

**Statement by Mr. Nabeel Munir, Minister
Permanent Mission of Pakistan
to the United Nations
in the Special Political and
Decolonization (4th) Committee on
Peaceful uses of Outer Space**

New York, 17 October 2014

Mr. Chairman

The report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), contained in document A/68/20, gives a comprehensive review of the activities of the Committee. We appreciate the work done by the UN COPUOS and its two Sub-Committees. They are the central focal point for UN Member States to seek avenues for enhancing international cooperation for peaceful uses of outer space.

Pakistan believes that the UN COPUOS has an important role in maximizing the benefits of space capabilities in the service of humanity, particularly in environment, health and disaster mitigation.

Mr. Chairman,

Space is an important driver for socio-economic growth in Pakistan. Space activities and technologies contribute to confronting challenges in the fields of climate change, resource monitoring and management, disaster management, health and education.

Pakistan is benefitting from cooperation in peaceful exploration and use of outer space. Some examples of recent collaboration are:

- Satellite-based monitoring of major crops;
- Automation of field data collection process through android-based smart phone applications;
- Developments on Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCC) Atlases in collaboration with the FAO.
- Projects on *Mapping of Impact of Floods* and on *Strategic Strengthening of Flood Warning and Management Capacity*, carried out in collaboration with the FAO, UNESCO and the University of Southampton.
- In the field of tele-epidemiology, projects on identification of hotspots for dengue outbreak and polio digital mapping system, completed in collaboration with UNICEF.

Mr. Chairman

The Space Education and Awareness Program (SEAP), launched recently, organizes short courses for industry professionals and government officials and collaborates with academia for student projects.

The Pakistan National Student Satellite Program (PNSSP) aims at a long-term plan to engage, train and prepare university students for the high-tech space industry.

In November 2013, students of the Institute of Space Technology (IST) successfully launched a cube satellite namely ICUBE-1. It would enable a wide range of future experiments in the domain of imaging, microgravity, biology, nanotechnology, space dynamics, chemistry, space physics and various other fields.

Mr. Chairman

Pakistan supports the positive outcomes of the Working Group on “Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities”.

We also take note of the report and recommendations of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space. Transparency and CBMs should be implemented in a manner consistent with national interests of States and as a means to achieving enhanced safety and security in outer space.

We have been participating actively in open-ended consultations of International Code of Conduct (ICoC) for Outer Space Activities. While we see value in such efforts, we believe that such initiatives should be pursued in an inclusive, universal and participatory manner, preferably under the umbrella of United Nations, taking into account security interests of all States.

Mr. Chairman

On the issue of space debris mitigation, Pakistan believes that outer space should be used in a manner that guarantees safety, security and long-term sustainability of peaceful space activities. Emerging space-faring nations - mostly developing countries - however, do not possess the requisite financial and technological resources to comply with the UNCOPUOS Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines or any other set of guidelines or technical standards. Much of the existing space debris is a result of activities of space-faring nations. They have a moral responsibility to assist new entrants in implementation of these guidelines.

Mr. Chairman

Space environment is precious for the whole of mankind. Pakistan has consistently opposed militarization and weaponization of outer space and an arms race in outer space. Need for negotiations in the CD on this contemporary issue of interest and concern is obvious.

We have also supported further negotiations on PAROS and the draft text, tabled jointly by the Russian Federation and China in 2008, commonly known as PPWT in the CD. Pakistan believes that the issue of weaponization of outer space, including the placement and installation of weapons in space and/or celestial bodies poses a threat to the future of space operations.

Mr. Chairman

Principles Relevant to the Use of Nuclear Power Sources (NPS) in outer space should be formally submitted to the Legal Subcommittee for examination in order to review possible grey areas as identified by member States from time to time. Pakistan recognizes the need for NPS application in outer space for inter-planetary space missions travelling to outer limits of the solar systems and/or deep space exploratory missions for which solar panels are not suitable as a source of electrical power.

Pakistan is neither using nor planning to use NPS applications, at least in the foreseeable future. The question of the use of NPS should, however, be addressed in compliance with international regulatory regime and applicable safety standards. Use of NPS in active satellite orbits is extremely perilous for fragile space environment in general and spacecrafts in particular and must therefore be undertaken under stringent legally-binding safety procedures.

Mr. Chairman

The national space agency of Pakistan, SUPARCO, biennially organizes an *International Conference on Space*. The moot focuses on how emerging space-faring nations could apply space-derived techniques and solutions to solve complex issues of development, including natural resource management; urban and rural planning and development; provision of health services and education; sustainable agriculture; environmental monitoring and protection; disaster risk assessment, management and mitigation; and reliable telecommunications services.

We remain committed to the overarching principles of peaceful uses of outer space.

I thank you