

Canadian Statement
Agenda Item 15 – Space2030 Agenda
Delivered by: Alexandra Toma, Global Affairs Canada

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
Sixty Sixth session, Vienna, 31 May – 9 June, 2023

Chair, Distinguished delegates,

In an era of rapid development and change in the space environment, Canada places a great importance and supports the efforts to ensure the continued peaceful and sustainable use of outer space by present and future space-faring countries for generations to come. Canada commends the essential technical and the legal work undertaken by COPUOS to support the Space 2030 Agenda. Many of Canada's space missions and activities contribute to the achievement of the UN SDGs. For instance, in addition to providing support for sustainable food production systems and strengthening our ability to adapt to climate change, Canada's RADARSAT Constellation Mission supports the International Charter on Space and Major Disasters, delivering critical data to disaster management authorities to allow for a quick response to catastrophic events.

The current space environment is ever evolving, and with an increasing number and diversity of players and activities, we must pragmatically orient our vision to embrace new opportunities while preserving the outer space environment. Canada welcomes the adoption of the Resolution of 76/3 by the General Assembly as a charter for a comprehensive, inclusive and strategically-oriented plan for COPUOS, which aims to strengthen international cooperation in the peaceful exploration and uses of outer space, in which space is seen as a major driver and contributor to the achievement of the UN SDGs.

Canada notes the recent release of the Secretary General's Policy Brief "For all Humanity: The Future of Outer Space Governance". Canada views this as a timely effort from the Secretary General as a long-term strategy for the future and recognition of the increased need for global governance to ensure the long-term sustainability of outer space activities that have become part of the fabric of modern society. Canada looks forward, as a COPUOS Member State, to contributing to this dialogue. Indeed, COPUOS continues to play a key role in the leadership of the preservation of outer space for peaceful purposes and we support the Chair of the STSC's non-paper regarding the Committee's proposed contribution to the UN SDG Summit later this year.

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Canada has a long-standing commitment to gender equality. Gender mainstreaming in space means recognizing the importance of including gender-based perspectives in our discussions, and that the benefits of outer space remaining a peaceful domain can provide significant gender equality gains across the world. Decades of research demonstrate various benefits of gender equality and quality education for women and girls, including faster poverty reduction, better health and well-being, and stronger economic growth, prosperity, and innovation.

Canada is pleased to be hosting with UNOOSA the 2023 Space4Women Expert Meeting from 30 Oct – 3 Nov 2023, in Montreal. Space4Women is a UNOOSA project that encourages women and girls to pursue STEM education and raises awareness about career opportunities and the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment in the space sector. This is particularly important because the space sector has been historically male-dominated, with women representing less than a third of all STEM professionals globally. The theme of the 2023 Space4Women Expert Meeting is to build capacity to promote and advance gender equality in the space sector. In this context, experts will discuss bold actions to achieve the targets set out in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, including removing barriers and bias to gender equality and the objective of a gender-balanced workforce by 2030. Experts attending this year's meeting will contribute to developing a Toolkit on effective gender mainstreaming strategies in the space sector that we intend to present at COPUOS next year.

Chair, distinguished delegates,

As we are embarking on invigorating changes to the outer space realities, COPUOS' role in defining the evolution and direction of outer space governance renewal is crucial. Canada is dedicated to working together with Member States, as well as with intergovernmental organizations, to contribute to this process. Canada's focus remains on maintaining a sustainable outer space environment through the implementation of the Space2030 Agenda, and achievement of the UN SDGs.