

Statement by Norway to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space under Agenda Item 4: “General Exchange of Views”

Chair,

Norway would like to thank you for chairing this 66th session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. You may rest assured of Norway’s support. We would also like to thank the Office for Outer Space Affairs for their excellent work in preparing this session.

My delegation is also pleased to welcome the new members to the Committee: Guatemala and Uzbekistan.

After now having been a member of COPUOS for over five years, we are proud to be part of the important work taking place in this committee and its sub-committees. The pace of progress in the space domain reminds us of the importance of the multilateral efforts of COPUOS to develop norms and guidelines for the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space. We view the UN as the foremost arena to foster global cooperation in space, and we look forward to contributing constructively to the work of COPUOS.

Let me first address Norway’s space-related efforts for countering the effects of climate change: Norway’s International Climate and Forest Initiative is extended until September 2024. After 2,5 years of the program, it has become evident that public access to high resolution satellite images leads to more effective rainforest protection. Since the launch of the program in 2020, more than 18,000 registered users across the globe have made use of free, high-resolution imagery of the tropics.

We strongly support the Space2030 agenda and implementation: Space can be a driver for sustainable development. We are working on contributions to the agenda and will report to the Committee accordingly.

At the end of May, the Norwegian Space Agency and the International Astronautical Federation (IAF) jointly hosted the first Global Space Conference on Climate Change in Oslo. With a focus on Space for Climate Action, the conference contributes to improved knowledge and actions to combat climate change – with a focus on the end users. During this conference, the Norwegian Space Agency also signed the charter on the establishment of a space for climate observatory.

The Working Group on Long-term Sustainability is another priority for Norway. We are looking forward to its meetings during this session of COPUOS and have submitted a suggestion on capacity-building for new satellite operators on conjunction assessment as a topic for the upcoming workshop next year. Norway welcomes further discussions in the working group on issues of great importance to us all.

Of high priority is also the Working Group on Legal Aspects of Space Resource Activities. We look forward to continuing discussions on the scope and topics to be addressed at the

international conference on space resources next year. The working group should reach agreement on arranging the conference during this session of COPUOS.

Chair,

Allow me also to present an update on some of the latest developments in our space activities:

- On the 15th of April this year, a new Norwegian national satellite, NorSat-TD, was launched. This is a multinational technology demonstration mission with Norwegian, French, Dutch, and Italian payloads performing individual and combined In-orbit demonstrations. The satellite carries an upgraded AIS-receiver and VHF Data Exchange System. The satellite has a new propulsion system to maneuver the satellite and will increase our competence on control and de-orbiting of satellites. The satellite also carries novel and sophisticated satellite navigation equipment.
- As a maritime and Arctic nation, Norway aims to use space for the benefit of sustainable development in the High North and the Arctic. The satellite station on Svalbard, an upcoming broadband satellite communication system for the Arctic, a maritime microsatellite constellation for maritime surveillance in the north and the new spaceport on the arctic island of Andøya are national initiatives to support space in the Arctic.
- Regarding Andøya, constructions of a spaceport to launch small satellites to orbit is well under way. To facilitate the new activities and ensure compliance with international treaty obligations, the Norwegian government has set up a licensing process to supervise and authorize the planned activities. Beginning this year, the Norwegian Civil Aviation Authority has also assumed the role of national space authority.

Chair,

In COPUOS, as in every international forum, it is more important than ever to stand up for international law, norms, and standards that bring about stable and peaceful coexistence. To that end, we repeat our call on the Russian federation to withdraw its troops, stop its aggression against Ukraine, and comply with the fundamental rules of international law.

Thank you, Chair.