

Madam Chairperson, Your Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Japanese delegation, I am pleased to address the 61st session of the Legal Subcommittee of COPUOS. First of all, I wish to stress that the Japanese delegation will support the chair and work together with other Member States to achieve tangible results through our discussions. I would also like to express our sincere gratitude to Professor AOKI Setsuko, the former chair of this Subcommittee, for her outstanding work during her chairpersonship.

Madam Chair,

Let me first refer to the current situation in Ukraine. Russia’s aggression against Ukraine seriously infringes upon the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine. This unilateral attempt to change the *status quo* by force shakes the very foundations of the international order in Europe, and in every corner of the globe. The series of decisions and acts of Russia are clear and flagrant violations of international law and the United Nations Charter. Japan condemns in the strongest terms Russia’s acts of aggression. Russia must immediately stop the aggression, withdraw its forces back to Russia, and come back to the path of diplomacy.

In this context, Japan does not support the proposed establishment of a new regional centre for space science and technology education, hosted by the Roscosmos Corporate Academy, which was referred to in UNGA resolution 76/76.

Madam Chair,

Japan recognizes the importance of the rule of law in outer space. To ensure the safety, security, sustainability and stability of outer space, Japan reaffirms the importance of the United Nations treaties, and emphasizes the need to use various fora, including this Subcommittee itself, to call upon Member States to ratify them and to implement them properly.

Also, a number of principles, declarations and guidelines for the peaceful uses of outer space in the form of UN General Assembly resolutions have been developed in the Committee since the early 1980s. Japan acknowledges that these resolutions have played an important role to complement the existing treaties and we attach great importance to these resolutions.

Another important non-legally binding instrument on outer space is the Guidelines on Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities (LTS Guidelines). Japan encourages states and international organizations to implement the guidelines to the greatest extent possible. While we value implementation, we also understand that some of the guidelines need to be further elaborated. In this regard, Japan will continue to support the efforts of the LTS 2.0 WG bureau during the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of COPUOS.

Madam Chair,

With regard to national legislation relevant to the peaceful exploration and use of outer space, Japan established the Basic Space Act in 2008. In accordance with the Act, Japan formulates and publishes the Basic Plan on Space Policy as a comprehensive space policy of Japan. The current Basic Plan was updated in 2020. Consistently from the first edition, it contains a section referring to the promotion of international cooperation of Japan’s space activities. In 2016, Japan enacted two national space acts regarding non-governmental space activities and remote sensing data utilization. Furthermore, in December 2021, the “*Act on the Promotion of Business Activities for the Exploration and Development of Space Resources*”, commonly known as the “*Space Resources Act*” of Japan, came into force. Through the implementation of this act, Japan is committed to pursue the exploration and utilization of space resources in consistent with international norms and frameworks. Japan also established the national guidelines for on-orbit servicing last November. We believe that this guideline will facilitate "end-of-life service" and active debris removal provided by Japanese companies.

Madam Chair,

Japan acknowledges the importance of international cooperation in ensuring the safety, security, sustainability, and stability of outer space. In this regard, information sharing and exchanges on national space legislation are important for enhancing space activities pursuant to the treaties and other international norms. The “National Space Legislation Initiative (NSLI)” under the activities of Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF) provides a regional opportunity to contribute to such objectives.

This Initiative is open to the national governmental organizations of the Asia-Pacific countries. Under this initiative, a Study Group consisting of practitioners in space policy and law from nine countries, namely Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Thailand, and Viet Nam, conducted a joint study to draft a report on the status of national space legislation. This report was jointly submitted by the nine countries to the 60th session of the Legal Subcommittee of COPUOS, and is available on the LSC website. With the wide support of the APRSAF community, the second phase of the Initiative has launched and welcomed new participants from New Zealand, Singapore and Turkey. As the host country of the APRSAF and a participating country of the Initiative, Japan will actively promote the activities of the Initiative to further enhance the development of national space legislation in the Asia-Pacific region.

Furthermore, in May 2021, during the 60th session of the Legal Subcommittee of the UNCOPUOS, the Government of Japan and the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) announced their cooperation on UNOOSA’s “Space Law for New Space Actors” project. Through this cooperation with UNOOSA, Japan supports capacity-building of emerging spacefaring nations in the Asia-Pacific region to draft national space laws and regulations in line with international space law.

Thank you for your kind attention.