25 August 2021

English only

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
Sixty-fourth session
Vienna, 25 August–3 September 2021

Application for membership of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space: Slovenia

Note by the Secretariat

The present document contains a copy of the application of Slovenia for membership with the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The Note Verbale of the Permanent Mission of Slovenia to the United Nations (Vienna) containing the application of Slovenia, was received by the Secretariat on 19 April 2021 and was circulated to States members of the Committee in a Note Verbale OOSA/2021/33 – CU 2021/164/OOSA/CPLA of 22 April 2021.

V.21-06275 (E)

PERMANENT REPRESENTATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
TO THE UN, OSCE AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

No.: 104/21

NOTE VERBALE

The Permanent Representation of the Republic of Slovenia to the UN, OSCE and other International Organizations in Vienna presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs and has the honor to inform that the Republic of Slovenia has decided to apply for membership of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS).

Background information on the application of the Republic of Slovenia to join COPUOS is attached, including information on the development of Slovenian space industry.

The Permanent Representation of the Republic of Slovenia 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 the membership application of the Republic of Slovenia.

The Permanent Representation of the Republic of Slovenia avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs the assurances of its highest consideration.

Vienna, 19 April 2021

REPUBLIKA SLOVENIJA
STALNO PREDSTAVNIŠTVO RS PRI OZN, OVSE IN DRUGIH MEDNARODNIH ORGANIZACIJAH
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United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs
Secretariat

V i e n n a

Background information on Slovenia's application to join the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Aiming to contribute actively to international cooperation in the peaceful use and exploration of space and the utilisation of space science and technology for sustainable economic and social development, and in anticipation of further development of its own space industry, Slovenia has submitted its application for membership of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

Slovenia is a party to four out of five UN treaties on outer space, i.e. the Outer Space Treaty, the Liability Convention, the Rescue Agreement, and the Registration Agreement. In order to facilitate the implementation of these treaties, Slovenia is currently in the process of adopting its first space law, which will also provide the basis for a national space object registry. In addition, the drafting of the first national strategy on outer space is underway.

Slovenian space activities are under the authority of the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology, which closely cooperates with other relevant ministries and institutions to promote and raise awareness of space activities.

Slovenia has a long tradition as a space nation. In 1929, a Slovenian rocket engineer and a pioneer of astronautics, Herman Potočnik Noordung, set out a plan for a breakthrough into space and the establishment of a permanent human presence in space in his visionary book *"The Problem of Space Travel: The Rocket Motor"*. Since then, Slovenian science and industry have been developing new solutions for exploring the universe and facilitating better use of space data in all areas of life.

Slovenia addressed the increasing importance of outer space for humanity by establishing, in 2010, the Cultural Centre of European Space Technologies (KSEVT) that aims to facilitate a methodological understanding of culture, the arts, and humanities in outer space.

In September 2020, the first Slovenian satellites, Nemo HD and TriSat, were launched into space. A new one is planned to follow later this year.

In 2016, Slovenia joined the space nations by concluding an Association Agreement with the European Space Agency (ESA), which has since been upgraded with the conclusion of a new Association Agreement in 2020. Slovenia is planning to become a full ESA member by 2024 and is preparing the next steps to achieve this important goal. Slovenia already participates in four of ESA's optional programmes: the General Support Technology Programme (GSTP), the Earth Observation Programme (EO), the Human and Robotic Exploration Programme (HRE) and PRODEX (*Programme de Développement d'Expériences Scientifiques*). The possibility of joining new optional programmes is currently under review. In addition, Slovenia actively cooperates with the EU and EUMETSAT, and takes part in European programmes and systems such as Galileo, EGNOS, Copernicus, etc.

Slovenia has joined the ESA's Human Spaceflight and Robotic Exploration Programmes to help stimulate the inclusion of new research institutions and industry in the space sector (e.g. recycling, 3D printing, robotics, AI, etc.). In addition, the Jožef Stefan Institute conducts "bed

rest studies" implemented by the Planetary Habitat (PlanHab) Laboratory (an ESA ground-based research facility) located at the Planica Nordic Centre, Slovenia. In 2021, an upgraded short-arm human centrifuge (SAHC) will be transferred to the Centre, which will make Slovenia one of the three ESA Member States with SAHC to carry out the "bed rest studies".

Slovenian companies are engaging in various fields of the space industry, with a special focus on niche products and services, such as applications connected to earth observation and the processing of big data obtained from space for different purposes (from agriculture to rescue operations and traffic), control and measuring systems, new materials that can be used in the harsh space environment, artificial intelligence, equipment for ground stations (antennas, domes, measuring instruments), micro coolers, new solutions in the field of miniaturisation, microgravity facilities, on-board monitoring of health conditions of astronauts (bed rest studies), and micro- and nanosatellites.

Slovenia attaches particular importance to earth observation. The data obtained from space can be used to great effect in different fields. For instance, this data is being used to facilitate environmental protection and support green, sustainable development, which is very much in line with one of Slovenia's priorities – sustainable development. In addition, space-based services and technologies are vital to understanding and tackling climate change. It is important to raise awareness of the advantages of their efficient use for reaching sustainable development goals. This is very much in consonance with COPUOS' focus, and Slovenia is ready to contribute its share towards achieving this important goal.

Slovenian companies have developed several breakthrough applications for processing space data, which are successfully used in agriculture, water monitoring, spatial planning, rescue and early warning operations, and numerous others. With near real-time multispectral images and videos from space, Slovenia's first two satellites have made an additional step forward, featuring new miniaturised equipment for operation in the harsh space environment.

In recent years, space activities have been increasingly becoming the focus of industry and research institutions. Slovenia's ambition is to involve new companies in space activities, working hand in hand with research institutions and universities. Slovenia will actively pursue activities to raise the recognition of the space sector, with a special focus on using space data and space applications to enhance manufacturing, meeting societal needs, and improving everyday life.

To promote the use of outer space and to keep it secure, sustainable and peaceful, Slovenia believes that particular attention should be devoted to space debris and space traffic management, which it will help ensure. Slovenia is confident that COPUOS is up to the task, and it may count on our full support.