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Draft report

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Addendum

Programme questions: proposed programme budget for 2025

(Item 3 (a))

Programme 5 Peaceful uses of outer space

1. At its 3rd meeting, on 14 May 2024, the Committee considered programme 5, Peaceful uses of outer space, of the proposed programme plan for 2025 and programme performance in 2023 ([A/79/6 \(Sect. 6\)](#)). The Committee also had before it a note by the Secretariat on the review of the proposed programme plan by sectoral, functional and regional bodies ([E/AC.51/2024/6](#)).

Discussion

2. Delegations expressed their appreciation and support for the mandate of the Office for Outer Space Affairs and its role in advancing international cooperation, while strengthening capacities in space and science technology. The role of the Office as the custodian of the United Nations treaties governing the rights and obligations of States in space was also recognized and welcomed. A delegation expressed its support for the role of the Office as a key multilateral forum for fostering a conducive environment that strengthened the safety, stability, and sustainability of space activities and building capacity in space law and policy. Another delegation welcomed the important role of the Office in raising awareness and understanding on the normative framework that guides the conduct of outer space activities.

3. A delegation noted that in the past year, the Office had made great contributions to improving global governance of outer space and enhancing international cooperation. The view was expressed that the rapid development of space science and technology, the emergence of new types of space activities, the diversity of space



entities and the rapid growth of commercial space activities, while benefiting lives, also brought new challenges to the global governance of outer space. The delegation expressed its hope that the Office would continue to practice true multilateralism and would also maintain the international monitoring of outer space as underpinned in the 1967 Outer Space Treaty.

4. Delegations welcomed the proposed programme plan for 2025 and programme performance for 2023 presented in the report. A delegation expressed its appreciation and support for the Office's important mandate to promote international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space and noted the Office's proposed strategy for 2025. Another delegation highlighted that it attached great importance to the safety and security of outer space, and that it believed that it must be kept as a domain free from threats or violence. Delegations reiterated their commitment to a framework that maintained peace in outer space, and their commitment to work collaboratively with the United Nations and Member States to advance international cooperation and transparency in space activities.

5. The Office's role as the substantive secretariat of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subcommittees and working groups was recognized and emphasized. A delegation expressed its strong support for the rules-based international system, with the United Nations at its core, and a multilateral approach to international affairs, which, it noted, included the cooperation on outer space issues. The delegation stated that with its new space strategy, it had committed itself to work on the development of space law in the Committee, and to contribute to the agreement of guidelines, standards and norms enabling the safe and sustainable exploration and use of space by future generations. The delegation noted that the five United Nations space treaties were the foundational framework for all space activities, and that the Committee, and its legal subcommittee in particular, were the central platforms for developing the legal framework for space activities.

6. A delegation commended the Office for Outer Space Affairs for its work in a rapidly growing sector, and recognized that the Office's initiatives in space debris mitigation, management of space resources, and long-term sustainability of outer space activities were critical. It was noted that, in recent years, space activities had experienced growing relevance, with increasing space traffic and the rapid increase in the number of objects launched into space. A delegation observed that with that trend, the tasks of the Office and Member States' demands had further increased. While matters relating to parts of the programme dealing with resources were not within the mandate of the Committee for Programme and Coordination, a delegation questioned whether the Office had been adequately equipped with the necessary resources to meet that growing demand, since, at each session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in the past years, the Director had informed Member States about the growing challenges faced by the Office to fulfil its mandate. The delegation expressed the view that with an expected increase in tasks for the Office, it was necessary to ensure that the Office had the resources to meet its requirements and fulfil its mandate, as failing to do so could have detrimental effects on the functioning of the legal framework for space activities, especially at a time of growing challenges to space governance where legal certainty is more important than ever. Another delegation noted that the Office had an interesting but difficult task and observed that the Office had to work with significant resource constraints, while the Office's expanding project activities to support developing countries seeking to take advantage of the benefits of space technologies required significant resources, in particular human resources.

7. Several delegations underscored the importance of the peaceful exploration of space science and technology in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achievement of its Goals, and commended the

initiatives of the Office in that regard. The Office was urged to continue supporting developing countries in leveraging space technologies to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and that the benefits of space technology should be made widely available, and that developing countries should receive the proper support to make full use of them. The view was expressed that the benefits of space exploration should become a fundamental tool to support the development efforts of countries. In that regard, a delegation provided examples of such issues that included the development of space legislation and water management with space technologies. Another delegation opined that it favoured a free data policy that facilitated access to satellite data by users in areas that needed them most, and supported programs aimed at training and educating users in developing nations so that they could receive, interpret, use and make such data available to end users in a meaningful way. A delegation expressed its support for the Office's efforts to advance international cooperation for harnessing the potential of space as a driver of sustainable development.

8. Several delegations observed that outer space was a common heritage of humankind. A delegation noted that outer space presented a source of potential benefits for all countries and could be explored in a way that would be conducive to increasing prosperity, security and well-being. Another delegation expressed the view that outer space should not be subject to national appropriation or claims of sovereignty, and that it should be used for peaceful purposes and remain accessible to all nations on a non-discriminatory basis, irrespective of the level of scientific, technical or economic development. The delegation expressed its hope that the Office would contribute to promote inclusivity and robust international cooperation for capacity-building, technical assistance and technology transfer, which it considered critical for developing nations in the field of peaceful uses of outer space. Another delegation called upon the Office to continue supporting countries, in particular developing countries, in providing direct access to space based emergency response mechanisms.

