

6 June 2016

English only

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**Committee on the Peaceful  
Uses of Outer Space**  
**Fifty-ninth session**  
Vienna, 8-17 June 2016

**Application for membership of the Committee on the  
Peaceful Uses of Outer Space: New Zealand**

**Note by the Secretariat**

The present document contains a copy of the application of New Zealand for membership with the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The Note Verbale of the Permanent Mission of New Zealand to the United Nations (Vienna) containing the application of New Zealand, was received by the Secretariat on 30 May 2016 and was circulated to member States of the Committee in a note verbale OOSA/2016/6, CU 2016/148/OOSA/CPLA of 31 May 2016.

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NOTE NUMBER: 2016/21

The New Zealand Permanent Mission to the United Nations and International Organisations in Vienna presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs and has the honour to inform that New Zealand has decided to apply for membership of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS).

Background information regarding New Zealand's application to join COPUOS, including on the development of a space industry in New Zealand, is attached.

The New Zealand Permanent Mission would be grateful if the Secretariat of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs could circulate this *note verbale* to the current member states of COPUOS to inform them of New Zealand's membership application.

The New Zealand Permanent Mission to the United Nations and International Organisations in Vienna takes this opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs the assurances of its highest consideration.

New Zealand Permanent Mission  
VIENNA

30 May 2016

Encl. 1



## **Background to New Zealand's application to join the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space**

New Zealand is not currently a space-capable state; no launch into outer space has ever taken place in New Zealand. However, in recent years commercial interest in space launches from New Zealand has increased. The first commercial rocket launches from New Zealand territory into outer space are now expected to take place in the second half of 2016.

In anticipation of this development for New Zealand's space industry, New Zealand is applying for membership of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

New Zealand's social and economic progress increasingly depends on access to space-based technologies. Due to its geographic position and distance from other technological hubs, New Zealand is more reliant on space-based technologies than many other states.

New Zealand therefore has a direct interest in ensuring that outer space remains available for peaceful uses. Other areas of COPUOS activity that are of particular interest for New Zealand include the long term sustainability of space, and the question of how relevant international law obligations apply to the activities of private companies in space.

New Zealand can make valuable contributions to the work of COPUOS, including the Legal Subcommittee and the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. It has existing technical expertise in areas such as radio spectrum (at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment) and satellite applications (at Land Information New Zealand and Crown Research Institutes).

New Zealand has signed and ratified three UN treaties on outer space: the Outer Space Treaty, the Rescue Agreement, and the Liability Convention.