

UK Statement – UN LSC 2024 – Agenda Item 8 - Future Role and Method of Work of the Committee

Mister Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

Please allow me to set out the view of the United Kingdom on the future role of the Legal Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

We strongly believe in the role of COPUOS in ensuring the ongoing peaceful use and sustainability of the space environment and the unique role of this subcommittee, in discussing the legal aspects of the exploration and peaceful use of outer space.

The UK will continue to be active in COPUOS and offer our support to the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs.

We have taken a leading role on the sustainability, security and safety of outer space.

Along with other Member States, we continue to believe it is both important and possible to have distinct but complimentary discussions in Geneva and Vienna.

Security focussed discussion in Geneva are highly relevant to the safety and sustainability agenda addressed in Vienna, just as Vienna work is relevant to the work of Geneva.

Mister Chair, the United Kingdom would now like to share some observations on the ways of working.

The United Kingdom would like to echo other Member States and join the call for the further streamlining of agenda items and of the report of our sessions.

Addressing each agenda item in sequential order has granted more predictability for participants. The Legal Subcommittee should be easy for observers to understand, not just governments, and we think this change has helped in that direction. We call upon all delegations to consider ways to innovate and make our work easier for non-experts to understand, including through the further consolidation of agenda items.

We also call upon Member States to work with us on streamlining the reports of our sessions, including for this Subcommittee. Although we view the report as an important outcome of our discussions, the UK is here to exchange best practice and to engage in constructive discussions on important issues. We believe that negotiating the report and preparing statements in order to influence the outcome of the report, has become an impediment to constructive and open discussions. We welcome all pragmatic ideas to reduce this burden on Member States, and on the Secretariat.

We are pleased to see that we have a diverse range of observers represented at COPUOS and its subcommittees. The peaceful use of outer space does not concern governments alone. We share the view that we should do more to fully engage the private sector and the scientific community. We would encourage delegations to consider including non-governmental actors as part of their delegations throughout the COPUOS meeting cycle. We are pleased to have UK industry partners represented on our delegation at this session. The UK, along with other delegations, believes that sharing experience, ideas

and creating a common vision, is one of the defining benefits of the multilateral system.

Thank you Mister Chair and Distinguished Delegates.