



European Union

**EU Statement on
Agenda item 5: General exchange of views**

**65th Session of the
Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS)
United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA)**

Vienna, 1-10 June 2022

Mr. Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The following countries align themselves with this statement: the Republic of North Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Albania*, Bosnia and Herzegovina*, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova.

I congratulate you on your election as Chair of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) and assure you of our full support and cooperation. I would also like to express our appreciation to the outgoing Chair, Dr. Marius-Ioan Piso of Romania, for his skilful guidance over the past two years and to the former Director of the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA), Dr. Simonetta Di Pippo, for her important role in supporting our work.

This year's COPUOS session is regrettably taking place amid a brutal war in Europe. The European Union condemns in the strongest terms the unprovoked and unjustified military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine which grossly violates international law including the UN Charter, and undermines European and global security and stability. We demand that Russia immediately cease its military actions, unconditionally withdraw all forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine and fully respect Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence within its internationally recognised borders. We recall Article 2 (4) of the UN Charter, which prohibits the threat or use of force against

* Candidate Countries the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania as well as potential Candidate Country Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

the territorial integrity or political independence of any State. This prohibition is a peremptory norm of international law that all States must abide by.

Against the background of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the EU and its Member States can no longer support the process noted in UN General Assembly Resolution 76/76 towards establishing of a new UN affiliated regional centre for space science and technology education hosted in Russia. We invite all UN Member States to reconsider their position, and call upon UNOOSA to refrain from initiating any cooperation projects with the Russian Federation in the current situation.

The EU strongly supports the rules-based international system, with the United Nations at its core, and a multilateral approach to international affairs. We reiterate that COPUOS and its Subcommittees are unique platforms for international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space, including on the development of international space law, international norms and standards, guidelines, best practices, and other transparency and confidence building measures regulating space activities. The Committee's important role for global space governance was recognised by the UN Secretary General in his report "Our Common Agenda" and is further illustrated by its growing membership. We welcome the new COPUOS members Angola, Bangladesh, Kuwait, Panama and Slovenia, and lend our support for the applications of Guatemala and Uzbekistan.

We believe that the space treaties developed in the UN framework constitute the cornerstone of international space law. This UN framework is complemented by space-related resolutions adopted by the UN General Assembly. As a responsible space actor, the European Union is exploring concrete ways by which the EU could, in compliance with its internal rules, accept the rights and obligations contained in the appropriate UN treaties on outer space.

We continue to actively promote the preservation of a safe, secure and sustainable space environment and the peaceful use of outer space. We stress the need to strengthen commitments to avoid potentially harmful interference with the peaceful exploration and use of outer space.

We underline the need to foster increased international cooperation, sustainability of space activities, and to preserve access to outer space, for present and future generations.

Mr. Chair,

The EU and its Member States look forward to participating and actively contributing to the work of COPUOS and its Subsidiary Bodies, including their working groups. We welcome the agreement on the terms of reference, methods of work and work plan of the Working Group on Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities (WG-LTS) at the recent 59th session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and look forward to making progress on the implementation of the 21 LTS Guidelines, capacity building and new challenges.

The EU and its Member States are already in the process of implementing the LTS Guidelines. Within the EU Space Surveillance and Tracking Support Framework, the EUSST Consortium is operational 24/7 providing spacecraft collision avoidance, re-entry and fragmentation services and developing additional space surveillance and tracking capabilities. Following the new EU Space Programme, further SST services such as the development of activities in preparation of space debris mitigation and remediation are envisaged. Considerable work is also underway in the EU Member States to implement the LTS Guidelines, for example through drafting or amending national space laws, space strategies and space policies on debris mitigation, international cooperation, as well as capacity building measures. Finally, a concrete EU approach for space traffic management (STM) is being laid out in order to pave the way for a possible multilateral STM approach in the framework of the UN.

Furthermore, the EU and its Member States underline the importance of implementing the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of COPUOS. We call on all UN Member States to avoid the creation of space debris, in order to preserve the safe, secure and sustainable use of outer space in a peaceful manner for present and future generations.

The EU and its Member States also welcome the recent agreement on the mandate, terms of reference, workplan and methods of work of the Working Group on Legal Aspects of Space Resource Activities. We stand ready to advance its work in the intersessional period and to support its Chair and Vice-Chair in their efforts to seek consensus on the outstanding issues as mentioned in the WG's report adopted during the 61st session of the Legal Subcommittee.

Mr. Chair,

Last year's agreement in this Committee on the Space2030 Agenda and its Implementation plan was yet another great achievement and a testimony that multilateralism in the space sector produces results. Space science, applications and technologies have a great potential to help address major challenges of our time particularly in tackling the global climate crisis, supporting economic recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic and achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We encourage all UN Member States to contribute to the implementation of the Space2030 Agenda as set out in last year's UN General Assembly Resolution 76/3. In this regard, the European Union Agency for the Space Programme (EUSPA) and UNOOSA signed a Memorandum of Understanding, in March this year, to help advance the use of space technologies, data and services, making them available to all, particularly developing states.

In 2019 the UN General Assembly proclaimed the Decade of Action to deliver on the SDGs, amongst which is the SDG13: „Climate Action“. The European Union's Earth Observation programme Copernicus is developing dedicated satellites on CO2 monitoring and in particular a data assimilation service to provide estimations of greenhouse gas emissions. This development is done in close coordination with the UNFCCC secretariat and will support the Global Stocktakes as of 2028 with systematic observation and the related analyses, as well as support the parties to the Climate Agreement in their policy implementation.

I use the opportunity to invite you to follow the EU technical presentation later today which will provide you with more information about these developments.

Thank you for your attention.