



**European Union**

**EU Statement on  
Agenda item 4: General exchange of views**

**Sixty-third session of the Legal Sub-Committee  
United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space**

**Vienna, 15 – 26 April 2024**

Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The candidate countries Albania<sup>1</sup> and Ukraine, and the EFTA country Norway, member of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

At the outset, I would like to congratulate Spain on its chairmanship and to assure you of our full support and cooperation. I would also like to reaffirm our full support to the work of UNOOSA Director Aarti Holla-Maini. The EU will continue to closely cooperate with her and her team.

The EU and its Member States remain fully committed and will actively contribute to the work of COPUOS and its Subcommittees, including their Working Groups. They are unique platforms facilitating international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space, and the development of international space law, international guidelines, best practices, and transparency and confidence-building measures related to the long-term sustainability of outer space activities. The development of such instruments related to the long-term sustainability and safety of outer space activities should be distinct but complementary to the same approach relating to space threats, which are being considered in other fora within the UN system. We encourage all Member States to continue constructive and result-oriented efforts to advance the issues on the agenda of COPUOS and its Subcommittees. We commend UNOOSA for its invaluable support in facilitating our work and promoting inclusive dialogue on space law, space governance and space policy issues related to the peaceful uses of outer space.

The EU and its Member States recall the importance of the 1967 Outer Space Treaty and call on all parties to fully respect it. This and the other UN treaties on outer space lay down the foundation of international space governance, complemented by a series of consensual

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<sup>1</sup> Albania continues to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

resolutions of the UN General Assembly. We highlight the obligations under the Outer Space Treaty, in particular those comprised in Article IV that obligates States Parties not to place in orbit around the Earth any objects carrying nuclear weapons or any other kinds of weapons of mass destruction, install such weapons on celestial bodies, or station such weapons in outer space in any other manner. All space activities must be conducted in accordance with these provisions. We therefore welcome the initiative by Japan and the United States on a UN Security Council Resolution on Outer Space.

As responsible space actors, the EU and its Member States are committed to promoting the universalisation and implementation of international instruments on outer space, in particular the Outer Space Treaty. We encourage all States to ratify the UN Treaties on outer space and fully implement their obligations. In the same spirit, the European Union is working on possible ways by which it could accept the rights and obligations contained in the relevant UN treaties and conventions on Outer Space.

The grave violations of the UN Charter and other provisions of international law remain a matter of grave concern to the EU. In this context, we continue to condemn in the strongest possible terms Russia's unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine. It has multiple negative consequences for international cooperation especially in the space sector.

Chair,

The COPUOS Working Group on the Status and Application of the Five UN Treaties on Outer Space is an important forum to review the status of the treaties, their implementation and obstacles to their universal acceptance, as well as to promote space law. We welcome that the Working Group agreed to commence an exchange of views on the implementation of Article XI of the Outer Space Treaty.

We welcome the progress made within the COPUOS Working Group on Legal Aspects of Space Resource Activities and the recent expert meeting co-hosted by Belgium and Luxembourg collecting preliminary inputs for today's International Conference on Space Resources. We encourage further work towards achieving consensus on outstanding issues.

Likewise, the EU and its Member States acknowledge the positive discussions within the Working Group on Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities (WG-LTS) at the recent 61st session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and encourage further work on the implementation of the 21 LTS guidelines, capacity building and emerging challenges.

Recognizing the key role of capacity building in space law and policy, we welcome UNOOSA's work in assisting new space actors and emerging space nations.

Chair,

The EU and its Member States remain committed to the continued implementation of the 21 LTS guidelines. A number of work strands are ongoing at European level to advance Space Traffic Management (STM) as set out in the Joint Communication on Space Traffic Management and affirmed by the EU Member States in several Council Conclusions of the EU, most recently on 8 December 2023.

We are actively engaged in developing capabilities, regulatory frameworks and partnerships, both multilaterally within the United Nations and bilaterally with international partners. Since 2023, also non-European users benefit from the collision avoidance services, and since 2024 from the re-entry and fragmentation services offered by our EU Space Surveillance & Tracking (SST).

The upcoming Summit of the Future provides a key opportunity to bring outer space issues high on the international agenda and strengthen space governance. We hope that the Pact for the Future will facilitate the implementation of the Space2030 Agenda. In our view, the Pact for the Future should aim at fostering a peaceful, safe, secure and sustainable use of outer space. It should invite UNOOSA and COPUOS to help promoting space traffic management at global level. Furthermore, the Pact should encourage the implementation of existing guidelines, sharing of implementation experiences, capacity building and the work on potential new guidelines for the Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities. It should urge the Secretary-General to strengthen UNOOSA in its role as secretariat to COPUOS and its Subcommittees and to ensure that the Office can fully and effectively implement its mandate.

Thank you for your attention.

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