

## **Italian Delegation Statement**

### **Agenda item 12 of the Agenda of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space at its 60th session**

#### **Long-term sustainability of outer space activities**

Wednesday, 8 of February 2022

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates,

The Italian Delegation is pleased to make this statement on point 12 of the agenda of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on the topic of the Long-term sustainability of outer space activities. At the outset, we take this opportunity for reiterating our deep appreciation for the work of the Chair of the Working Group on LTS, Mr. Umamaheswaran, and of the dedicated OOSA Staff.

Mr. Chairman,

Italy strongly supports the efforts to ensure the long-term sustainability of space activities, to maintain their inherent potential and to meet the needs and aspirations of present and future generations in the use of space for peaceful purposes, scientific and technological progress and socio-economic benefits. From a substantive point of view, our national position is characterized by the importance recognized to the practical implementation of the 21 Guidelines adopted in 2019 and the actions of capacity building, exchange of experiences and awareness towards emerging space nations. Italy also agrees on the possibility to discuss, as provided for by the Terms of reference, issues connected with the revision of the Guidelines and the adoption of new Guidelines, if necessary. At the same time, we would like to see the WG not to discuss aspects which fall within the competence of other fora.

Italy has played in the past an active role in the Working Group on the LTS and has always reaffirmed that voluntary Guidelines need to be focused on practical measures that could be implemented in a timely manner.

Italy was fully engaged in the process leading to the adoption of the Preamble and 21 Guidelines on LTS. Last November, during Informal Consultations, it has submitted a Report on voluntary implementation of the Guidelines for consideration by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee during this 60th session. Our contribution is now posted in the dedicated LST webpage.

My delegation believes that member States should focus their efforts on not just implementing the Guidelines, but on sharing the approaches, practices and lessons

learnt in doing so. By compiling and reviewing the experiences and lessons learned of all member States, intergovernmental organisations and industry in the implementation of the Guidelines, there will be a much better understanding of the further steps that the Committee should take.

The Guidelines commit States to voluntarily take measures ensuring that they are implemented to the greatest extent feasible and practicable, in accordance with their respective needs, conditions and capabilities and with their existing obligations under applicable international law. We consider adherence to the UN space treaties as one of the key underlying conditions to support the implementation of the long-term sustainability of outer space activities.

The National Security Strategy for Space, adopted in 2019, considers the promotion of sustainability, safety and security of outer space activities as a strategic objective and foresees among the lines of action the adoption of a renewed national legislation concerning private and commercial space activities. The intention is to use this instrument as an opportunity to ensure the application of norms and practices that enhance the long-term sustainability of outer space activities. This is in line with the recommendations contained in resolution 68/74 of the General Assembly on national legislation relevant to the peaceful exploration and use of outer space. Regarding the potential development of its national space sector, Italy considers appropriate, at the normative level, the method of adaptive and progressive governance.

In this respect, the following additional elements are considered: Italian planning for the SDGs contained in the national strategy for sustainable development; compliance with the international technical standards published by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the Consultative Committee for Space Data Systems. In addition, in view of the increase of space activities carried out by universities and private operators, which shows a specific focus on small satellites, the Italian Space Agency (ASI) is considering the definition of ad hoc measures and guidelines aiming at raising awareness among those operators.

Moving on to the operational side, we may recall that the Italian Space Agency is the national entity representing the Italian involvement into the European Union Space Surveillance and Tracking partnership, which gathers European countries acting under the European Commission mandate of providing services in the three major domains of space debris monitoring, namely: collision avoidance, re-entry and fragmentation. This implies developing an operational capability at national level and the sharing of data and assets within the partnership.

Mr Chairman,

The Italian Delegation confirms its view that Capacity-building training and education in space matters, including space law, is of paramount importance to national, regional,

and international efforts for developing the practical aspects of space activities, especially in emerging space countries. We are ready to continue our engagement in the framework of existing instruments of cooperation with these countries at all levels, multilateral and bilateral.

At the same time, Italy is following with attention the new challenges to outer space sustainability raised by the increased congestion in the outer space environment, in particular due to large constellations, the continued diversification of space actors, and the increased risks of collisions and interference. We concur on the need to establish a space traffic coordination at multilateral level, and, in this regard, we highlight the ongoing efforts of the European Union on this topic.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, my delegation is pleased to confirm its support to the Chair's proposal to create a repository, accessible and searchable of guidelines-related information, in line with the criteria indicated in the mentioned document.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,