UK General Statement at the Scientific and Technical Sub-committee of COPUOS, 7 – 18 February 2022

Chair, Distinguished Delegates

We would first like to take this opportunity to join with others in welcoming the Chair to his new role. We would also like to thank UNOOSA Director, Simonetta Di Pippo, for continuing to take the bilateral relationship between the UK and UNOOSA from strength to strength in recent years and wish Simonetta all the best in her future endeavours.

The Delegation of the United Kingdom is pleased to have the opportunity to share with you the progress and developments we have made since the last meeting of this sub-committee.

In September 2021 the UK released its National Space Strategy. The National Space Strategy is the first time the UK government has brought together civil and defence space policy and sets a bold vision for the UK's space future. Critically the National Space Strategy highlights the importance that the UK attaches to the United Nations and COPUOS. International collaboration with our partners and allies, delivery agencies, industry and academia remains central to our vision in securing our ambitions and building future global innovation. To this end, 2022 promises to be an exciting year for international space cooperation. Later this year we should see the first observations from the James Webb Space Telescope to which the UK contributed to the MIRI instrument. We will

also see the launch of ESA's Rosalind Franklin Rover which has had significant involvement from UK industry and academia.

We are also pleased to see continued multilateral cooperation in 2022 on many of the most pressing issues facing us today in outer space. At this moment there are parallel international conversations happening both here in Vienna, where the UK is proud to play a role in supporting UNOOSA's work on many issues including the Long Term Sustainability of Outer Space, and in Geneva, where the UK is leading efforts in the newly established working group to tackle threatening space behaviours.

Space Sustainability is a key priority for the UK. The UK acknowledges the important work of the Inter-Agency Debris Coordination Committee in developing a common understanding of the sustainable use of Earth orbit and continue to use this work and their associated guidelines to inform our decision-making processes. Pertinent to recent events the UK encourages adherence to the Space Debris Mitigation guidelines which seek to minimise the potential for on-orbit break-ups which includes preventing intentional destructions which will generate long-lived orbital debris.

The UK is playing a leading role in supporting an inclusive approach to capacity building and implementation of the LTS guidelines. In addition to our intention to submit the UK's annual conference room paper on the voluntary implementation of the LTS guidelines, the UK was pleased to fund UNOOSA to publish the LTS guidelines in all 6 official UN languages and convene international expert events to exchange information on

implementation. The UK will provide a further update in its statement on Long-term sustainability later in the week.

The UK is also pleased to have launched our second project with UNOOSA, entitled Strategic Mapping: International efforts using Space for Climate Action. The purpose is to produce a truly comprehensive study on how international organisations are using space technology to address climate resilience, mitigation, adaptation and monitoring. We'd invite all interested international organisations to reach out to UNOOSA, if they wish to contribute to this valuable exercise.

COP26 took place in Glasgow from 31st October to 12th November 2021 and brought together nations to set the future path to addressing climate change. During the event the UK Space Agency signed a new MicroCarb Implementation Arrangement with French Space Agency CNES and announced several key projects at COP26 which we are now in the process of delivering. These announcements included unveiling the new design of the TRUTHS mission and a heat data pilot in partnership with National Centre for Earth Observation and the Ordnance Survey.

Regarding our spaceflight ambitions, July 2021 saw both the UK Space Industry Regulations signed into law in our Parliament, enabling both horizontal and vertical launch from the UK, and the establishment of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) as the UK's independent Spaceflight Regulator. We would like to highlight that the CAA will be providing a technical presentation on the morning of Monday 14th February setting

out how they regulate UK space activities, particularly in relation to launch from the UK in the coming year.

The UK delegation recognizes the continuing, constructive work of the working group on the use of nuclear power sources in outer space and looks forward to receiving its report at this session. We will deliver a full statement on this later in the week. We would again like to offer our thanks to Dr Sam Harbison for his long-serving and excellent leadership of the working group.

The UK also recognises the importance of the topic of Dark and Quiet Skies and look forward to further discussion in the single issue agenda item next week.

Finally, Chair, distinguished delegates, we look forward to a constructive session to further our cooperation and dialogue in the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space.