

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIR

Scientific and Technical Subcommittee
Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Sixtieth Session
Vienna, 6-17 February 2023

Distinguished Delegates and Representatives,

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you to the sixtieth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

I would also like to express my appreciation to the Office for Outer Space Affairs and its Secretariat Team for outstanding preparations made for this session.

Distinguished Delegates,

With reference to General Assembly resolution 77/121 of 12 December 2022, I sincerely welcome Guatemala and Uzbekistan as the newest members of the Committee. With this, the membership of the Committee crosses the milestone mark of historical importance of 102 States.

I also welcome the Association for the Development of the Atlantic International Research Centre, the Access Space Alliance, the Hague Institute for Global Justice and the International Peace Alliance (Space), as the newest international organizations with observer status with the Committee.

Distinguished Delegates,

At this point in time, we hold the sixtieth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. Thus, we are celebrating the sixtieth anniversary of the Subcommittee.

We have a long history of remarkable achievements and in the development of international instruments, including the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the Safety Framework for Nuclear Power Source Applications in Outer Space, and the Guidelines for the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

The Subcommittee forms part of the unique intergovernmental platform of COPUOS and its two subcommittees which together are preeminent fora for fostering dialogue, reinforcing mutual understanding among nations and promoting international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space. They thrive to maximizing the benefits of space science and technology and their applications, taking into account the particular needs of developing countries.

Distinguished Delegates,

The dependency of our world on space systems is proven and is increasingly critical. Space activities are thriving; space actors are increasing in numbers and becoming more diverse than ever before. The COVID-19 pandemic crisis management and relief efforts underscored the reliance on satellite infrastructures, specific technology capabilities and space applications in facilitating the present economic and societal challenges given by the pandemic. This should encourage us in our efforts in promoting international cooperation and enhanced use of space technologies for socioeconomic development and for addressing global challenges.

The General Assembly adopted in 2022, its resolution 77/120 “Space and Global Health”. This was a result of long-standing work of the Subcommittee in this field, including in the framework of the Working Group on Space and Global Health. The Subcommittee will continue to actively engage in this important area, including with the newly established dedicated mechanisms the Space and Global Health Platform, based in Geneva, and the Space and Global Health Network. I look forward to further collaboration and activities in this crucial area of consideration.

Distinguished Delegates,

The Subcommittee has a special and important task to consider many areas of space science and technology and their applications. In this context and in accordance with previous decisions by the Committee, I would like to recall the different working groups to be reconvened during this session: The Working Group of the Whole of the Subcommittee, the Working Group on the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space Activities, and the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities.

I also note with appreciation the continued work carried out by the three international bodies whose establishment was facilitated by the Subcommittee, namely the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems (ICG), the Space Mission Planning Advisory Group (SMPAG) and the International Asteroid Warning Network (IAWN).

Distinguished Delegates,

I would like to repeat what I stated at our session last year, that the interrelationship between major space-faring nations and emerging space nations, increased international cooperation, and capacity-building efforts for the benefit of developing countries, have laid the groundwork for success over the years. Furthering international coordination and cooperation among all space actors including partnerships among States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, industry and private sector entities will be key in promoting sustained economic growth and sustainable development in all countries.

Distinguished Delegates,

Space applications, such as telecommunications, observation, positioning and navigation, tele-transmission and remote control, are substantially facilitating the present economic and societal challenges given by the pandemic. It should therefore be our aim to share the benefits of space science and technology in achieving our commitments under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

With the endorsement by the General Assembly in 2021 of its resolution 76/3 on the “Space2030” Agenda: space as a driver of sustainable development and the implementation plan,

States have a forward-looking strategy for reaffirming and strengthening the contribution of space activities and space tools to the achievement of global agendas and addressing long-term sustainable development concerns of humankind.

At our last session of the Subcommittee in February 2022 we developed a contribution to the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in July 2022. On the basis of the corresponding submission by Paraguay, the HLPF Ministerial Declaration of 2022, in its paragraph 112 reads:

We support emerging avenues in support of acceleration of the 2030 Agenda, such as the “Space2030” Agenda: space as a driver of sustainable development and its implementation plan, as a forward-looking strategy for reaffirming and strengthening the contribution of space activities and space tools for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals while recognizing that the benefits of space will be brought to everyone, everywhere.

Distinguished Delegates,

It is my desire to explore whether the Subcommittee at this present session may develop a contribution to the High-Level Political Forum under the auspices of the General Assembly, namely the Sustainable Development Goals Summit, which will be held at the level of Heads of State and Government during the high-level week in September 2023.

The General Assembly in its resolution 70/299 decided that the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) shall have only one negotiated Political Declaration, covering the different and complementary functions of both sessions of the forum under the auspices of the General Assembly - the SDG Summit, and the forum under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) when the forum is convened twice in the same year.

The Political Declaration of the SDG Summit is presently being negotiated under the leadership of the co-facilitators of Ireland and Qatar during the ongoing 77th session of the General Assembly. The President of the General Assembly, in a letter to Permanent Missions in New York, dated 20 October 2022, emphasized his vision for the SDG Summit in 2023 to serve in accelerating implementation at all levels and that such a transformative agenda must be based on scientific evidence and data.

It is my intention to get back to this effort in the course of our present session.

Distinguished Delegates and Representatives,

In conclusion, I am determined, as the Chair of the Subcommittee to work with all of you to ensure that we continue making measurable progress in our work. I look forward to a highly productive session.

Thank you.
