

 Permanent
Mission
of Austria

to the United
Nations in Vienna

AUSTRIA, ITEM 4

**General Exchange of Views
64th COPUOS (25.08. – 03.09.2021)**

Ambassador Gabriela SELLNER

Chair,
Excellencies – Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Austria fully aligns herself with the EU statement and I would like to add the following comments:

Chair, let me first of all congratulate you on your election and I wish you all success. You can count on Austria's support. I am very pleased that the meetings of the subcommittees have taken place successfully given these difficult circumstances. I hope that this spirit will also carry the coming session and I already thank the Chair and the Secretariat for their efforts and the Member States for their willingness and flexibility to reach agreement.

Austria looks forward to reach an agreement on the **Space2030 agenda and its implementation plan**. I hope that the mandate for the Committee (COPUOS) and the Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) will be finalised and that we can endorse and submit it to the General Assembly session in autumn.

Another important topic is the **Long-term Sustainability in Space – LTS 2.0**. Austria very much welcomes the agreement on the Chair and on the establishment of the respective Working Group. The Working Group should quickly solve the administrative issues so that

it can start without further delay it's substantive work. If necessary, we would also welcome intersessional meetings to move forward.

Outer Space is facing major changes and action is required at the multilateral level. We therefore welcome the referral of new topics and initiatives to the Committee and Subcommittees.

The **Working Group on exploration, exploitation and utilisation of space resources** has started already and it will tackle complex technical, legal, environmental and political issues of the future possibility to exploit the natural resources of celestial bodies in our solar system. We wish the Chair, Andrzej Misztal, and the Vice-Chair, Steven Freeland, a lot of success. In addition, Austria thanks Belgium, Finland, Germany and Greece for all preparatory work.

Light pollution is a severe problem to science and society, therefore we also welcome the Initiative „**Dark and Quiet Skies for Science and Society**“.

We see more heat waves, droughts and heavy rains: Man-made climate change is accelerating, with very serious consequences, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's 2021 report.

We also need action at national, international and multilateral level since climate change does not stop at national borders.

We need a holistic approach and since half of the Essential Climate Variables (ECVs) can only be properly measured from space, space assets should play an important role.

To do so, Austria has proposed the **Space4Climate Action Initiative to be implemented by UNOOSA**.

UNOOSA has decades of experience

- as capacity builder to provide access to and use space data to accelerate sustainable development,
- as convener and
- as gateway, UNOOSA is the sole UN body dedicated to the peaceful use of outer space and coordinates UN activities using space based technologies to support sustainable development.

AND UNOOSA has the mandate to develop and implement programmes that support sustainable development and the Agenda 2030 including SDG 13: Climate Action

We are very pleased about the great interest and the positive reactions we have received so far at a briefing meeting held on 18 June and at the side event during the High-level Political Forum of ECOSOC at New York on 14th July. We are continuing our briefings and consultation with Member States. I am pleased to provide more information under item 11 Space and Climate Change

Austria is also very pleased that the **World Space Forum 2021** will be held again in Vienna at the Vienna International Center (VIC) **from 6-9 December**. We are hosting and organising this Forum together with UNOOSA and the topic is **Space4Climate Action**. The programme will be available by mid-September on the UNOOSA website. The topics and activities we foresee within the framework of this year's World Space Forum range from a youth session, two matchmaking sessions that will offer participants a possibility to network online with the help of a dedicated platform to the presentation of the *World Space Forum Action Report* and the sharing of concrete space-related actions, activities and projects. In addition, we foresee a special event back to back to the Forum Programme on our Space4Climate Action Initiative.

Finally, one more event I would like to draw your attention to is the **UN/Austria Symposium 2021 on Space Applications for Food Systems** which will take place from 7 to 9 September in Graz in an online format.

THANK YOU