



# *Malaysia*

*Permanent Mission to the United Nations*

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**STATEMENT BY**

**THE HON. AHMAD SHABERY CHEEK, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT  
REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA**

**ON**

**ITEM 74: INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN THE  
PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE**

**AT**

**THE FOURTH COMMITTEE OF THE 59<sup>TH</sup> SESSION  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
NEW YORK**

**MONDAY, 18 OCTOBER 2004**

(Please check against delivery)

Mr. Chairman,

1. I would like to thank the Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Mr. Adigun Ade Abiodun of Nigeria for the excellent report on the work and activities of the Committee, which is contained in document A/59/20, Supplement No.20 as well as for his stewardship of COPUOS.

2. Malaysia also welcomes the recommendation of the Committee to the General Assembly that the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Thailand become members of the Committee.

Mr. Chairman,

3. My delegation would like to recall that the role of the United Nations as the focal point for international cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space had been decided by the General Assembly in 1961. Malaysia fully respects that decision and remains deeply committed to the peaceful exploration and use of outer space. In this regard, Malaysia attaches great importance to any common effort which may lead to the enhancement of international cooperation in this field. Malaysia's National Space Agency subscribes to the goal of strengthening and forging effective partnerships through international cooperation. Malaysia is developing its capacity in the space arena. However, we are conscious of the limitations of our own resources. Therefore Malaysia actively seeks international cooperation in all aspects of space activities while at the same time vigorously nurturing its own indigenous capability. My delegation fully acknowledges that international cooperation in this field will provide a strong working foundation for member states to further strengthen cooperation in outer space related activities and bring the benefits of space technologies to Earth.

4. My delegation extends its congratulations to the two sub committees of COPUOS, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the Legal Subcommittee for undertaking all the possible efforts to attain the Committee's main goal of promoting international

cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space for the benefit of all humanity. COPUOS itself should be complimented on its role in the current setting of the ever-changing security environment. My delegation is convinced that further efforts are needed to strengthen the Committee and make it more effective. Malaysia maintains a keen interest in the work of COPUOS as well as the subcommittees. We believe that we can contribute further through direct participation in this work, in particular through chairmanship of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee.

Mr. Chairman,

5. The advancement of space science and technology has brought about new initiatives in the aspect of research and development of defence related activities including the introduction of weapons into outer space. This has created a major concern among Member States on the potential threats to the breach of the peaceful uses of outer space. Considering that the issue of space debris is a major problem, it is important to note that a weapon destroyed while in orbit would leave a persistent cloud of debris, posing a hazard to satellites and other launched space objects. In this regard, greater efforts should be made to prevent the weaponisation of outer space, in particular by drawing up an international agreement to prevent an arms race in outer space and to prohibit the deployment of weapons in outer space. Effectively, the Committee should seek to establish a practical mechanism for coordinating its work with other relevant bodies, such as the Conference on Disarmament.

Mr. Chairman,

6. Let me now briefly review Malaysia's space related activities. Malaysia is now working on her second earth observation satellite in collaboration with South Korea. The flight model of the satellite, which is now called RazakSAT, is being built in Malaysia. A launch in the fourth quarter of 2005 is being planned. Weighing in at 180 kg, RazakSAT will have a ground resolution of 2.5 meters in the panchromatic and 5 meters in the multi-spectral bands. To support RazakSAT operations, a Mission Control Center for

Telemetry, Tracking and Control (TT & C) is being built. With data reception capabilities in the X and S band, it is designed to enable data to be received from many satellites, including future satellites in our Near Equatorial Low Earth Orbiting (LEO) series of satellites. Apart from TT & C capabilities for LEO satellites, the station is configured to also provide services for Medium Earth Orbiting (MEO) satellites. The Malaysian Center for Remote Sensing (MACRES) ground receiving station has been fully commissioned since the end of 2003 and is now receiving data from NOAA, RadarSAT, LANDSAT, SPOT. It will also act as the main receiving station for RazakSAT.

7. In matters relating to meetings and seminars, Malaysia has hosted several international space-related meetings, many of them on remote sensing applications that were organized by MACRES. Two notable meetings held in Malaysia were the 9<sup>th</sup> UNESCAP Intergovernmental Consultative Committee of the Regional Space Applications Programme in December 2003 and the UNIDROIT colloquium to discuss the Preliminary Draft Space Protocol in April 2004.

8. Malaysia is currently developing an Astronaut Programme. In August 2003, the Prime Minister of Malaysia officially announced Malaysia's joint programme with Russia to launch a Malaysian astronaut into space. This programme focuses on science and education. In this regard, strategies for a major public awareness and understanding of the space programme have been put in place. A total of 7000 applications has been received, 70% of which come from men and women in the 21 - 30 age group. Major efforts to target this age group through media and related activities are underway.

9. With regard to the development of space science, Malaysia is currently setting up a National Observatory that will house a robotic, remotely accessed telescope. It will be ready by the end of 2005. By then, we should be able to announce to interested astronomers the way in which to access the telescope from anywhere in the world.

Mr. Chairman,

10. Malaysia and Greece are co-leaders of Action Team 9 of the Implementation of the Recommendations of UNISPACE III on IMPROVING KNOWLEDGE-SHARING THROUGH THE PROMOTION OF UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO SPACE-BASED COMMUNICATION SERVICES. A survey questionnaire was sent to all United Nations member states to assess the current usage of satellite communications systems and impediments to the usage. Twenty-eight responses covering the Asian, African and European were received regions with very limited responses from the Latin American and North America. One of the important findings from the survey was that most member states regarded a satellite-based telecommunication system as the easiest to be implemented and the most cost effective solution for rural areas but commercial viability and high cost of services remain as major impediments. It therefore appears that government policy is required to overcome those impediments in order to address the issue of the digital divide in rural areas. The Action Team will continue to obtain more information especially from developing countries before it moves on to the next phase of its work.

11. With regard to education, Malaysia has initiated many space related educational programmes. Some of these programmes have now become an annual affair and have gathered very encouraging responses from targeted audiences. Among the programmes conducted are Space Camps, National Space Science Quiz, National Rocket Launching Competition, talks and observation on celestial events such as the Mars close encounter, Venus Transit (2004), comet observations and eclipses, World Space Week Celebration, Space Poetry Night, Yuri's Night, Astronaut Education Programme such as the Astronaut Costume Design Contest and Lectures given by scientists and researchers. An Artist-in-Residence programme has also been initiated and the Space Sculpture Competition is near completion.

Mr. Chairman,

12. Malaysia notes the success of Spaceship One's on its maiden flight to reach 100 km. Technically the age of commercialized space travel has begun. Obviously there are several issues that now need to be deliberated upon by this august body, such as the status of space tourists and the transportation vehicle in the context of current international treaties and conventions and the application of the Astronaut Rescue Agreement under these circumstances. We look forward to discussion on these issues in the future. In this regard, Malaysia takes note of the views of the EU calling for a legal framework and appropriate national space law. This merits particular attention.

13. In conclusion Mr. Chairman, space related developments in Malaysia have progressed significantly in the last few years. These developments have been influenced largely by domestic and regional challenges. Malaysia will continue to contribute to regional and international initiatives for space cooperation in order to meet the goals of sustainable development.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.