



**Permanent Mission of Italy
International Organisations - Vienna**

**61th SESSION OF THE
LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE (LSC)**

**Statement by
Ambassador Alessandro Cortese**

Item 4: general exchange of views

Vienna, 28th of March 2022

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Thank you Madam Chair,

While aligning myself with the statement of the European Union, let me add a few remarks in my national capacity.

At the outset, let me express our full solidarity with Ukrainian colleague who will intervene shortly, with his Country and with the Ukrainian people. Italy condemns in the strongest terms Russia's unjustified and unprovoked aggression against Ukraine, which is a gross violation of international law and humanitarian principles. Italy calls on Russia to cease hostilities immediately.

Madam Chair, I first wish to congratulate you on your appointment as Chair of the Legal Sub-Committee and confirm the full support of my delegation. I also express our appreciation for the preparatory work carried out by the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) in the preparation of the session and take this opportunity to commend once again the excellent work and outstanding achievements reached by Dr. Simonetta Di Pippo, who left Vienna few days ago and, as you all know, served as Director during the past eight years, in promoting and enhancing the role of the Office. Italy is proud of the outstanding work she accomplished at the service of the UN. We look forward to work closely with and support her successor.

Italy believes that the Committee and its subsidiary bodies continue to be the best forum within the United Nations for comprehensive discussions of matters related to the peaceful uses of outer space, including the Moon and

other celestial bodies, and values the Legal Subcommittee as pivotal in promoting and strengthening the international legal regime governing outer space activities. We recognize the **invaluable role** played by the existing United Nations treaties on outer space, especially the **1967 Outer Space Treaty**. Under such regime, exploration and use of outer space have flourished. We also recognize the importance of implementing, at the national level, the principles enshrined in the United Nations treaties governing outer space.

At the same time, we recognize that **new legal challenges** are brought up by the impressive developments in space activities and the diversification of the actors involved. In this perspective, we welcome the initiative of the International Institute of Space Law (IISL) and the European Centre for Space Law (ECSL) to hold their traditional symposium on the theme “National laws and regulations to ensure space sustainability” in the afternoon of Tuesday, 5 April 2022.

Madam Chair,

Italy underlines the important role played by the Committee in the **consolidation of best practices through non-legally binding instruments**, such as the 2007 Orbital Debris Mitigation Guidelines and the 21 Guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities adopted in 2019. We take this opportunity to underline the relevance of the legal aspects of the above topics and the central role that this Legal Subcommittee could play in their thorough consideration.

Looking ahead at our deliberations during the current session, allow me to highlight some points particularly important for my delegation.

Italy attaches special relevance to the item on **capacity building in space law** and is especially committed to promote capacity-building initiatives with African countries. In the frame of the long-standing bilateral relations between Italy and Kenya, a cooperative project between the Italian Space Agency (ASI) and Sapienza University of Rome has been launched, named “Outer Space Law for International Cooperation and Sustainable Development”. Under this Project, several initiatives are ongoing. We would like to mention that the Italian Space Agency together with Sapienza University and the Kenyan Space Agency will jointly contribute to **The Global Conference on Space for Emerging Countries - GLEC 2022**, that will take place in Quito (Ecuador), under the auspices of the International Astronautical Federation (IAF), from 16 to 20 May 2022. It will focus on the importance of raising the awareness of policy makers and the need to consider space policy and law within space ecosystem.

Madam Chair,

Italy fully supports the work of the Legal Subcommittee on **space traffic management** (STM), acknowledging its growing importance due to the diversification of space actors on a global scale and the relevant increase of outer space activities. In view of the cross-cutting nature of Space Traffic Management, which entails legal/regulatory as well as technical aspects, Italy reiterates the invitation to think about the opportunity to extend the considerations over this item also to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, in order to profit from a comprehensive perspective. Moreover,

Italy commends the efforts undertaken by the European Union to develop a Space Traffic Management approach for Europe aimed at contributing to the international debate on this global challenge. In this respect, we wish to mention in particular the new Joint Communication adopted in Brussels on 15 February 2022 on Space Traffic Management. It outlines the EU STM approach, which encompasses all aspects including requirements, capabilities, regulatory and external engagements, also in the perspective of opening the way for a possible multilateral Space Traffic Management approach in the framework of the UN.

Madam Chair,

Italy is experiencing an increasing involvement of private operators in **small-satellite activities**. In this respect, we acknowledge that small satellites can be used for a wide variety of purposes including scientific, education, technology demonstration and other applications. We therefore confer particular attention to the general exchange of views on the application of international law to small-satellite activities, from which we can highly benefit for our on-going national developments.

To conclude, my delegation has always supported the inclusion on the agenda of this Sub Committee of an item on potential legal models for **space resources** exploration and utilization. Therefore, we especially welcome **the establishment of the dedicated Working Group**. We take this opportunity to commend the efforts pursued by Prof. Andrej Mitzal and Prof. Steven Freeland, as co-moderators of the informal consultations process which successfully brought us to that goal, and to congratulate them

for their appointment as Chair and Vice of the Working Group. We also express our appreciation to the last proposal set out in the document “Second Further Revised Co-Chairs’ Five Year Workplan”, which encompasses several suggestions emerged during the intersessional meeting of March 2022. The final adoption of the workplan will allow to start the deliberations of the Working Group during the current session, to which our delegation is ready to contribute.

In this framework, we wish to recall that in 2020 Italy signed the **Artemis Accords**, which provide non-legally binding guidance for space exploration and establish a set of common principles grounded in the Outer Space Treaty, to increase the safety of operations, reduce uncertainty, and promote the sustainable and beneficial exploration and use of space. Seventeen countries from four different regional groups are now part of the Accords. My delegation is committed to share our experience in implementing the Artemis Accords within COPUOS, with UN Member States and the international space community.

Thank you.