

UNCOPUOS Scientific and Technical Subcommittee

59th Session, Vienna/Online, 7-18 February 2022

Statement by Germany on

Agenda item 4: General Exchange of Views

Mr. Chair, [**Anmerkung:** *Ambassador Juan Francisco Facetti Fernández, Permanent Representative of Paraguay*], distinguished delegates,

On behalf of the German delegation I would like to congratulate you on your election as Chair of this Subcommittee and assure you of our full support. We would also like to thank the outgoing Chair of the Subcommittee, Ms. Natália Archinard of Switzerland, for her excellent leadership over the past two years, especially under the challenging circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic. We would also like to thank Ms. Simonetta Di Pippo and her office for the excellent organization of this year's session.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, 2021 has been a successful year in space affairs, in particular regarding those activities conducted through international collaboration. 2021 concluded with the launch of the James Webb Space Telescope, the largest space telescope ever built and a collaborative effort between the US space agency NASA, the Canadian Space Agency CSA and the European Space Agency ESA. The telescope will soon orbit the second Lagrange point and will study the very beginnings of the Universe. Another highlight of 2021 was the ongoing mission of German ESA astronaut Matthias Maurer to the International Space Station. The name of the mission, Cosmic Kiss, was chosen as a declaration for the love of space, as well as the value of exploring space in partnership, and for the respectful and sustainable treatment of the Earth. The mission will last for six months, during which Matthias Maurer will conduct more than 100 international experiments.

Mr. Chair, distinguished delegates,

we are glad that this Committee has found a way to continue its work despite the pandemic. Last year's sessions have produced very important results. The Space2030 agenda has been adopted, the Working Group on Space Resources has been established, and the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities has made further progress towards its terms of reference and workplan. We want to build on these achievements and continue our productive and constructive work in this year's session, always guided by the Vienna Spirit, as we like to say here.

In particular, [**Anmerkung: Absatz kurzfristig anpassen an Ergebnis des 2. Intersessional vom 03.-04. Februar 2022**] we hope that the Vienna Spirit once again supports to the ongoing work of the LTS working group and that, at this session, we will finally adopt its terms of reference and work plan so that the substantive work can begin next year. The working group carries a special importance for the future of space activities, as the growing proliferation of space debris in Low-Earth Orbit and the rising number of collision avoidance maneuvers make the issue of long-term sustainability of outer space activities ever more urgent. This call for action is further underlined by the prominent role of outer space in the UN Secretary General's "Common Agenda".

On this note, we also want to thank the International Astronomical Union for continuing to raise awareness of the challenges faced by the astronomical community to this Committee, and we would welcome if this Subcommittee would find a mechanism to discuss and support efforts to address these challenges.

Mr. Chair, distinguished delegates,

The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee holds a special role within COPUOS, as it provides a place for fostering multilateral cooperation and exchange in scientific-technical matters. Over the past years, a number of issues have been studied in great detail by dedicated working and expert groups, such as space and global health, the use of nuclear power sources

or space weather. The mandates of many of these bodies are expiring this year, and while an individual decision has to be taken in each case whether to continue or dissolve their work, we want to highlight the value of the platforms that they provided for experts to exchange their ideas with international colleagues, and we want to thank these experts for the work they have done over the past years. We hope that their collaboration can continue in the future, whether through a working group of this Subcommittee or another mechanism.

Finally, we want to highlight the ongoing efforts by UN-SPIDER, together with the University of Bonn, to bring together experts from all around the world to discuss space-based solutions for disaster management. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, UN-SPIDER and the University of Bonn manage to conduct their capacity-building efforts in a virtual fashion, with the recent International Conference bringing together more than 100 experts from more than 30 countries.

Mr. Chair, distinguished delegates,

I thank you for your kind attention.