

Mr. Chair, Distinguished delegates,

Japan places great importance on the Legal Subcommittee as it provides a unique platform to discuss various legal aspects of the peaceful exploration and use of outer space. We would like to express our sincere appreciation to the former Chair of the Subcommittee, Professor AOKI Setsuko, and the current Chair Ms. Nomfuneko Majaja for their excellent work and dedication, which led to a fruitful session despite the unprecedented hybrid format of the Legal Subcommittee.

Mr. Chair, Distinguished delegates,

Japan would like to reiterate the importance of the rule of law in outer space to ensure safety, security and sustainability of outer space activities.

In this respect, we are pleased to highlight several achievements of the past session of the subcommittee. In 2021, Japan, Australia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Thailand and Viet Nam submitted a report on the status of the national space legislation of countries of the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum *via* the National Space Legislation Initiative (NSLI) study group. We believe the information contained in the report will greatly benefit the space community. Recently the second phase of the Initiative, covering the implementation of the Guidelines for the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities of the Committee was launched and supported by the APRSAF community, which has welcomed new participants from New Zealand, Singapore and Turkey. The Legal Subcommittee expressed its appreciation for the NSLI study group’s past efforts as well as its new study. Japan will continue to support regional efforts in space law.

The Subcommittee also welcomed the new UNOOSA Space Law for New Space Actors project. Considering the growing interest from Asia-Pacific countries in international space law, Japan decided to make a financial contribution to the project, which is to be used for capacity building in the establishment of national space legislation and in supporting these countries to conduct their space activities in a responsible and sustainable manner. Japan looks forward to continuing to cooperate with UNOOSA on this project.

Mr. Chair, Distinguished delegates,

Japan believes that the debate on the rules and norms of activities related to the exploration and utilization of space resources should confirm the sustainability of future space exploration missions by ensuring that the activities of all innovative players, including industry, are consistent with existing international norms. Discussions should evolve in a way that reflects current technology, the economic realities and needs of industry, as well as national space exploration programs. In this respect, Japan welcomes the establishment of the new working group under the agenda item on the general exchange of views on potential legal models for activities in exploration, exploitation and utilization of space resources. We also highly welcome and the leadership of Mr. Misztal as Chair and Mr. Freeland as Vice-Chair of the working group.

We would also like to take this opportunity to introduce Japan's recent developments related to space resources. In June 2021, the National Diet passed a bill concerning the exploration and development of space resources including by the private sector. In December 2021, the “*Act on the Promotion of Business Activities for the Exploration and Development of Space Resources*”, commonly known as the “*Space Resources Act*” of Japan, came into force. The Act defines an entities’ legal obligation when applying for a license to conduct exploration and development of space resources as well as resource acquisition of ownership

through international cooperation. The Act also sets rules to ensure that its enforcement does not interfere with the implementation of treaties and other international agreements concluded by the Government of Japan, and that the Act will not interfere unduly with the interest of other States in exercising their freedom in the exploration and use of outer space. Based on this Act, Japan is keen to establish internationally harmonized systems on the exploration and development of space resources in collaboration with other countries and international organizations.

Through the implementation of this act, Japan is committed to pursue our exploration and utilization of space resources in line with international norms and frameworks.

Mr. Chair, Distinguished delegates,

Last but not least, we would like to express Japan's respect for international norms on outer space and the important role played by the Legal Subcommittee to ensure the peaceful exploration and use of outer space.

Thank you for your attention.