

STATEMENT BY THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

COPUOS Legal Subcommittee Meeting

(31 May-11 June 2021)

Thank you Madame Chair.

At the outset, we would like to join other delegations in welcoming you as the Chair of the Legal Subcommittee. We are confident that your experience and able guidance will bring this session to a fruitful conclusion. We would also like to express Turkey's full support for the success of the meeting.

We would also like to commend the Director of UNOOSA, Simonetta di Pippo and the Secretariat for the excellent preparation of the 60th session of the Legal Subcommittee.

Madame Chair,

In recent years, the space area has been developing rapidly and the states are becoming increasingly reliant on space-based activities for the well-being and sustainable socio-economic development of our societies. Communication, navigation, agriculture, education, climate change, environmental protection, global health and disaster management are just a few areas where space-based systems play an indispensable role for our common future. Moreover, we also witness the increase in the number of new actors such as private companies in space. These current developments bring new challenges and new regulatory needs to space activities.

In this regard, we support establishing a working group on potential legal models for activities in exploration, exploitation and utilization of space resources.

The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Outer Space (COPUOS) and its Subcommittees have played a pivotal role for the regulation of the space activities and laid down a sound legal basis. In view of the above mentioned developments in the space environment, we are confident that COPUOS will continue to serve as a unique forum for enhancing international cooperation, exchanging information among states and developing international norms and guidelines.

On this occasion, we would like to reiterate the importance of the states' commitment to the basic principles of the Outer Space Treaty.

Turkey, as a member of COPUOS, is a party to all the UN Space Treaties. We call upon those who have not yet done so to sign and ratify all five treaties in order to ensure a safe, secure, sustainable and peaceful outer space.

Madame Chair,

We would like to reiterate our support for the Space2030 Agenda Working Group. Turkey will continue to contribute constructively to the process.

Turkey attaches importance to the continuous utilization of outer space for the scientific, social and economic development of humankind. In this context, we support the efforts for the long term sustainability of outer space activities. We welcome the agreement on the composition of the Bureau of the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities reached at the 58th session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. We congratulate India for its election as the Chair and we assure the Chair of our support and cooperation.

Guided by the word and spirit of the international treaties, Turkey supports initiatives and exploration of non-binding measures aimed at addressing legal gaps and challenges toward achieving the long-term sustainability of outer space activities.

We firmly believe that any current and future international legal framework should not impose difficulties, unattainable standards or thresholds for countries in their space activities.

Madame Chair,

As improving its national space policy and technology, Turkey attaches particular importance to bilateral and regional cooperation in the space field.

One example in this regard is our fruitful cooperation with the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization (APSCO) and the United Nations/Turkey/APSCO Conference on Space Law and Policy which was held on 23-26 September 2019.

The Conference was attended by over 200 participants from 43 countries and 6 international organizations.

The conference organization by itself was a successful example of international cooperation involving two international organizations, the UN and APSCO, and the government of Turkey.

Turkish Space Agency and TUBITAK Space Technologies Research Institute took part in the organization of the conference.

The conference has also a historical value for Turkey as it is the first international event attended by the newly-established Turkish Space Agency.

Turkey and APSCO scheduled and organized a four-day training course on space law for almost 50 participants from APSCO member countries preceding the conference. The lectures and discussions among distinguished lecturers and participants during this training event paved the way for a fruitful interaction during the conference.

Another important aspect of the conference was the interactive break-out group session on the first day of the event. Five break-out groups discussed national legal and policy frameworks related to outer space activities. These groups facilitated fruitful discussions on five main subjects related to their national frameworks, namely the scope of application; authorization; supervision and registration; liability/insurance and space debris mitigation.

The government of Turkey is glad to have contributed to capacity-building in the area of space law and policy.

Madame Chair,

In conclusion, we would like to reiterate our support for COPUOS, UNOOSA and to you for a successful meeting.

Thank you.