



**Permanent Mission of Italy  
International Organisations - Vienna**

**57<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE  
SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL SUBCOMMITTEE  
(STSC)**

**Statement by  
Ambassador Alessandro Cortese**

Item 4: general exchange of views

**Vienna, 3 February 2020**

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Madame Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

Italy fully aligns itself with the statement of the European Union, and I wish to add a few remarks in my national capacity.

Let me first congratulate you, Madame Chair, for presiding over this session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, and thank Director Di Pippo and the staff of the Office for Outer Space Affairs for the excellent preparation of the meeting. I also would like to welcome the Dominican Republic, Rwanda and Singapore as new members of the Committee.

Madame Chair,

2020 is a particularly relevant year for the Committee and its Subcommittees. After the adoption of the preamble and twenty-one guidelines for the **long-term sustainability of outer space activities**, we have the collective responsibility to follow up on the success achieved last year and make sure that this contributes to preserving outer space as an operationally stable and safe environment, especially in relation to the significant challenge posed by space debris. We therefore need to move to the implementation of the agreed guidelines, as well as ensure a smooth start for the newly-created working group, in accordance with the mandate set forth by the Committee. In this regard, we thank those countries which have presented proposals for the bureau and the terms of reference of the working group, and we stand ready to engage constructively in the discussions.

Moving from the sustainability of outer space to the role of space as a driver for sustainable development on Earth, we underline the importance of finalizing, before the next session of COPUOS, the **Space2030 Agenda** and implementation plan, as mandated by the General Assembly. Italy remains fully committed to this process, which will ultimately highlight the tremendous impact that space-related technologies and applications have on sustainable development and on our daily lives.

At the national and international level, Italy is already engaged in several activities along the four pillars of the future Space2030 Agenda, and I will make a few examples on a couple of them.

In the field of **Space Diplomacy**, since 2016 the Italian Space Agency, in cooperation with the International Astronautical Federation, has organized, on an annual basis, the International Space Forum. This initiative is aimed at increasing the involvement of universities and scientific institutions in decision-making processes related to space activities, also with a view to facilitating the dissemination and sharing of space knowledge, in particular for the benefit of developing countries. Following the regional chapters dedicated to Africa and Latin America, the Mediterranean chapter was held last September in Reggio Calabria (Italy). The next edition is expected to take place in Malaysia and will be devoted to South-East Asian countries.

The initiative of the International Space Forum has already produced tangible results. In particular, as a follow up to the second edition held in Nariobi, the Italian Space Agency, in collaboration with the Kenya Space Agency and with the support of UNOOSA, organized, last December, the first Training Course on Remote Sensing, Space Sciences and Space Policy at the Broglio Space Centre in Malindi. Young students from ten African Countries attended the course, which confirms Italy's commitment to promoting **capacity building** in the space sector.

With a dynamic and competitive space industry, which features a complete supply chain of products and services covering the upstream, midstream and downstream sectors, Italy is also particularly interested in the **Space Economy** pillar. Nowadays we cannot talk about exploration and use of outer space without acknowledging the growing role played by the private sector. Italy is therefore committed to further enabling space activities, also through a strengthened governance framework following the reform of 2018, which created an "Inter-ministerial Committee for Space and aerospace-related policies", under the leadership of the Prime Minister.

Madame Chair,

The last few weeks and months have been significant for Italy's contribution to space science and exploration, and I shall mention just a few accomplishments. Further information is provided in document A/AC.105/1211 and in technical presentations that the Italian delegation will deliver in the next few days.

On 20 July 2019 - a day which marked the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Apollo 11 lunar landing - the Italian astronaut **Luca Parmitano**, together with a Russian and a US colleagues, left Earth to reach the International Space Station for his second time. After more than 6 months in orbit, during which period he has also been the first Italian to command the ISS, Luca Parmitano will return to Earth in a few days. His mission, called **Beyond**, has included a number of scientific experiments, including six selected by the Italian Space Agency. Parmitano's mission provides yet another confirmation of Italy's strong engagement in space exploration, both robotic and human.

In the field of **earth observation**, last December 18 the first satellite of Italy's **Cosmo-SkyMed** Second Generation was successfully launched. Cosmo-SkyMed features state-of-the-art technologies and engineering solutions, in particular synthetic aperture radars, capable of observations under any weather or light conditions, day or night. The second generation builds on the success of the four existing satellites of the first generation, which have proven invaluable in monitoring the environment and contributing to the management of natural disasters and anthropogenic risks.

When it comes to the upcoming events, Italy looks forward to the launch of **Solar Orbiter**, an ESA mission, in partnership with NASA, which will perform a close-up study of our Sun. Italy's contribution consists in particular of the Multi-Element Telescope for Imaging and Spectroscopy (METIS), which will monitor the outer solar corona and the coronal mass ejection activity, and of the Data Processing Unit of the Solar Wind Analyzer, a key in situ instrument which measures the solar wind properties.

Madame Chair.

At a time when space activities are diversifying and many new actors are getting increasingly engaged in space ventures, we believe the Committee, its Subcommittees and the Office on Outer Space Affairs continue to play a critical role in promoting international cooperation. As a long-standing space-faring nation and a founding member of the Committee in 1959, I can ensure that Italy remains fully committed to a **cooperative approach to advance the exploration and use of outer space**. Only through cooperation will we be able to fully reap the benefits of space science and technology while ensuring that space activities continue to be conducted for peaceful purposes.

Thank you for your attention.