

**Statement by ITU Secretary-General Houlin Zhao at Sixty-First Session of the Legal Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space**

MARCH 28, 2022

Madam Director, Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee.

The mission of ITU, as the UN specialized agency for ICTs, is threefold: to allocate global radio spectrum and satellite orbits, to develop the technical standards that ensure networks and technologies interconnect seamlessly, and to strive to improve access to and use of ICTs to underserved communities worldwide.

Space technologies have a major role to play in achieving these objectives. They will be central to the agenda of ITU's next World Radiocommunication Conference set to take place in the United Arab Emirates at the end of 2023.

WRC-23 will address space technologies such as Earth stations in motion, non-geostationary satellite constellations, and narrow-band satellite transmissions for the Internet of Things. It will update the Radio Regulations, the international treaty governing the use of radio frequencies worldwide and in outer space.

As space technologies evolve, concerns are being raised about space sustainability—with issues like the impact of large constellations of non-geostationary satellites on radioastronomy, or the risks of space debris on the safe and effective operation of low-Earth orbits.

ITU remains committed to supporting efforts towards a more sustainable space environment and the implementation of the COPUOS Guidelines for the Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities.

I applaud Director Simonetta Di Pippo for her leadership—and commend the work of this committee in providing a trusted, global platform for addressing issues ranging from the definition and delimitation of outer space to the legal aspects of space traffic management.

I reaffirm the importance of cooperation between ITU and the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs, as highlighted by the joint ITU-UNOOSA document on regulatory matters concerning small satellites.

Let us continue to work together to develop more sustainable, inclusive and diverse human activities in outer space.

Thank you.

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