

Agenda Item – 9: General Exchange of Views on potential legal models for activities in the exploration, exploitation and utilization of space resources.

Mr. Chair and distinguished Delegates,

Indian space exploration program achieved a major milestone on Aug 23, 2023 with the first ever soft landing near the south polar region of the Moon by ISRO's Chandrayaan-3 mission. This mission with a lander and rover accomplished all the mission objectives. Government of India has announced the future directions for its space exploration program, which includes a lunar sample return mission and eventual human landing on the Moon by 2040. The road map for Indian space exploration also has missions to study the Mars, Venus and other celestial bodies. There are also plans for an indigenous space station – the Bharthiya Antariksha Station – by 2035 to ensure sustained human presence in space.

In this context, India places high importance to the discussions in this Sub - Committee on the potential legal models for space resource exploration activities. The existing UN space treaties provides the legal basis for the space activities including those related to space resources. But considering the technological developments in the field of space and to bring certainty to specific aspects of space resource exploration, a new framework needs to be created. India believes that UNCOPUOS and its Legal Sub Committee are the ideal multilateral platform to deliberate on this new framework. Indian delegation acknowledges the work being carried out in the Working Group of Legal Aspects of Space Resource Activities and assures its fullest support.

Indian delegation appreciates the effort put in by Luxembourg & Belgium and UNOOSA in hosting the Expert meeting at Luxembourg to collect inputs for the international conference organized on the first day of this session. The information and views exchanged in the expert meeting and the international conference will certainly contribute to the work of the Working Group on Legal Aspects of Space Resource Activities.

Thank you, Mr. Chair and distinguished delegates for your kind attention.