



**STATEMENT BY THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA  
AT THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE  
ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE**

**ITEM 13. LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY OF OUTER SPACE ACTIVITIES**

**7-18 February 2022**

**Mr Chair,**

It is with great pleasure that the South African delegation once again participates in this the 59<sup>th</sup> Session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-committee (STSC), of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNCOPUOS).

**Mr Chair,**

The issues related to the long-term sustainability of outer space remain at the forefront as activities in outer space continue to increase. We wish to start by acknowledging the work of all delegations to finally establish the Working Group 2.0 with its bureau to advance this important work. We look forward to the deliberations of the Working Group during this session and would like to express our confidence in Mr Umamaheswaran R. of India as the Chair of the Working Group to take the work forward during this session.

As a developing country, South Africa is fully aware that outer space activities are essential tools for realizing the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Hence, the long-term sustainability of outer space activities is of interest and importance for current and emerging participants in space activities, in particular developing countries.

The long-term sustainability of outer space activities is defined as the ability to maintain the conduct of space activities indefinitely into the future in a manner that realizes the objectives of equitable access to the benefits of the exploration and as such use of outer space for peaceful purposes, in order to meet the needs of the present generations while preserving the outer space environment for future generations.

In this regard, the deliberate destruction of space objects, for whatever reason, and the resultant proliferation of space debris, particularly in the low-Earth orbits, jeopardises the long-term sustainability of outer space activities and such deliberate destruction of space objects is condemned in the strongest terms.

**Mr Chair,**

Due to the reasons stated above, South Africa strongly believes that an interdisciplinary and mutually supportive effort is needed to achieve long term sustainability of outer space activities.

Voluntary responsible behaviour is premised on the understanding that outer space should remain an operationally stable and safe environment that is maintained for peaceful purposes and open for exploration, use and international cooperation by current and future generations.

We therefore, urge that as the work of the Working Group on the LTS unfolds, the objective of building capacity across all space actors is advanced. This will allow all actors, including new and emerging space actors to remain responsible users of outer space.

**Mr Chair,**

In this regard, South Africa wishes the Chair of the Working Group every success in maintaining momentum on the work of the committee and urges all members to work together in advancing the objectives of the working group.

I Thank You.