



BANGLADESH

Statement under Agenda Item 48: *International Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space* at the Fourth Committee of the 71st Session of the UN General Assembly

Thursday, 13 October 2016, Conference Room 4

Mr. Chairman,

Since this is the first time my delegation takes the floor in this Committee, please allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of the Chair, and assure you and other members of the Bureau of our delegation's unstinting cooperation in discharging your mandates.

We take this opportunity to thank the delegation of Canada for presenting a comprehensive report on the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), and for steering the work of the Working Group of the Whole on the draft Resolution. We underscore the need for achieving consensus on various elements of the draft, particularly in the interest of constructive engagement by all Member States during the lead up to [the observance of the fiftieth anniversary of UN Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space] (UNISPACE + 50) in 2018.

As a matter of principle, our delegation advocates the need for a robust international legal regime to govern outer space activities, including exploration and use of space for peaceful purposes, with a view to ensuring shared and equitable benefits for all humankind. We recognize the potential contributions of space science and technology and their applications for realizing the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Being a climate vulnerable delta, exposed to frequent natural disasters, Bangladesh continues to reap dividends from investment in space research and remote sensing, particularly for disaster management, environmental protection, natural resources management and climate change impact monitoring. In pursuance of our Government's ongoing initiatives to foster economic growth and inclusive public service delivery, with the help of ICT, we see the growing importance of collaboration on and investment in space technologies, such as satellite communication, Earth observations systems and satellite navigation technologies.

With this in mind, our Government has recently completed the necessary groundwork for launching our own communication satellite, *Bangabandhu 1*, hopefully by the end of 2017. Partly financed by our own resources, this first project marking our entry into the outer space is being implemented with the cooperation of France, Russian Federation, United States and ITU,

in particular. It is expected that given proper coordination in the satellite's frequency, it should be able to provide services to all South Asian countries as well as a number of countries in South East and Central Asia. Our Government, along with our telecommunication regulatory authority, is currently working on setting up a public limited venture to manage the commercial operations of the satellite.

In terms of our national level capacity building, we acknowledge the cooperation received from a number of regional and international organisations, including the Asia Pacific Space Cooperation Organisation (APSCO) and the regional centres for Space Science and Technology Education.

We look forward to further deepening our engagements with the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs (UN-OOSA) towards developing a comprehensive National Space policy and further enabling legislations.

We are also in the process of considering seeking membership of COPUOS, and would appreciate member states' support in this regard in due course. We urge COPUOS to remain seized with issues concerning equitable allocation and sharing of space orbit and transfer of knowledge, technology and know-how, with particular focus on addressing the constraints faced by the least developed countries.

Bangladesh has consistently supported the call for prevention of an arms race in the outer space, and a corresponding international legally binding instrument to be negotiated in the Conference on Disarmament (CD). As we stress the need for overcoming divergence of views concerning the legal instrument, we recognize the important role various Transparency and Confidence Building Measures (TCBM) can play in promoting space security and sustainability of space activities. We see merit in sustained efforts towards implementing the recommendations of the UN Group of Governmental Experts on TCBMs. We believe there is a need for a common but differentiated responsibility among Member States in mitigating the potentially alarming impact of debris and minimizing accidents in space.

In this context, we welcome the initiative to hold a joint panel discussion between the First and Fourth Committees to discuss all related issues during the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly next year.

I thank you.