



**Statement by South Africa**  
**The 62<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Legal Sub-committee**  
**(20 March–31 March 2023)**  
**United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space**

**Delivered by Ambassador RS MOLEKANE**

**PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**  
**Agenda Item 3: General Exchange of Views (GEV)**

**Madam Chair**

I am pleased to see you chairing the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the Legal Subcommittee and wish to assure you of my delegation's full support. I also wish to extend our gratitude to Mr Niklas Hedman, the Acting Director and the Secretariat from the Office for Outer Space Affairs for their continued support.

At the onset, my delegation associates itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the Africa Group and the Group of 77 and China respectively.

**Madam Chair,**

South Africa affirms the peaceful use and exploration of outer space for the benefit of all countries and without discrimination to economic or scientific development. We look forward to hearing the progress made by Member States in the implementation of their regulatory frameworks to ensure the effective application of relevant, international norms, standards and practices for the safe conduct of outer space activities.

South Africa, being a mineral endowed country, has great interest in participating in the Working Group on Legal Aspects of Space Resource Activities and welcomes the Five-Year Work Plan and Methods of Work of the Working Group. We look forward to the finalization of the mandate and the scope of the Working Group.

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South Africa would like to update the Subcommittee on the status of our draft Space Industry Regulatory legislation, which takes cognisance of all treaties South Africa is party to, specifically compliance issues such as insurance conditions to minimise the vulnerability of the state, whilst accommodating the growing space industry. The draft legislation covers both new and broad regulatory areas which are foreseen in future space activities. We are pleased to inform that we are in the final stages of processing for approval.

In this regard, the new draft legislation will take into account rapidly evolving technological developments to keep pace with the growing space value chain. The South African Council for Space Affairs (SACSA) strives to ensure a safe and responsible technology development regulatory environment to ensure that national licensing activities are aligned with treaties and non-binding guidelines.

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## **Chairperson**

The Council has worked tirelessly with relevant role players to issue the license for the first commercial South African-built satellite, AGRISAT-1, which was launched on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January 2023 in Cape Canaveral, USA. The process tested South Africa's regulatory and legislative capabilities.

AGRISAT-1 will provide the forestry industry with high-quality data. These images will deliver valuable information for applications such as harvest monitoring, seasonal planning and assessments that analyze information such as soil moisture, yield prediction and biomass levels. Data will support growers with reducing carbon dioxide emissions and help them to develop sustainable agricultural methods. Such information will have important environmental benefits for the planet, such as helping to maintain biodiversity and to prevent natural habitats from being diminished for crop growth.

## **Chair,**

International space law is the cornerstone of space governance. Building requisite capacity in space activities will help promote international development and cooperation in space activities. It will assist in building both national and regional expertise for emerging space nations. In this regard, South Africa was honoured to organise the virtual 2022 Africa Round of the Manfred Lachs Space Law Moot Competition, which provides a platform for students, academics, legal professionals and the space community across Africa. South Africa is pleased to see the national coordination in other countries, such as in Nigeria through National Space and

Development Research Authority, (NASDRA), which brought in a huge number of teams, and we encourage other African countries to take up this initiative to build regional capacity on space-related issues.

**Chair,**

South Africa through our National Space Agency, SANSA, is currently revitalising its cooperation agreements with other African Space Agencies such as the Egyptian Space Agency and the Algerian Space Agency to implement projects relating to capacity building in space technology development and promoting space science and technology policies and associated applications alongside the legal framework.

**Madam Chair**

South Africa also looks forward to the Symposium on the Legal Aspects of a Dark and Quiet Sky to have a better understanding of the legal processes necessary to better protect our night skies from light pollution and for the benefit of future generations.

In conclusion, I thank you for your kind attention and my delegation looks forward to a productive meeting.

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