

Statement by Thailand
Agenda item 9. General exchange of views on potential legal models
for activities in the exploration, exploitation and utilization of space resources
The 63rd Session of Legal Subcommittee of COPUOS
15 - 26 April 2024

Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

Thank you for allowing Thai delegation to share our perspectives on potential legal models for activities in the exploration, exploitation and utilization of space resources. The missions on space resources represent a rapidly advancing frontier to extend human capabilities beyond Earth. With reference to the principle of COPUOS, space should remain for peaceful use, equitable access, and shared benefits among all humankind. Well-designed and suitable legal models for governing these activities are imperative for ensuring the principle.

Mr. Chair,

Even Thailand is an emerging space country, we believe that space exploration is a journey to expand understanding in our solar system and universe, to grasp scientific knowledge, and craving our ability to enhance space technology. As of now, Thailand is formulating several space exploration projects with our partners. Therefore, we are enthusiastic in exploring legal scheme overarching space resources, how to exploit and utilize it the best. In this regard, Thailand would like to humbly share several key considerations and potential legal frameworks we believe they are at core of pursuing equitable access to space resources.

The Outer Space Treaty of 1967, which serves as the foundational international legal framework governing activities in outer space, establishes that outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, is not subject to national appropriation by claim of sovereignty, use, or occupation. This principle challenges the direct application of terrestrial property rights models to space resources. Therefore, we reiterate that any legal models developed for space resource activities must be compatible with these provisions and existing treaties to prevent claims of sovereignty while allowing for the practical needs of exploration and exploitation.

On March 26, 2024, Thailand participated in “The Expert meeting collecting preliminary inputs for considerations at the International Conference in Vienna 2024”, co-hosted by Belgium, Luxembourg and the United Nations. The event of the working group on legal aspects of Space Resources Activities under the Legal Subcommittee of COPUOS was the active forum to exchange different point of views within the scope of environmental and socio-economic aspects,

international cooperation, including future space resource activities. Establishment of an international framework to manage resource exploitation should consist the following aspects. The legal frameworks must ensure the activities on space resources are implemented sustainably, reducing conflicts and highlighting peaceful intention. Thailand also encourages constructive discussions on the topic of ownership and property rights of space resources, which could attract investment on space resources activities. The framework should be an effective mechanism to fostering cooperation, allowing space to be benefits for all humankind and promoting equitable accessibility.

On the top of that, transparency and international cooperation are critical foundation of sustainable and peaceful exploitation and utilization of space resources. Legal models should prioritize the sharing of data, technologies, and benefits derived from space resource activities. This approach would foster collaborative environment, reducing potential conflicts and ensuring that advancements in space benefit all countries.

Mr. Chair,

On behalf of the Thai delegation, developing legal models of exploration, exploitation, and utilization of space resources is a complex task that requires balancing the principle of peaceful use with the practical needs of human advancement, emphasizing international cooperation, equitable benefit-sharing, and environmental protection. Space activities should promote the sustainable use of space resources, preventing harmful contamination and preserving celestial bodies for future generations.

Thank you Mr. Chair.
