

Portuguese Statement
on the occasion of the sixtieth session of the Scientific and Technical
Sub-Committee of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
Vienna, 6–17 February 2023

Muchas gracias, señor Presidente

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Representatives,

1. As this is the first time the Portuguese delegation is taking the floor in this session, I would like to congratulate you for the efficient chairmanship and to assure you of our full cooperation and support. I also would like to thank UNOOSA, its acting Director and the Secretariat for their excellent work in supporting this meeting and the ongoing works.
2. Portugal welcomes the new Member States and the new Observers, especially the Atlantic International Research Centre - Air Centre, recalling that Portugal had the lead in the creation and set up of this international networked institution along the Atlantic Ocean.
3. Further to the statement delivered earlier today by the distinguished representative of the European Union - which we fully support in all its extension, including the reference to the situation in Ukraine and in the condolences presented regarding the victims of the earthquake -, we would like to convey some additional points in this Subcommittee under our national capacity.

Mr. Chairman,

4. Space systems are becoming more and more relevant for live on Earth and during the next decade we will continue to assist the massive transformation of the space sector, with new public and private actors, new international collaborations and new ways of Space exploration for which we need to be prepared and to plan ahead.
5. Therefore, we reaffirm Portugal's full commitment towards COPUOS and its Subcommittees, aiming at a fruitful cooperation for a peaceful and a sustainable use of outer space, and we recognize the important role of UNOOSA in supporting this work. It is also extremely important to continue to extend the discussions in a fruitful and positive way in the Disarmament Commission through the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on reducing space threats to guarantee a safe and prosper outer space for the benefit of all mankind.

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6. This year, the Portuguese Space Agency's annual conference, the New Space Atlantic Summit, will have Space Diplomacy and International Relations as one of its prime focus themes and we expect to address topics such as space governance and inter agencies coordination. We are also going to debate space as an economic development instrument and the importance of coordinated Earth Observation data policies. We would like to invite all delegations to come to Portugal next May and engage in an open discussion of this topics.

Mr. Chairman,

7. Portugal welcomes the continuous work and the workplan of the Working Group on the **Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities**, as is actively committed to the Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space. We have done a first internal assessment of the 2019 LTS Guidelines implementation and the results were very satisfactory, considering especially the national regulatory framework – comprising both the space law and the space regulation - and the interlink between some of the scientific themes that are being developed and their use and application by the national industry. We are keen on continuing to follow the fruitful ongoing work.
8. Portugal continues to actively promote the preservation of a safe and secure space environment and remains strongly committed to the safeguard of the long-term use of outer space.
9. Portugal is also member of the **EU-SST** consortium and host companies that are already providing data, on-ground sensors and services to monitor space debris and that will soon be able to provide collision avoidance capabilities to satellite operators.
10. Regarding the ongoing works on **Dark and Quiet Skies**. Portugal recalls that space is to be explored and developed for the benefit of all humankind. The sustainability and preservation of nocturnal skies is important not only to enhance our understanding of the Universe, but also to protect space as a heritage of all humanity and for the protection of nocturnal wildlife from light pollution. As such, we do find fruitful the ongoing discussions on extending this single agenda item and convening an expert group around this topic, in a way that promotes awareness and guidance and enables communication and cooperation between member States and relevant stakeholders regarding the impact of the satellite constellations on astronomy.
11. Portugal strongly supports the “**Our Common Agenda**” proposed by the UN Secretary-General and “**a stronger, more networked and inclusive multilateral system, anchored within the United Nations**”, that also encompasses a “multi-stakeholder dialogues on outer space” for a peaceful, lawful, secure, and sustainable use of outer space.

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12. Finally, Portugal will actively contribute to the outer space dialogue and promote an international conference on the topic of **Management & Sustainability of Space Activities** on the road to the Summit of the Future, to be hosted in Portugal in May 2024. This conference will be organized in full alignment with the appointed co-facilitators of the inter-governmental consultations on the preparatory process of the **Summit of the Future**. This conference, as already recognized by member states, should address the need for the international community to come together and discuss ways to reinforce space governance and further strengthen the sustainability of human space activities

Thank you, Chair.