

Japan Item 5 – “Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes”

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Mr. Chair, Distinguished delegates,

As space activities have diversified in recent years, Japan acknowledges the importance of upholding the rule of law, and calls upon all states to consider ways and means to maintain the safety, sustainability and stability of outer space. COPUOS can serve an essential role to this end. Japan believes COPUOS can also increase transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities, through its unique information-sharing platform, which can help improve mutual understanding of each other’s space activities.

Mr. Chair

Space debris is an increasingly serious threat to people’s daily lives as our reliance on space assets increases. In particular, the destruction of a satellite, which is known to generate large amounts of space debris indiscriminately, increases the risk of collisions between orbiting objects. In order to maintain a sustainable and stable use of outer space, Japan announced its commitment not to conduct destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite (DA-ASAT) missile testing last September. Japan welcomes the adoption of a General Assembly resolution last year, supported by more than 100 states, which calls upon all countries not to conduct such tests for the benefit of all. To put this initiative into practice, Japan will continue to encourage others to follow suit in cooperation with like-minded countries.

Japan is taking concrete steps towards tackling this issue through its domestic policy, legal instruments, technical standards, research and development. One such example is the Commercial Removal of Debris Demonstration program (CRD2), under which JAXA and Japanese industry are working together to develop technology for the removal of large-size space debris. The first phase of this project is currently underway, demonstrating the key aspects of ADR, including non-cooperative rendezvous, proximity operation and inspection of a discarded Japanese

rocket upper stage. Through sharing good practices and lessons learned from technological developments, Japan will promote international cooperation and rulemaking to enhance debris mitigation and remediation measures.

Another effective way to tackle space debris is to respect international norms. Given that our societies increasingly rely on space system, Japan believes that the implementation of the LTS and the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines is more important than ever.

At the agency level, JAXA established “JAXA Sustainable Space Principles” last year demonstrating its practical commitments to the long-term sustainability of outer space activities.

Mr. Chair,

Japan has actively participated in various space cooperation projects for the peaceful uses of outer space. International cooperation promotes mutual understanding, enhances transparency, and builds confidence among nations.

For more than 30 years, Japan, as an Indo-Pacific country, has led the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF), which is a successful initiative of regional peaceful space cooperation. The forum attracts participants from space agencies, governmental bodies, and international organizations, such as the United Nations, as well as private companies, universities and research institutes from over 30 countries. The open framework of APRSAF enables a wide range of entities to participate in various programs under the Forum.

The theme of last November’s APRSAF session was “Bridging Space Innovations Opportunities for Sustainable and Prosperous Future”. The session took place virtually and in person in Hanoi, Vietnam, where many participants met face to face for the first time in three years. This year, Indonesia and Japan will host the 29th session of APRSAF from September 19 to 22, under the theme “Accelerating Space Economies through Regional Partnership”. We invite all interested parties to participate in the meeting.

Thank you for your attention.