

Czech Republic, Item 3

Madam Chair,

It is my pleasure to congratulate you on behalf of the Czech delegation on your chairmanship of the Legal Subcommittee.

Also, I would like to express thanks to the Office of Outer Space Affairs and the Secretariat for their excellent work and continuous support.

My delegation fully aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and its Member states, including the condemnation of Russia's military aggression against Ukraine.

We also welcome new members of COPUOS: Guatemala and Uzbekistan.

Madam Chair,

We would like to mention that today is the anniversary of the birth of the Czech lawyer Vladimír Mandl, who is considered to be the author of the first comprehensive survey of space law.

The Czech Republic emphasizes that the UN space treaties constitute the cornerstone of international space law and that all activities in outer space must be carried out in line with the international legal framework.

The Czech Republic, as one of the founding members of COPUOS and a country with a long tradition of international space law, supports a multilateral approach toward the use of outer space. COPUOS is a unique multilateral body tasked to regulate the legal aspects of space activities. We believe that the development of international space law should be realized primarily through this multilateral forum and initiatives undertaken outside this forum must be implemented and interpreted fully in accordance with the existing international law, because it reflects the binding consensus of the international community.

Madam Chair,

Regarding item 10 the Czech Republic welcomes the initiation of the exchange of views on potential legal models for space resources activities. We appreciate the establishment and the work of the Working Group on Legal Aspects of Space Resource Activities and we thank the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Working Group for their intersessional work providing a useful basis for further discussions. We are confident that the Working Group provides a valuable opportunity to review the existing legal framework for space resources activities and to recommend principles developing this framework. Undoubtedly, it will be a difficult task. However, let's seize this momentum and ensure that the working group successfully fulfills its mandate by 2026.

Madam Chair,

Now I would like to turn to agenda item 11 concerning space debris mitigation. The Czech government has been traditionally committed to this topic. As one of the initiators of the compendium of space debris mitigation and remediation measures we welcome the existing contributions to this valuable database. At the same time, we take this opportunity to encourage other Members States and other relevant stakeholders to provide information on their practice in this area and thus develop the database further.

The topics concerning space debris mitigation, application of international law to small-satellite activities, as well as other topics on the agenda of the Legal Subcommittee indicate the importance of ensuring the long-term sustainability of activities in outer space, which should take into consideration the need for transparency, information sharing and proper registration of space objects and aim at serious deliberation of adequate space traffic management, other legal implications of cutting edge technologies, as well as capacity building in space law. In this regard, closer cooperation between STSC and LSC seems to be essential to find consensus on globally acceptable space traffic management governance and other related issues.

Madam Chair,

Last but not least, let me mention that the Czech Republic endorses the initiative Dark and Quiet Skies currently addressed by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. This topic is essential and the Czech government is well aware of the fact that outer space activities influence astronomy in a significant way. We are of the opinion that the protection of dark and quiet skies deserves a special attention and should become an integral part of thinking about sustainability in outer space.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that the Czech Republic remains committed to the tasks of the Legal Subcommittee and is ready to contribute to the proper development of international law to ensure transparent, fair and sustainable exploration, exploitation and use of outer space.

Thank you, Madam Chair.