9. Under the strategy and external factors section, and with respect to paragraph 6.4 (c), a delegation reiterated the importance of the Office's work with Member States to promote the peaceful use of outer space. In particular, the delegation recognized the Office's work to ensure the implementation of a legal framework governing space activities, the registration of objects launched into outer space, steps for space debris mitigation, and other constructive efforts as essential functions providing a normative framework for outer space activities. In that context, the delegation requested an update on the state of improvements to the registration of space objects through the modernized online platform. Another delegation noted that the Office played an important role in implementing relevant aspects of the legal framework, including through maintaining the United Nations Register of Objects Launched into Outer Space, among other responsibilities.

10. A delegation noted references in the programme plan to the Office's cooperation with non-governmental organizations, in particular references contained in paragraphs 6.4 and 6.7. The delegation expressed the view that the main mandate of the Office was to facilitate the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which was an intergovernmental platform for discussion, specifically and primarily by States, of current issues of international space law. The delegation expressed the view that according to the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, international responsibility for activities in outer space, whether carried out by governmental authorities or non-governmental entities, were borne by States, and that therefore, in its assessment, the prioritization of interaction with non-governmental organizations was not within the Office's mandate. The delegation sought clarification on who the

Office interacted with when it referred to “other partners” and “other space-related entities” in paragraphs 6.4 (c) and 6.7, respectively.

11. With respect to the external factors reflected in paragraph 6.6, a delegation questioned which part of the activities of the Office would be supported by non-governmental organizations. The delegation expressed the view that the budget of the Office was funded through contributions from Member States, which received direct assistance within the framework of the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

12. With respect to paragraph 6.7, the efforts by the Office to foster partnerships at the global, regional, national and local levels, across governmental, intergovernmental, non-governmental, industry and academic organizations was recognized as important to ensuring cohesion, coherence, and transparency in programmatic activities. In that regard, a delegation observed that partnerships with the private sector were also essential, while another delegation requested further information on the Office’s plans to meet the growing demand for support to strengthen the capacity of developing countries.

13. With respect to paragraph 6.8, a delegation expressed appreciation for the Office’s work to promote and better coordinate data-sharing and cooperation on the procurement of space-based information. The delegation expressed its view that an agreed system for such cooperation would contribute to progressing the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and to strengthening the United Nations development system’s capacity to deliver in line with the priorities of the Global South.

14. With respect to paragraph 6.9, several delegations expressed their support for the Space for Women project that would promote the empowerment of women and girls in the areas of space science, technology, innovation and exploration. Several delegations also commended the Office for mainstreaming gender in its operational activities, deliverables and results.

15. A delegation expressed appreciation for the Office’s continued efforts to identify opportunities for disability inclusion in the space sector and encouraged the sharing of good practices for accessibility in scientific research, education, and outreach, as detailed in the programme plan.

16. With respect to paragraph 6.11 under the evaluation section, several delegations requested further information regarding the reason why the evaluation planned for 2023 on the activities under the Access to Space for All initiative was delayed, and when it would be completed in 2024.

17. With respect to paragraph 6.19, under result 3: increased access to space, a delegation emphasized that technical assistance to Member States should be provided strictly at their request.

Conclusions and recommendations

18. **The Committee welcomed the contribution of the Office for Outer Space Affairs to the promotion of international cooperation on space activities, including its efforts to strengthen the capacity of a greater number of developing countries to use space science and technology, and recommended that the General Assembly encourage the Secretary-General to further leverage cooperation with other United Nations agencies, Member States, and the private sector in that respect.**

19. **The Committee recalled the importance of the Office continuing to focus on its core functions, in particular being the secretariat of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, performing its duties as the register for space**

objects and raising awareness on the need to coordinate actions regarding space debris.

20. The Committee noted the continued increase of space objects launched every year, welcomed the continued development of the register for space objects and reiterated the importance of efforts from the Office in cooperation with all relevant stakeholders to protect the spectrum.

21. The Committee welcomed the implementation of the Space for Women project and Space for Persons with Disabilities project and highlighted the importance of increasing empowerment for women and inclusion for persons with disabilities in the areas of space science, technology, innovation and exploration and advocating for greater awareness in the corresponding education in collaboration with relevant partners.

22. The Committee welcomed the action being taken by the Office, including through the work with Member States, to build transparency and resilience in outer space activities where relevant and applicable, as well as to raise awareness regarding the importance of peaceful uses of outer space in global agendas and summits, including Our Common Agenda and the Summit of the Future, and advocating for treaty compliance and access to space for all.

23. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of programme 5, Peaceful uses of outer space, of the proposed programme budget for 2025, subject to the following modifications:

Overall orientation

Paragraph 6.4 (c)

After “Work with Member States, intergovernmental and”, insert “, where relevant and applicable,”.

Paragraph 6.5 (c)

Replace the existing text with the following:

Greater understanding, acceptance and application of the international legal framework governing space activities;

Paragraph 6.13

Replace “The programme, as executive secretariat to the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems,” with “The Office, as executive secretariat to the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems,”.

Planned results for 2025

Result 1

In the title of result 1, replace “international legal regime governing outer space activities” with “international legal framework governing outer space activities”.

Paragraph 6.15

Replace “implement the international regime governing outer space activities” with “implement the international legal framework governing outer space activities”.

Figure 6.II

In the title of the figure, replace “international legal regime governing outer space activities” with “international legal framework governing outer space activities”.
