continue to explore the potential of space science and technology in contributing to the formulation of the post-2015 development agenda and achieving sustainable development. ASEAN also urges the UN and its partners to help raise awareness of the benefits of space technology and their useful applications.

Mr. Chair,

As we are well aware, close cooperation and coordination at both regional and international levels are indispensable and are key mechanisms in promoting and using space technology and its relevant applications for the future.

ASEAN therefore encourages developed countries and relevant international organizations to further assist developing countries, especially through capacity-building, knowledge enhancement, transfer of technology, as well as training and education in space technology. This will greatly help fill the knowledge gap and enable those who are lagging behind to develop their own capacity in space science and technology.

Mr. Chair,

This year, we will be observing the tenth anniversary of a tragic event for my region. On 26 December 2004, one of the most devastating tsunamis in modern history hit the Indian Ocean coast. The consequences were devastating. More than 200,000 people lost their lives. Economic and social losses were incalculable. For many of those directly affected, this event still remains fresh in their minds.

ASEAN recognizes the utility of space-based data in complementing and improving early warning systems as well as facilitating search and rescue operations in the event of natural disasters. Significant progress has been made in this area. Today's tsunami warning capabilities are more accurate and effective than they were in 2004. More can be done and should be done to prevent and mitigate the terrible effects of natural disasters like tsunamis.

We therefore encourage further research and development to better the technologies as well as to promote greater collaboration among all relevant stakeholders.

Mr. Chair,

ASEAN reiterates our concern regarding the issue of space debris. These space objects pose a serious risk for communications and all nations, peoples, and industries that rely heavily on their use.

Therefore, we urge the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee to continue discussion on mitigation measures. We also encourage those States which have not yet done so to consider voluntary implementation of the Space Mitigation Guidelines of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

Mr. Chair,

Within the framework of the ASEAN Sub-Committee on Space Technology and Applications (SCOSA), we have forged and strengthened cooperation on space technology and its application.

This year, a number of events were organized in our region. Allow me to recount a few key events:

First, the 2nd ASEAN Workshop on Ground Station Experts Exchange was held in Thailand on 28-29 November 2013. At the workshop, participants exchanged experiences in the operation of Remote Sensing satellite ground stations, maintenance, R&D as well as the utilization of satellite data.

Second, the ASEAN Earth Observation Satellite (EOS) Virtual Constellation project was established. The project focuses on joint mission planning to get larger coverage or higher imaging frequency of various satellites from ASEAN members.

Finally, at the 21st ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in Myanmar in August 2014, ASEAN and fellow ARF participants clearly recognized the vital role of space systems in climate monitoring and disaster management.

The Ministers attending the ARF also acknowledged the importance of international cooperation to regulate outer space and reaffirmed their commitment to its peaceful uses as well as to the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Mr. Chair,

Allow me to take this opportunity to speak in my national capacity. As a member of COPUOS, Thailand has always been committed to promoting the peaceful uses of outer space in order to better the lives of the people.

We find our inspiration from our King, His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej. His Majesty has been recognized internationally for the use of space knowledge and technology for the benefit of Thailand and our people.

A number of projects under the royal patronage of His Majesty apply space data to water and land management which have improved the agricultural productivity of farmlands and the livelihood of Thai farmers.

Mr. Chair,

Over the past few years, Thailand has focused its attention to earth observation, communications satellites and space-related economy. Thailand's National Committee on Space Policy recently issued a roadmap which emphasizes the utilization of space science and technology to develop a knowledge-based society and to deepen space research related to sustainable development.

A number of international conferences were held in Thailand on space-related technologies and peaceful uses of outer space. In November 2013, Thailand hosted the inaugural bi-annual symposium of the Committee on Space Research (COSPAR) under the theme of "Planetary Systems of our Sun and Other Stars, and the Future of Space Astronomy". We sincerely hope that the success of the first COSPAR symposium will enhance collaboration and development within the space science and the astronomy community.

Also in November last year, the second round of the Open-Ended Consultations on the International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities was held in Bangkok. We commend and support this European Union initiative. At the same time, we underline the need to maintain an all-inclusive and transparent approach in order to finalize consultations on the Code of conduct with the broadest consensus possible..

In June this year, Thailand hosted the 10<sup>th</sup> International Conference of the Asia Geographic Information System Association. The Conference brought together representatives of the geospatial community to discuss and share views on significant developments made in geospatial technology.

Mr. Chair,

Thailand is now developing its space economy. At this year's COPUOS fifty-seventh session, Dr. Anond Snidvongs, Executive Director of Thailand's Geo-informatics and Space Technology Development Agency or GISTDA, made a presentation to the Committee on the potential of space industry and business in Thailand and ASEAN as new opportunities for economic growth.

Earlier this year, Thailand launched into the orbit two new communication satellites, Thaicom 6 and Thaicom 7. These two satellites will serve Thailand's growing telecommunications industry and further advance Thailand's competitive position in space economy. In addition, Thailand's Space Krenovation Park (SKP) now serves as a capability development center for space technology as well as space business development. Through this public-private collaboration, there are currently twelve partnerships conducting more than forty programmes.

Mr. Chair,

In closing, I wish to reaffirm ASEAN's commitment to the peaceful uses of outer space. We also stress that the uses of outer space must respect the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and equal access for all States. In particular, we emphasize the need to prevent the possibility of an arms race in the outer space, especially involving nuclear weapons, which can threaten international peace and security in a profound and irreversible manner.

In order to ensure the long-term sustainability and security of the space environment, we support continued discussions to lay down the legal principles for outer space activities, leading to a strengthened international space regime. As such, we acknowledge the efforts being undertaken by stakeholders in the creation of a draft code of conduct for outer space activities. Such discussions however must be the product of a transparent and inclusive intergovernmental process within the ambit of the United Nations, to ensure universal access to the outer space and mutual benefits for all concerned.

ASEAN of course stands ready to work with COPUOS, fellow Member States and all stakeholders to uphold the objective of preserving the outer space only for peaceful uses and for the benefit of all States and peoples.

Thank you Mr. Chair.

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