



Ministry of Economic Affairs
and Employment of Finland

**Finland's Statement in the 58th session of the Technical and Scientific Subcommittee of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
Virtual meeting, 19 – 30 April 2021**

Agenda Item 3 – General exchange of views

Thank you Madame Chair, Good afternoon.

First, I would like to thank you, Madame Chair for chairing this 58th session of Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, and Director Simonetta Di Pippo and the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, for the continuous work and excellent organization of this meeting, which allows for a continued dialogue and exchange among the Member States of the Committee, while physical meetings are not possible.

We recognize the importance of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee as an indispensable forum for the exchange of views on scientific and technical aspects of outer space activities and for fostering international cooperation in this regard, and wish to actively contribute in the work of this session.

Madame Chair, distinguished delegates,

Finland fully aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union (EU), and would like to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

International cooperation forms a firm fundament of Finnish space activities. Finland is a member of the European Space Agency (ESA) since 1995, and the Finnish industry and research organisations participate actively in various ESA programmes. In this framework, also the EU Space Programme and other multilateral and bilateral collaborations continue to have an important role in the Finnish space programme.

Finland has a particular interest in small satellite activities. There are currently eleven satellites registered in the national registry. All of these have been launched in the past three years. These satellites include both missions by scientific institutions as well as commercial companies.

Finland is an Arctic country and one of the eight member states in the Arctic Council. Finland sees the Arctic as one important area of regional collaboration. Sustainable growth of the Arctic area can be ensured through active development and use of space infrastructure that can serve the specific needs of the area.

Finland's national climate targets are ambitious: Finland will be climate neutral by 2035 and climate negative soon after that. Finland promotes the role of space solutions in combatting climate change. Space data plays a key role in monitoring the environmental changes and the key variables such as greenhouse gases as well as reacting to natural disasters. For example, promising results have been achieved in Finland in using satellite data to complement in situ data for water quality monitoring. Satellite-based monitoring can enable more comprehensive results and allows coverage also on remote regions.

Finland is fully committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals that will steer the promotion of sustainable development for the next decade. Finland supports the work on furthering the Space2030 agenda, and recognises the importance of space science and technology for the achievement of the goals and targets set by the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

The issue concerning safety and sustainability of space activities is a growing concern to all space actors and the society. Finland considers that the development of a global Space Traffic Management regime that contributes towards creation, development and implementation of common international rules that take into consideration changes in the sector is timely and essential. An effective space situational awareness capacity, including space weather, space surveillance and tracking and near earth objects capabilities, is vital in supporting these aims. We are currently drafting a national space situational awareness strategy and are mapping our national operational and research capabilities, as well as the possibilities in international cooperation in this regard.

Finally Madame Chair,

Finland welcomes the adoption of the preamble and 21 guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities by the Committee in 2019, and their subsequent endorsement by the General Assembly, with great appreciation.

The themes of sustainable use of outer space and sustainable growth of the space sector, in particular the NewSpace economy, are the key priorities of the Finnish space policy. We consider that COPUOS is the right multilateral forum to address topics relevant to safe and sustainable space activities. In this respect, we also welcome the initiative of the International Astronomical Union to bring in the discussion at COPUOS the issue relating to Dark and Quiet Skies for Science and Society.

Coupled with the NewSpace reality, the increased number of actors and objects, it means that the application, implementation and enforcement of the LTS guidelines and space debris mitigation measures at national level are in the key position to ensure the protection of the outer space environment, as well as the long-term sustainability of outer space activities. Finland has started to work with the national implementation of the adopted guidelines, and will report on that in more detail under agenda item 13. In addition to practical implementation, we consider that it is important to engage in international discussion on policy and legal issues to support coherent development of the norms contained in the LTS guidelines through unified reporting practices on national implementation.

Finland gives its full support in the process of finalising the organisation of the LTS working group and intends to actively cooperate with other delegations during this session in forming consensus on the composition of the bureau, and the goals and methods of work in accordance with the mandate of the working group so that substantive work can commence as soon as possible.

I wish everyone an interesting and fruitful session. Thank you Madame Chair.