

United Kingdom, Item 6

UK Statement on Item 6. Report of the STSC

Chair, Distinguished Delegates

The United Kingdom would like to extend its thanks to COPUOS delegates and UNOOSA who contributed to the success of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee this year. We would also like to particularly thank the chair Juan Francisco Facetti, for his hard work in presiding over the sessions.

The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee remains a unique forum for member states and permanent observers to share updates on their respective national and joint developments in the advancement of the peaceful uses of outer space. This year we were fortunate to hear updates on missions such as Artemis 1, ESA's Jupiter Icy moons Explorer (JUICE) and the work of a range of external committees such as CONFERS and the IADC which seek to advance international good practice associated with space activities. Alongside this, importantly the Committee's working groups were also able to make key advances in their programme of work and in the remainder of this statement we would like to highlight a few of these:

The UK recognises that to achieve the goal of a sustainable space environment international collaboration and the dissemination of good practice, knowledge and experience is vital. To this end the UK is a strong supporter of the work performed under the Working Group for the Long-term Sustainability of the Outer Space Environment and would like to thank Umamaheswaran R. of India, his team and UNOOSA for their organisation of the working group. At the session in February members were able to share updates across the three pillars of the workplan including valuable dialogue on the voluntary implementation of the guidelines. The UK looks forward to further dialogue in the frame of the working group and in particular the future work on the development of an easily accessible and searchable open-source repository which will act as a vital tool in building transparency, confidence and capacity. The UK

also co-sponsored Canada's CRP on a practical and inclusive approach to the LTS Guidelines and support its proposals, including continuing to have open dialogues which involve a diverse array of space faring nations.

Alongside the working group the UK also continues to support UNOOSA in the delivery of a series of virtual discussions that aims to raise awareness and build capacity in the context of the implementation of the Guidelines on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities.

At STSC this year the Nuclear Power Sources Working Group continued their work under an extended multi-year workplan. The UK was pleased to see the final report from the Working Group and given the renewed global interest in Nuclear Power Sources for space applications, agree with the recommendation that continuing the work of the Working Group under a new 5-year workplan would be beneficial. The UK was also pleased to see the unanimous appreciation of the dedicated service of the Chairmanship of Dr Sam Harbison as he steps down as chair. The United Kingdom continues to extend its full support to the candidature of Mr. Leopold Summerer from the Austrian Delegation for the position of new Chair of the Working Group on the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space.

At the Sixtieth session the topic of Dark and Quiet Skies was also discussed. The UK continues to believe this is an important issue which requires focus and attention at the technical level. The needs of both the orbital operator and the astronomical community need to be understood and potential mitigations identified so that we can continue to benefit from the valuable work of astronomers across the globe. It is hoped that in this session we can resolve the challenges uncovered at the STSC and ensure that the valuable discussions and proposed work can be continued within the frame of the committee.

Thank you for your kind attention.

