

**Additional Statement by the U.S. Ambassador, Ms. Laura S.H. Holgate,
on Agenda Item 4, “General Exchange of Views,” February 16, 2022**

Mr. Chair, thank you for providing this opportunity for Member States to recognize the contributions of Simonetta Di Pippo during her tenure as Director of the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs. The time we have today is far from sufficient to elaborate on the many successes of her years leading the Office. Director Di Pippo’s record speaks for itself: the growth of COPUOS to 100 member states and the expansion of COPUOS observer organizations by more than 50 percent. She has seen her own role within the UN system change; she is now the Senior Advisor to the UN Secretary-General for Outer Space Affairs, and she joins us today not as the Secretary of the Committee but as the direct representative of the Secretary-General. During her tenure, she has also seen mankind’s relationship with outer space change dramatically.

As attested by the constantly expanding length of the United Nations Register of Objects Launched into Outer Space – which UNOOSA maintains – human activity in outer space has grown dramatically since the director arrived in Vienna in 2014. The space economy has grown to \$450 billion, with more governments and non-governmental actors operating in space than ever before. Director Di Pippo deserves specific credit for her relentless advocacy of commercial activities in space and for assisting emerging space-faring nations to

launch their first satellites. She has ensured that outer space can and will be an inclusive space for all spacefarers.

Director Di Pippo has set a high bar for the next UNOOSA Director. She is not only a talented and accomplished subject matter expert, but also a tireless advocate for the Office and its work. Likewise, she is a skilled diplomat. She often prefaces tough messages by reminding her interlocutor that she is “not a diplomat,” and then she proceeds to navigate through Vienna’s diplomatic asteroid belt with ease. She is a visionary who sees what is possible and a pragmatist prepared to do the work that is required to make that vision a reality. She has brought the work ethic of a space flight mission to UNOOSA and inspired the Office’s workforce.

Director Di Pippo also has inspired a generation of women and girls aspiring to careers in astrophysics and other space fields. She is the co-founder of Women in Aerospace Europe and, here in Vienna, is a prominent and active International Gender Champion. Her passion for inspiring youth has often been visible when she has engaged the space generation in her current role and, as much as we are sorry to lose Ms. Di Pippo in Vienna, we are pleased that she will continue to lead in this regard in her future roles in academia.