

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space Scientific and Technical

Subcommittee 61st Session

Agenda Item 4

Observer: Committee on Space Research COSPAR

Statement by Professor Pascale Ehrenfreund, COSPAR President

Madame Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

In my capacity as President of the Committee on Space Research COSPAR, I want to congratulate the Chair to the chairmanship of STSC and to express my appreciation to the new leadership of the UNOOSA.

I am presenting the following report on behalf of COSPAR and will particularly address two items of direct relevance to the portfolio of the Working Group on Long-Term Sustainability.

On the matter of regulatory and policy aspects:

The space sector is undergoing a transformation with the entry of numerous new players. New entrants and commercial actors are reshaping the space sector.

Presently, the provisions of the Outer Space Treaty of 1967 (OST67) remain vague regarding detailed operational rules of behavior for agencies and entrepreneurs when exploring the Moon and other celestial bodies. There is an urgent need to craft new guidelines and frameworks to harmonize economic interests with the imperative to safeguard the scientific integrity of space exploration. Effective regulation—and crucially, the means to enforce it—is essential.

Most industry stakeholders actually see the elaboration of technical standards for interoperable systems and infrastructure as their prime concern and the establishment of international norms of behavior for landing and proximity operations on the Moon's surface as a second priority. Although the order of priority is reversed, scientists also share these two elements as their prime concerns. There is a clear opportunity for collaborative progress in these domains that COSPAR's Panels, Commissions and Task Groups can support.

On the matter of raising awareness and building capacity:

Efforts to assist the growing number of developing and emerging space nations, as well as to promote gender equality, diversity, and the appeal of STEM careers, are vital. COSPAR's *Panel on Capacity Building* and *Panel on Education*, in collaboration with other entities including the UN, must continue the longstanding commitment to organizing Capacity Building events. Those opportunities are vital to imparting practical knowledge to scientists from emerging space nations and for forging enduring connections among the global scientific community.

COSPAR support to UNCOPUOS and the UNOOSA:

COSPAR members include today 46 national scientific institutions and 13 international scientific unions worldwide. COSPAR's established involvement through its Commissions, Panels and Task groups with UNCOPUOS supports many areas of sustainable space exploration.

For over six decades, the *COSPAR Panel on Planetary Protection* has guided compliance to the Outer Space Treaty of 1967, concerning the potential biological contamination of celestial bodies. The COSPAR Policy on Planetary Protection represents a framework that space agencies follow worldwide.

COSPAR's *Panel on Space Exploration* addresses planetary environmental stewardship and COSPAR's *Panel on Potentially Environmentally Detrimental Activities in Space* engages in research on "the Contamination of the upper atmosphere by reentering and burning up of space objects" and also supports "Cislunar Space Debris policies". COSPAR's *Panel on Space Weather* investigates the adverse effects of space weather in a setting of an international forum.

In summary, this signifies COSPAR's potential to act as a prime forum for addressing Sustainable Space Exploration concerns, both scientifically and socially. The fifth COSPAR Symposium was successfully held in Singapore in April 2023 addressing the topic of "Space Science with Small Satellites". We are also delighted to announce that our 45th COSPAR Scientific Assembly will be held this July 2024 in Busan in the Republic of Korea.

COSPAR stands ready to continue its long-standing support to the work of UNCOPUOS and the UNOOSA.

Honourable Chair, distinguished delegates,

Thank you