

62nd Session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Vienna, 12 – 21 June 2019

Item 4. General exchange of views

(statement of the Intersputnik International Organization of Space Communications
delivered by Mr. Victor Veshchunov, Executive Director)

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for giving me the floor. I appreciate the opportunity to make a statement on behalf of the Intersputnik International Organization of Space Communications.

Distinguished Mr. Chair, distinguished delegates, Intersputnik is an international intergovernmental satellite telecommunications organization headquartered in Moscow. It was established in 1971 and today unites twenty six Member States representing virtually all geographic regions of the globe. Intersputnik is keen to further expand geographically and invites any nations to become its members. At present, the competent state authorities of the French Republic are following the procedure set forth in the internal laws to make a decision to potentially join Intersputnik. We are looking forward to the successful completion of such procedure and welcoming France among the Intersputnik Member States.

Distinguished delegates, let me remind you that Intersputnik's mission is to contribute to the expansion of economic, scientific, and technological relations among its Member States using satellite telecommunications and to render assistance in procuring and operating their national satellite systems. In this regard, I am pleased to inform the Committee that in April 2019 Intersputnik started to implement a Program for the Development of Satellite Telecommunications Business in the Member States of the Organization, which had been approved by the Intersputnik's Board and the Operations Committee last June. This Program is another tool to attain Intersputnik's goals by granting financial support to companies from our Member Countries. For this purpose, there was set up an investment fund which can be apportioned among the winners of the tender. The first bids are invited till the end of September, and the winners' projects may be funded already before the end of this year. For more details, please refer to Intersputnik's web-site.

Intersputnik has always promoted international, regional, and interregional cooperation, including contacts with other international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. In this context, I am delighted to inform the Committee that last month, during the

joint session of the Board and the Operations Committee, an agreement on cooperation between Intersputnik and the European Telecommunications Satellite Organization (EUTELSAT) was executed. The agreement signed with EUTELSAT logically concluded the process of convergence of intergovernmental satellite telecommunications organizations that we had started more than six years before. Similar cooperation agreements had been already signed by Intersputnik with the International Mobile Satellite Organization and the International Telecommunications Satellite Organization. Today, the future-oriented alliance of all global intergovernmental satellite telecommunication organizations is complete.

Continuing the theme of Intersputnik's international commitments, I am pleased to inform the Committee that last year the Intersputnik Board carried a resolution to accept the rights and obligations under the Rescue Agreement, the Liability Convention, and the Registration Convention, as well as the responsibility for compliance with the Outer Space Treaty. This crucial decision – one of the most important in Intersputnik's nearly half a century's history – underlines our commitment to the highest standards of carrying out space activities. Pursuant to the Board's decision, the Intersputnik declaration was duly made and sent to the depositaries of the four United Nations treaties on outer space. The full text of the declaration is published on Intersputnik's web-site.

Starting from 1985, when Intersputnik was granted permanent observer status in the COPUOS, it has been constantly participating in the work of the Committee and its Subcommittees. Since its last session, Intersputnik has also been carrying out activities at other international fora as well as at regional and national levels.

In September 2018, Intersputnik took part in the First United Nations Conference on Space Law and Policy held in Moscow and contributed to discussions on capacity-building in space law. It includes Intersputnik's annual seminar on the development of domestic satellite telecommunications for its Member States, co-organizing space law events and publications in the host country and abroad, supporting Russian teams in the Manfred Lachs Space Law Moot Court Competition, and offering internship to students to share knowledge and experience in the field of international space and telecommunications law.

As a member of the Radiocommunication Sector of the International Telecommunication Union, Intersputnik took part in meetings of its working bodies held last year, including the Plenipotentiary Conference 2018 and those aimed at preparing the World Radiocommunication Conference to be held at the end of this year. On a regional level, similar matters were discussed within the Regional Commonwealth in the Field of Communications, where Intersputnik

contributed to the activities of the working bodies on radio frequency spectrum and satellite orbits.

Since 2015, Intersputnik has been a member of the International Astronautical Federation and participates in its broad scope of activity including, above all, annual astronautical congresses. In order to contribute to the development, strengthening, and furtherance of understanding of international space law, Intersputnik staff closely cooperates with the International Institute of Space Law. For the same purpose, and to support international endeavours aimed at ensuring a safe and responsible conduct of space activities, Intersputnik staff is involved in the so-called MILAMOS project. The project aims to objectively articulate and clarify the existing fundamental rules of international law applicable to military use of outer space in peacetime while underlining the limitations international law places on an outbreak of conflict in outer space. The project will be completed in April 2020 by issuing a manual and we are honoured by the privilege to contribute to a future where exploration and use of outer space are carried on for peaceful purposes and sustainable use of outer space is ensured for the benefit of present and future generations.

I would like to recapitulate by reconfirming that Intersputnik is open to in-depth cooperation with all Committee member and observers.

Distinguished Mr. Chair, distinguished delegates, I thank you for your attention and wish you a fruitful session ahead.