



**STATEMENT  
BY**

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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

**AT THE 50<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE  
LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE  
OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE**

**AGENDA ITEM 3: GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS (GEV)**

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**Check against delivery**

### **AGENDA ITEM 3: GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS (GEV)**

Mr. Chairperson,

On behalf of the South African delegation I wish to express our gratitude to you for presiding over this 50<sup>th</sup> session of the legal subcommittee. Given your long outstanding leadership in carrying through the deliberations of this Sub-Committee during the 49<sup>th</sup> session, we are confident that progress will be made on the various agenda items and assure you of our full support. My delegation also expresses its appreciation to the Office of Outer Space Affairs for the preparations and outstanding efforts to facilitate the work of the legal subcommittee.

Our delegation would like to express sincere condolences to the victims of the multiple disasters that struck Japan on 11 March 2011.

We associate ourselves with the statement made by the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Chairperson,

It is gratifying for our country to have this opportunity to participate and contribute to the development of International Space Law. South Africa traditionally has actively participated in the work of the Subcommittee because of our interest in developing international and national outer space law. We attach great value to the work of the Subcommittee, since we believe that it is the most important forum to create a legal order, that provides for the peaceful uses of outer space.

As we commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the COPUOS and its Subcommittees as well as the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of human spaceflight, South Africa affirms its determination to carry out the peaceful exploration and use of outer space on the basis of respect for the international agreements and generally recognized principles of space law.

Mr. Chairperson,

South Africa will continue to support the use of space technology for human development. To this end, we urge Member States to ensure that the work of the Working Group on Long Term Sustainability on Outer Space progresses to achieve its objectives.

South Africa has made substantive progress since the last session of the Sub-committee and would like to briefly refer to the salient features of those activities, which are conducted by various space stakeholders in our country.

Our Cabinet has appointed the third South African Council for Space Affairs (SACSA) The Council has a responsibility in terms of the Space Affairs Act No 84 of 1993, to authorise and supervise space activities in South Africa. The Council must also ensure that all these activities are undertaken in compliance with international agreements.

Specific actions according to the five year work plan of the Council are as follows;

- To develop, review and implement appropriate regulatory instruments for the development of a vibrant and sustainable domestic space sector.
- To maintain a fair and stable regulatory regime that promotes economic growth and innovation in the space sector.
- To ensure compliance with relevant legislation to prevent loss of life, injury to persons and damage to property caused by space objects.
- To fulfill international obligations and responsibilities with respect to international instruments and other agreements entered into by South Africa.
- To promote the use of space applications for socio economic benefits in collaboration with other stakeholders.
- To promote confidence in South Africa's space activities

Mr. Chairperson,

We are pleased to announce the formal launch of the South African National Space Agency (SANSA) in December 2010. SANSA is an implementing agency for the South African Space programme. This affirms the commitment by the government of South Africa in terms of the National Space Policy namely, "to develop and maintain a robust and appropriate set of space capabilities, services and products to support national priorities through co-ordination and co-operative governance".

Mr. Chairperson,

South Africa values bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the Space arena. We strongly believe that international cooperation should be promoted in order to disseminate the benefits associated with the use of space technologies and the utilization of satellite remote sensing data.

In the past year, South Africa has entered into international cooperation initiatives with a number of countries. The IBSA satellite programme is a new initiative between India Brazil and South Africa emanating from the long standing relationship amongst these countries. The satellite will not only benefit the IBSA countries, it will also benefit other countries in the area of agriculture, transport and telecommunication.

The African Resource Management Constellation (ARMC) is a constellation of satellites between South Africa, Algeria, Nigeria and Kenya. We also look forward in negotiating similar agreements with other countries in future.

Mr. Chairperson,

As one of the finalists in the bid to host the Square Kilometre Array (SKA) telescope, South Africa is excited about the progress made in this regard. The South African Inter Ministerial Committee (IMC) on the SKA was established in November 2010. The IMC provides strategic direction for the project on local and international lobbying, site preparation in all the SKA partner countries, including regulatory and legal matters, as well as resolving high-level challenges as the bidding process approaches the final stages.

The African Union has also endorsed the importance of the South African SKA bid as an engine for capacity building across the continent.

Mr. Chairperson,

Let me now address some of the topics that will be discussed during this session. With regard to the status and application of the five UN treaties on outer space, we continue to appreciate the efforts of the Working Group to promote the universal application of the five instruments.

On capacity building in space law, South Africa is pleased with the continued inclusion of this item in the agenda of this Sub-committee. In this regard, we are committed into the strengthening and development of capacity in space law and related field.

In conclusion, Mr Chairman, South Africa is honoured to host the 62<sup>nd</sup> International Astronautical Congress (IAC) in our beautiful city of Cape Town in October 2011. All delegates are invited and urged to attend this event. Over 2200 abstracts have been submitted for the first IAC to be held on the African continent. Preparations are well underway and the delegates are assured of a warm South African welcome and will enjoy our renowned hospitality.

Thank you.