

Statement by Norway to the 69th session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space - agenda item 5: General exchange of views

Chair,

Let me first congratulate you on your election as Chair of this 69th session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Please rest assured of Norway's support. We would also like to thank the outgoing Chair, Mr. Rafiq Akram of Morocco, for his outstanding work in leading the Committee during the last year.

We also thank the Office for Outer Space Affairs under the able leadership of Director Holla-Maini for their excellent work in preparing this session. In that regard, the growing gap between UNOOSA's expanding mandates and its limited financial and human resources should be addressed.

Norway is pleased to see that the membership to UNCOPUOS is steadily increasing. In that respect, my delegation welcomes the new members to the Committee: Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Honduras, Maldives, Malta and Zimbabwe.

Chair,

Given the mentioned limited financial and human resources of UNOOSA, it is important that we reach agreement on the recommendations by the Working Group of the Whole on the liquidity crisis measures and working methods.

Norway welcomes the substantive progress made in the SSA Expert Group and is looking forward to contributing actively to the continuation of this work. It is timely and urgent that we enable the exchange of SSA information and contact details. The work undertaken can also contribute to enable the implementation of the existing LTS-guidelines.

While important work is taking place in the SSA Expert Group under the STSC, we believe there is also a need to discuss the legal framework for space traffic management in the LSC. We therefore ask that the Committee takes note of this need, and encourage further discussions as well as continuation of the collection of information on the legal and policy aspects of space traffic in the LSC.

Regarding the Working Group on Long-Term Sustainability, Norway awaits that agreement will be reached on the workplan of the Working Group so that it can be endorsed by this session of the Committee.

As a good example of Nordic collaboration, allow me to also mention the European Incoherent SCATter facility (EISCAT), with research infrastructure in the three Nordic

countries, Finland, Sweden and Norway. EISCAT capitalizes on the advantageous Arctic location and relevant competencies in space weather. The New EISCAT 3D facility with a transmitter in Norway is expected to be operational this year. The facility also has potential to contribute to space debris mitigation and observation of Near-Earth Objects in addition to space weather research, thus giving relevant research contributions to the protection of earth and space infrastructure.

On the domestic side, a new Norwegian space act will enter into force on 1 July this year. The new act will facilitate space activities that contribute to business development, innovation, and the peaceful exploration of outer space with due regard to the environment and sustainability. The act is a framework legislation, and the corresponding regulations are not yet in place. The regulator will be the Norwegian Civil Aviation Authority.

A new Norwegian White Paper on space activities will also be drafted this year and will be finalized in 2027.

Chair, space is a global commons of utmost and increasing importance. In this context, we remain committed to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Space2030 Agenda.

As the use of outer space increases in scale, complexity and diversity of actors, we need to redouble our efforts to ensure that space remains safe, sustainable and to the benefit of all. Norway supports the convening of UNISPACE IV, which would provide an effective platform to respond to the calls in the Pact for the Future and bolster space governance at a critical time. We hope a decision to hold such a conference in 2027 can be made by the Committee during this session.

Finally, Chair, we all agree that the UN Charter applies to the conduct of states in outer space. So, too does international humanitarian law. We strongly condemn Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and its violations of Ukraine's territorial integrity, actions which have ramifications also for the space domain.

Thank you Chair.