JAPAN 日本

Agenda Item 13 – "General exchange of views on the application of international law to small satellite activities"

Madam Chair,

Small satellites can be developed and manufactured at affordable cost by using relatively simple technology. They can be utilized in various areas, from educational purposes to technology demonstration, communication, and remote sensing, and have the potential to meet increasing demands of space technologies in various countries. With these characteristics, small satellites can provide emerging space countries a good opportunity to build their capacity in the utilization of space.

The Japanese Experiment Module "Kibo" of the International Space Station (ISS) with the unique capability of an airlock system and a robotic arm, is currently the only module in the ISS that is capable of deploying small satellites. The first deployment of CubeSats from Kibo was successfully conducted in October 2012. Since then, small satellites from Japan as well as from various countries' educational or research institutions from around the world have been deployed from Kibo. A distinct advantage of deploying small satellites from the ISS compared to a direct launch by a launch vehicle is that it could mitigate the launch requirements due to the lower vibration environment during the launch, therefore lowering the threshold of space activities.

For years, Japan has been cooperating with UNOOSA to promote a UN-Japan collaborative program known as "KiboCUBE". Launched in September 2015 as a capacity-building initiative between the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) and UNOOSA, the KiboCUBE program offers educational or research institutions from developing countries the opportunity to deploy CubeSats from Kibo. So far, CubeSats developed by teams from Kenya and Guatemala have been deployed from Kibo, and the experience and technology acquired from the development of these CubeSats are expected to be applied to the development of future satellites in both countries.

CubeSats developed by teams from Mauritius, Indonesia, Moldova, and SICA, which were selected for the third, fourth and fifth round of KiboCUBE will follow these missions. Japan looks forward to contributing to their space technology development, capacity building, and access to space.

Recognizing that KiboCUBE has become an essential tool for capacity building, UNOOSA and JAXA announced the extension of the program until the end of December 2024, adding a new educational opportunity named "KiboCUBE Academy" to the program. Currently, the sixth round of KiboCUBE is open for applications, and we look forward to working with the future selected teams.

Japan has been conducting small satellite activities in accordance with international norms. Regarding the registration of space objects, Japan established the "Manual Pertaining to the Notification for Registering Space Objects" in 2018. Regarding space debris mitigation, the "Act on Launching of Spacecraft, etc. and Control of Spacecraft"

refers to space debris mitigation measures, which are specified in the license requirements for the control of spacecraft.

We hope to promote responsible small satellite utilization through these endeavors, and are ready to contribute to the discussion on the legal aspects of these activities under this agenda item.

Thank you for your kind attention.