

Agenda item 3 – **General Exchange of Views**

Mme Chair, distinguished delegates,

Mme Chair, good afternoon, thank you for giving me the floor.

Let me start by thanking you, Mme Chair, for your guidance of this Sub-Committee. I would also like to repeat our thanks and great appreciation to Mr Niklas Hedman and to the Secretariat on their excellent work in preparation of this session. The Netherlands welcomes the new members to this session of the Sub-Committee, Guatemala and Uzbekistan.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands aligns itself with the statement of the European Union, and would like to state the following in its national capacity.

My delegation would like to start by stressing the importance of the work of this Sub-Committee. The Legal Sub-Committee is entrusted to promote and develop the legal regime applicable to Outer Space, that is the Five UN treaties on Outer Space. Together with the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, the Legal Sub-Committee is an expert committee, with the important task of monitoring, discussing and promoting the legal standards applicable to activities in and related to Outer Space. With that in mind, my delegation would hope that the discussions in this Sub-Committee can be focused on the development of international law in outer space, and not on issues that do not belong to this Sub-Committee.

My Government would like to take this opportunity to mark the issues that are of particular importance, and concern, to the Kingdom of the Netherlands. These are the issues of Registration of Space activities, Space Debris Mitigation and Remediation Measures, Space Traffic Management, the Future Role and Method of Work of the Committee, and the Potential Legal Models for the Exploration, Exploitation and Use of Space Resources.

In the context of the latter, **space resources activities**, I would like to refer to the **crp** with number A/AC.105/C.2/20/23.CRP.6 by Australia, Austria and the Netherlands compiling existing norms, principles, guidelines and concepts related to space resources activities. The Netherlands would in particular draw the attention of the members of this Sub-Committee to the Building Blocks, as adopted by the The Hague International Space Resources Governance Working Group. These have been submitted to the Committee by Luxembourg and the Netherlands in a working paper at the 59<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee. We would like to invite the members of the Committee to take these Building Blocks into consideration in our discussions on the development of a legal framework for the regulation of space resources activities.

With respect to the **Status and application of the five United Nations treaties on outer space**, my delegation wishes to thank Germany and Luxembourg for drafting the non-paper on *Dedicated Tools and Practices for Enhanced Information Sharing*. We are happy to co-sponsor this paper. The sharing of information about space activities is crucial for the safe and sustainable use of outer space, and the avoidance of conflict. In that regard, the Netherlands notes that the practice of registration under the five UN Treaties on Outer Space has not kept up with developments. There is a need for the development of a unified, and easily accessible, format for the registration of all peaceful activities in outer space, including activities other than launching an object into outer space from earth.

With respect to **space traffic management**, the Kingdom of the Netherlands would like to take this opportunity again to express its support for the Long Term Sustainability Guidelines and, under this

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agenda item, in particular with respect to space traffic management. Space traffic management remains a topic that requires our urgent attention, and my Government continues to support the identification of the legal aspects of space traffic management.

The Netherlands supports international guidelines to promote the safe and sustainable use of Outer Space, including the Long Term Sustainability Guidelines, the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines, and standards developed by the International Organisation for Standardisation and the European Coordination for Space Standardization. The Netherlands also welcomes the EU Approach for Space Traffic Management and the Unions efforts done towards this global challenge, especially the focus on the establishment of regulatory aspects, and the view on global cooperation.

The Netherlands stimulates its satellite operators to comply with these guidelines and standards in their missions. In line with its national space law, my Government prefers a approach that ensures technological neutrality, in particular in view of the rapid development of space technology.

Space Traffic Management has an inherently geopolitical character. Therefore, it is addressed most effectively and efficiently through a global approach.

My delegation wishes to note that the issue of space traffic management is closely connected with the notion of safe and sustainable use of outer space. Without the development of effective space traffic management, through regulation and monitoring, the use of outer space by future generation cannot be ensured. To ensure the safe and sustainable use of outer space, today as well as in future, a comprehensive approach is required. Therefore, my delegation would invite the Members of this Committee to consider to join the topics of Space Traffic Management, Space Debris Mitigation, and Small Satellites. This would enhance the efficiency of this Committee, by allowing a comprehensive approach, and the development of guidelines, best practices, norms and rules that, together, would enhance the safe and sustainable use of outer space.

Finally, the Netherlands stands with Ukraine. The Netherlands condemns in the strongest possible terms the unprovoked and continuing act of aggression by Russia. It is a blatant and serious breach of a peremptory norm of international law that all States must abide by. As also requested by the International Court of Justice, the Netherlands calls on the Russian Federation immediately to cease its aggression and unconditionally to withdraw its troops and any military or irregular armed units which may be directed or supported by it, from the territory of Ukraine, and to respect the latter's territorial integrity and political independence. In the course of Russia's aggression, numerous atrocities have been committed causing immeasurable suffering, in violation of international humanitarian law.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands will deliver its statements under agenda items nine, 11, and 15.

For now, Mme Chair, distinguished delegates. I thank you for your attention.