

New Zealand Statement

Agenda Item Three: General exchange of views

Sixty-Second Session of the Legal Subcommittee

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

20-31 March 2023

Thank you Chair

Tēnā tatou katoa. We would like thank you for your continued efforts in leading these important discussions and assure you of New Zealand's full support in your endeavours. We would also like to recognise the work of the secretariat. We are pleased to be back here with you all and are looking forward to our continued discussion.

Chair

In a committee focused on the peaceful use of space, it is important to emphasise that peace in space is fundamentally linked with respect for international law here on Earth. I reiterate New Zealand's condemnation of Russia's illegal war of aggression in Ukraine, which represents a grave and ongoing breach of international law. Our thoughts remain with the people of Ukraine, who continue to be severely impacted by the hardships of war.

Chair

New Zealand is committed to developing space policy and regulation that promotes the peaceful, safe, and sustainable use of space. As we continue to grow our space sector, we emphasise the importance of open access to space, of facilitating innovation and technology development, and of an open and transparent approach. As a host for commercial launch operations, New Zealand places great emphasis on being a responsible space faring nation.

Chair

We recognise the importance of ensuring national approaches and regulatory regimes remain up to date and fit for purpose, especially in the context a of rapidly evolving outer space context and technological developments. Effective and up to date rules will help enable, including through cooperative efforts, the very many exciting and impactful capabilities we see emerging in outer space, as well as the wide range of critical outcomes these capabilities support here on Earth.

In line with this, last year we completed a review of our national space legislation and regulatory framework, implemented in 2017, and we are working on updating our legislation to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

We are now also in the final stages of developing a National Space Policy. This will outline New Zealand's values and objectives for our space activities which, along with our international obligations, will inform the development of future space policies.

Chair

New Zealand looks forward to discussions on potential multilateral rules, norms or standards for activities in the exploration, exploitation and utilisation of space resources. We recognise the many benefits of these activities, including for enabling the deeper exploration of our solar system and beyond.

To realise these benefits, such activities need to be carried out in a safe, sustainable, responsible and peaceful manner, and which gives effect to existing international obligations in a way that ensures transparency and clarity.

In addition to existing international law, we recognise the need for more detailed rules to ensure the safety and sustainability of these activities, including protection of the space environment. We see the benefits of a multilateral approach to these issues and the potential for non-binding instruments and fora – such as the Artemis Accords – to guide the activities of States and to be a useful complement in supporting the development of rules and norms in this regard.

We look forward to the opportunity to discuss this important issue at length as part of agenda item fifteen of this session.

Chair

Finally, and separately to our work here, we wish to acknowledge the work underway in Geneva at the Open Ended Working Group on Reducing Space Threats. Articulating what constitutes responsible behaviour by States in outer space is critical to reducing the risk of conflict and supporting the safe and sustainable use of outer space.

Thank you Chair