

Fifty-fourth Session of the

UN COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE

Vienna, 2-10 June, 2011

Agenda Item 4 – General exchange of views

**Statement by Mr. Előd BOTH, Head of the Hungarian Delegation,  
on behalf of the European Union**

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The Candidate Countries Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia<sup>1</sup>, Montenegro and Turkey, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and the potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, as well as Armenia, Georgia, Liechtenstein, Norway, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine associate themselves with this statement.

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman for chairing the 54<sup>th</sup> session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. We are confident that under your able guidance the Committee will achieve valuable results.

Space activities are expanding and their importance is crucial. Space is a resource for all countries in the world. Those which do not yet have space activities will have them in the future. Therefore the EU considers necessary to ensure greater security in outer space and believes a pragmatic and incremental process can assist in achieving this goal. The EU is committed to the development and implementation of transparency and confidence building measures, as a means to achieve enhanced safety and security in outer space. We are also particularly sensitive to the issue of risks posed by space debris which are detrimental to present and future activities.

In its reply to the United Nation General Assembly resolution 61/75 in September 2007, the European Union underlined that voluntary “rules of the road” on outer space activities endorsing best practices between space actors would serve this objective. The European Union has launched a proposal for an international Code of Conduct for Outer Space activities and has

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<sup>1</sup> Croatia and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process

elaborated a preliminary draft. The EU has conducted extensive consultations. In the light of these consultations, we have produced a revised version of our first draft Code of Conduct, on the basis of which the EU Council gave mandate to the EU High Representative, on 27 September 2010, to carry out further and wider consultations.

The draft Code is based on three principles: freedom for all to use outer space for peaceful purposes, preservation of the security and integrity of space objects in orbit and due consideration for the legitimate security and defence needs of States. Our proposed draft foresees that the Code would be applicable to all outer space activities conducted by States or non-governmental entities. It would lay down the basic rules to be observed by space faring nations in both civil and military space activities. Due to the overarching nature of the Code, it would not be appropriate to table the draft code in any existing forum competent on civilian outer space activities (UNGA Fourth Committee, COPUOS) or disarmament (UNGA First Committee, CD).

The EU is in the process of consulting with as many countries as possible to discuss this proposal and gather their views. In addition to bilateral consultations, we are considering the possibility of organising a multilateral experts meeting before the end of 2011 to discuss our initiative. This multilateral experts meeting will serve to prepare the ad hoc diplomatic conference, open to participation by all States on a voluntary basis, at which the code will be open to signature.

Mr. Chairman,

Now let me to summarise the main features of the European Space Policy and the activity of the Hungarian Presidency. The main priorities of the European Space Policy are two important space applications, namely satellite navigation and global monitoring for environment and security. The European Space Agency (ESA) focuses on research and development of space systems and in their applications, while the EU brings a clear picture of how space can best serve Europe's citizens European policies and provides additional financial resources to the space programmes that implement these policies. We develop our flagship programmes, the Galileo and the GMES programmes, in close co-operation with ESA. The space components of both systems are under preparation. Further priority areas are, inter alia, space and climate change and space exploration. During the Hungarian Presidency the EU continued the work started under the Belgian Presidency. We regard the space sector as a very important one for the European economy, for

research and development. Very recently the European space policy received new impetus, with the insertion of the new provision of Article 189 of the Treaty on the Functioning of European Union. We continued the work in the Space Working Party, established last year under the Belgian Presidency, and the Competitiveness Council also discussed space related topics. Earlier this year we co-sponsored the conference “European Autonomy in Space”, organized by the European Space Policy Institute here in Vienna. In May we hosted a workshop in Budapest on space related R&D activities within the EU 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme.

The regular EU–ESA ministerial level Space Council meetings have affirmed that space exploration is a political and global endeavour and Europe should undertake its action within a worldwide programme. Moreover, the Space Council underlined the value of space exploration for inspiring young Europeans to choose a career in science and technology and to strengthen these capabilities in Europe. The seventh Space Council was held on 25 November 2010 in Brussels, under the co-presidency of Belgium (EU) and Italy (ESA). This was the first Space Council after the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty on 1 December 2009. The Space Council in its resolution “Global challenges: taking full benefit of European space systems”, adopted at this conference, invited the EU, ESA and their Member States, the three pillars which European Space Policy rests on, to further develop an overall space strategy and reaffirmed that Europe should continue to develop world class space infrastructures and applications, as well as to rely on efficient operational space systems to serve its citizens.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to reiterate, in line with our commemorative statement, that after half a century we can affirm that COPUOS has fulfilled the task, specified by the General Assembly 50 years ago. Over the last decades, COPUOS laid down a firm legal basis for all forms of space activities which provide for the application of international law and promotion of international cooperation and understanding in space activities, the dissemination and exchange of information through transnational direct television broadcasting via satellites and remote satellite observations of Earth and general standards regulating the safe use of nuclear power sources necessary for the exploration and use of outer space.

We are confident that current works within COPUOS, notably on the theme of the Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space activities and associated legal, economic and political issues, will

constitute further important achievements and contributions from COPUOS to the general framework of the peaceful uses of outer space. Therefore the EU notes with appreciation the establishment of the Working Group on the Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space activities and calls upon Member States the agile adoption of its terms of reference so as the Working Group can start its substantial work as soon as possible.

To conclude my statement, I underline the support of the European Union to the dedicated work of COPUOS, ensure you of the support of the EU and wish COPUOS further successes during this session, as well as for the future.

Thank you for your attention.

Thank you Mr. Chairman