

*Sixty-first session of the Legal Subcommittee
of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
Vienna, (28 March - 8 April 2022)*

**STATEMENT BY THE
UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR OUTER SPACE AFFAIRS (UNOOSA)**

Delivered by Mr. Niklas Hedman, Acting Director, UNOOSA

Madame Chair, distinguished delegates,

As delegations are aware, the Office for Outer Space Affairs continues to discharge the responsibilities of the Secretary-General under the treaties and principles on outer space. This is separate from the depository function and deals with the substantive responsibilities assigned to the Secretary-General.

With regard to the United Nations Register of Objects Launched into Outer Space, the Office is pleased to note that, in 2021, 1,895 functional and 41 non-functional space objects were registered with the Secretary-General by Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Japan, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mauritius, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Spain, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay and the United States of America. Additionally, the Office received re-entry notifications for 172 space objects and additional information for 25 space from Denmark, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Luxembourg, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Russian Federation, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The Office would like to further note that to date, in 2022, the Office has received registrations for another 325 functional and non-functional space objects from Argentina, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Morocco, New Zealand, the Philippines, the Russian Federation, Tunisia, the United Kingdom and the United States.

As States will realise, this is a significant increase of annual space object registration over previous years. In fact, the number of functional space objects registered in 2021 is 1.5 times that launched in 2020 and it is clear that the number of objects launched and, subsequently, registered will continue to increase. The Office would like to take this opportunity to note delays in its processing of submissions. The Office is actively working to meet the present challenges posed by handling such a large volume within its existing resources and would like to thank States of registry for their assistance in the timely resolution of related issues.

To ensure the efficient processing of registration submissions in the future, the Office is pleased to inform delegates that it is working on a multi-year development of an online registration portal. The portal will not only allow States to upload registration information on their space objects, but will also provide each State of registry with a “dashboard” of the status

of its submissions. The portal will also automate time-consuming tasks such as conversion of registration data into the standard United Nations document format presently used for disseminating such information and will also allow the Office to make the full Register dataset available online.

As noted previously, this is a multi-year project. Presently, the Office is working to develop the basic pipeline allowing States to submit registration information, with the intent of showing delegates a developmental version of this module at the 2023 session of this Subcommittee. In parallel to this IT development, the Office will also be seeking input from States of registry on what additional functionality they believe would be beneficial to the registration process. The Office will continue to report on this matter at future meetings of the Committee and its Subcommittees.

Concerning other notifications in 2021, Luxembourg provided a notification on the establishment of its national space object registry in accordance with Article II of the Registration Convention. Additionally, the Office disseminated a notification by China under Article V of the Outer Space Treaty, notifications by the Netherlands and the United Kingdom under Article XI of the Outer Space Treaty, and a notification by Japan under Article V of the Rescue Agreement.

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 62/101, in late 2021, the Office circulated a request for contact details national registration focal points. The Office would like to thank States who have provided information and invites States who have not yet responded, to do so.

The Office also continues to serve as the United Nations focal point on re-entry of nuclear-powered space objects for the Joint Radiation Emergency Management Plan of the International Organizations.

The summary above on the status of formal actions under the treaties and principles demonstrates the importance of further enhancing the application and implementation of obligations under the United Nations instruments on outer space. The Office would like to thank States and intergovernmental organizations for their assistance in the fulfilment of those responsibilities under the treaties and principles on outer space.

Thank you for your attention.
