CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Statement by

Mr. Benjamin Krasna

Head of Bureau for Strategic and Economic Affairs

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

International Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space [Item 53]

Session 11

United Nations, New York

22 October 2015
Mr. Chairman,

We welcome the convening of this joint session of the First and Fourth Committees as the issue of space in all its various aspects is dealt with in both committees. It is therefore quite useful to hold this meeting so that we can clarify the unique aspects of each one's work and at the same time highlight issues which may be of interest to both.

We believe that the separation between the civilian and scientific aspects of space of the Fourth Committee from those matters relating to the First Committee is crucial to allowing fair professional treatment and promotion of the broad spectrum of issues within both committees that need to be addressed. We can’t afford to delay the advancement of scientific initiatives and the cooperation in research that will allow us to reap the benefits of space to mankind.

We share the goal of the promotion of a series of voluntary, non-legally binding, pragmatic and timely measures that are essential to the long term sustainability, safety, stability and security of the outer space environment. Space can make real contributions to international security and at the same time sustainable development and communications for all nations.

Space needs to remain accessible and sustainable for the future of all nations. It is of vital importance that we address the issue of space debris and orbital congestion. Furthermore, we support the international effort to draft a voluntary Code of Conduct, which must remain as non-legally binding through all its parts, including the consultation mechanism.

As noted in our remarks at the Fourth Committee earlier this week, Israel is proud to be a long standing space faring nation and a producer and user of space technologies and applications. This is manifested by our cooperation with the professional UN bodies that deal with outer space and disaster relief. Furthermore, we enumerated how Israeli satellite technology stands to support a new Facebook initiative to improve communications technology in Africa.

While understanding that with regards to space there should be improved coordination, information and confidence-building measures across the United Nations system, this must be fostered as a means to an end, and not an end unto itself.

We commend the work by the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities as well as the timely completion of a concrete set of UN COPUOS guidelines for space sustainability which can serve as a key contribution to broader efforts to enhance stability in outer space.

Thank you.