Islamic Republic of
IRAN
Permanent Mission to the United Nations

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On “Outer Space”

At the Thematic Discussion of the 66th Session of the First Committee
New York, 22 October 2012

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In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

Mr. Chairman,

At your request, I would read short version of my statement and its full version will be posted on the quick first portal.

The Islamic Republic of Iran fully associates itself with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

My delegations strongly reaffirms this universally agreed principle that outer space is the common heritage and province of all mankind and must be explored and utilized exclusively for peaceful purposes and for the benefit of present and future generations of all peoples.

The Islamic Republic of Iran also underlines the full observance of the principles of non-ownership of the outer space and the freedom of States and their sovereign equality in discovery of and research in outer space, as well as the need for promoting non-discriminatory cooperation and mutual assistance in these areas.

Moreover, non-intervention in other States’ program for exploring and utilizing outer space for peaceful purposes, as well as non-interference in their activities for using the space-related technology, are among the principles that needs to be fully observed by all States. In this regard we would like to stress that space science and technology should be utilized in accordance with the international law and the principles and purposes of the UN Charter, in particular promotion of international peace and security.
The Islamic Republic of Iran is of the view that space science and technology and their applications, such as satellite communications, earth observation systems and satellite navigation technologies are indispensable tools for sustainable development, as such technologies can contribute effectively to development efforts in different regions of the world, to improve peoples' lives, to conserve natural resources, and to enhance the preparedness for disasters and alleviation of their consequences.

In this regard, the Islamic Republic of Iran stresses that access to outer space through space science, techniques, and technologies should be available to all countries. Iran strongly opposes any measure aimed at turning the space and space technology into a monopoly of a few countries and believes that monopolization of outer space is neither a legitimate option nor achievable.

Despite unacceptable ideas by certain countries that consider advanced sciences including space technology as their monopoly, the facts on the ground testifies to the fact that developing nations including Iran would advance in space technology and the unfounded allegations of proliferation concerns would never prevent them.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, being under the most severe restrictions and deprived of any assistance in sending its own satellite into space, was forced to develop its indigenous space technology and thanks to the dedication and perseverance of its young scientists, during the recent years, has made a remarkable advancement in space science and technology.

Iran's considerable experiences in the field of aerospace science and related knowledge constitutes a solid foundation for further advancements in implementing its long-term plan to explore and utilize space for peaceful purposes.

By launching the second indigenously made Satellite Launch Vehicle (SLV), carrying our first ever home built telecommunication satellite, and its successful placement in Low Earth Orbit, now Iran is among the countries having capability to launch satellite into orbit.

Our latest achievement in this regard is domestically manufactured Navid satellite. The mission of this satellite, which was designed and manufactured jointly by the Iranian Space Agency and the young scientists of universities and successfully put into elliptic orbit in February 2012, is defined in the fields of atmosphere and meteorological sciences and natural disasters.

We are determined to develop and expand the application of space technologies including by the establishment of monitoring and prediction system of rice yields using satellite imagery, continuing satellite monitoring and control of environment and natural resources, modeling and prediction of drought, tele-medicine project based on space technology, and remote sensing laboratory.
Mr. Chairman,

Iran gives a high priority to the international cooperation in developing its space programs, particularly within the framework of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), and as one of its first members, has constantly made constructive contributions to Committee’s activities.

As a disaster prone country, which faces a particularly hazardous situation resulting from the various types of natural disasters, Iran also is an active partner of the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER), which was established to ensure that all countries have access to and develop the capacity to use all types of space-based information to support the full disaster management cycle. Iran also is the host to Regional Support Office of the UN-SPIDER.

Additionally, the Islamic Republic of Iran as one of the founding members of the Asia Pacific Space Cooperation Organization (APSCO) actively contributes to its activities, and in a new development, Iranian Space Agency hosted the 6th Meeting of the Council of APSCO in Tehran, on 17-18 July 2012.

Furthermore, due to its wide experience in dealing with full range of disaster management, Iran is the host of newly established regional center for information, communication and space technology-enabled disaster management of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

In line with our support to measures to engage in the common efforts to use space science and technology and their applications for the benefit of mankind, a Regional Workshop on the Use of Space Technology for Human Health Improvement was organized jointly by the UN Office for Outer Space and the Iranian Space Agency, in Tehran, on 23-26 October 2011, the prime objective of which was to promote awareness of the use of space technology applied to health care.

Mr. Chairman,

The Islamic Republic of Iran strongly underlines the significance of prevention of arms race in outer space and is deeply concerned over the negative implications of weaponization of space, development of projects under the pretext of missile defense systems, as well as the pursuit of advanced military technology capable of being deployed in outer space, which contributes to the further erosion of an international climate conducive to strengthening of disarmament and international security.
Given the inadequacy of existing legal instruments to deter an arms race in outer space, and taking into account the attempts aimed at the weaponization of outer space, in order to seek military and strategic superiority therein, which would endanger international peace and security, Iran shares the view that the prevention of an arms race in outer space requires greater urgency.

Anti-missiles system development by the U.S. under the pretext of so-call missiles threat is only aiming to get the supremacy over other Nuclear-Weapon States in Europe neighborhood and Far East.

It is extremely difficult for the international disarmament observers to get convinced that the main reason for spending billions of dollars for the development of an anti-missiles system, origin of which comes from the so-called “Star War” in 1980s, is against purely defensive missile programs of a couple of other countries. Definitely, hosting this missile system will not add to the security of the host countries in east of Europe and elsewhere or the security of the country operating such system. It would be only a trigger of a new arms race.

In regard to some new initiatives on outer space, we fully support the position of the Non-Aligned Movement in underlining the importance of adopting a universal, non-discriminatory, and comprehensive approach, and stressing that any proposal or initiative on outer space should be pursued within the competent United Nations bodies and any possible decision thereon should be made by consensus.

Before concluding, Mr. Chairman, I would also like to introduce, on behalf of Egypt, Indonesia and my own delegation, the draft decision contained in document A/C.1/67/L.7 entitled “Missiles”, submitted by our delegations to the First Committee. In line with the position of the Non-Aligned Movement for addressing the important issue of missiles in all its aspects within the framework of the UN, Iran has already initiated the resolution on missiles which has regularly been adopted by the General Assembly since 1999. We will continue this initiative and hope that it would be adopted again by consensus.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.