

Dear Mr Chair,

On behalf of the delegation of the Czech Republic, allow me first to thank you and the vice-chairs for your outstanding leadership of the committee's work and deliberations. We would also like to thank acting director Niklas Hedman and the staff of the Office of Outer Space Affairs for their ongoing excellent work in support of this Committee.

My delegation also wishes to reiterate and highlight the importance of UN COPUOS as a unique multilateral forum for discussing and strengthening international cooperation and collaboration in order to minimize the risks of harmful impacts of increased activity in outer space and maximise the benefits of space for all humankind.

Mr Chair, distinguished delegates,

The Czech Republic aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union and reiterates its full solidarity with Ukraine. The Czech Republic condemns in the strongest possible terms the unprovoked and unjustified military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine which grossly violates international law including the UN Charter and undermines European and global security and stability.

Mr Chair, distinguished delegates,

The Czech Republic acknowledges space activities as activities with irreplaceable socio-economic benefits which contribute to the improvement of lives all around the globe.

The main interests of our national space activities lie in the fields of Earth Observation, Navigation, Telecommunications, Launchers, Space Science and Exploration and Space Safety. The Czech government's financial contributions to space programmes in the European Space Agency exceeded 60 million EUR annually. Our memberships in the European Space Agency and the European Union remain the main pillars of the development of our space activities and participation in space-related projects.

It is also worth mentioning that after 44 years the Czech Republic has its own astronaut, who has been selected for the reserve astronaut corps at the European Space Agency Ministerial Council last November. This significant achievement brings the opportunity for a Czech citizen to take part in human spaceflight activities again.

The delegation of the Czech Republic acknowledges the long-term sustainability of outer space activities as an essential policy with an everlasting necessity to protect the benefits of outer space for future generations. In this context, we would like to stress the importance of the work by the two COPUOS subcommittees on the topics of space debris mitigation and remediation and Space Traffic Management. Our delegation sees the need for further and deeper deliberation of this challenging issue, which will soon represent a key and basic element for ensuring the safe and sustainable use of orbital regimes. Especially considering the annually growing number of space debris. We see this agenda as a possible way forward where the sustainability of outer space goes in hand with the competitiveness of the space industry.

Mr Chair,

In conclusion, let me assure you that the Czech Republic remains committed to international cooperation in outer space at all levels and would like to reiterate its strong support for the work and the mission of the UN COPUOS and its Subcommittees.

Broad international cooperation is essential for ensuring a sustainable and peaceful future of outer space. We strongly believe that this committee, guided by the purposes and principles of the United Nations, and in keeping with the Vienna spirit, has a lot of potential to succeed in this endeavour.

Mr Chair, distinguished delegates, I thank you for your kind attention.