

Agenda Item 7 – “Report of the Legal Subcommittee on its sixtieth session”

Mr. Chair, Distinguished delegates,

Japan places great importance on the Legal Subcommittee as it provides a unique platform to discuss various legal aspects of the peaceful exploration and use of outer space. We would like to express our sincere appreciation to the first woman Chair of the Subcommittee, Professor AOKI Setsuko, for her excellent work and dedication, which led to a fruitful session despite the unprecedented hybrid setup of the Legal Subcommittee. Amidst these challenges and under her leadership, the 1000th meeting of the subcommittee was recorded and its report was adopted without any setbacks on Friday morning.

Mr. Chair, Distinguished delegates,

Japan would like to reiterate the importance of the rule of law in outer space to ensure safety, security and sustainability of outer space activities.

In this respect, we are pleased to highlight several achievements of the last session of the subcommittee. Japan submitted the report on the status of the national space legislation of countries of the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum National Space Legislation Initiative (NSLI) jointly with Australia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Thailand and Viet Nam, and the efforts by the NSLI study group was warmly welcomed by the subcommittee. We believe the information contained in the report will benefit the space community. On the first day of the subcommittee, Japan held the “Side event on the Role of the National Space Legislation in

Advancing the Rule of Law in Outer Space - Efforts and Challenges in the Asia-Pacific region -” co-hosted by UNOOSA and APRSAF, supported by eight NSLI participating countries. Participants appreciated the unprecedented report submission and reaffirmed the importance of international cooperation in space law to promote the rule of law in outer space. Japan continues supporting regional efforts in space law.

The Subcommittee also welcomed the Space Law for New Space Actors project of UNOOSA. In the last session, Japan announced its new cooperation project with UNOOSA. Considering the growing interest from Asia-Pacific countries in international space law, we decided to make a financial contribution to the project, which will be used for capacity building in the establishment of national space legislation and supporting these countries to conduct space activities in responsible and sustainable manner. Japan looks forward to working with UNOOSA on this new cooperation.

Mr. Chair,

Japan is of the view that the debate on the rules and norms on activities related to the exploration and utilization of space resources should ensure the sustainability of future space exploration missions by encouraging innovation by all players including industry, as well as ensuring those activities are consistent with the existing international norms. Discussions should evolve in a way that reflects current technology, the economic realities and needs of industry, as well as national space exploration programs. In this respect, Japan welcomes the establishment of the new working group under the agenda item on the general exchange of views on potential legal models for

activities in exploration, exploitation and utilization of space resources, and the leadership of Mr. Misztal as Chair and Mr. Freeland as Vice-Chair of the working group.

I would also like to take this opportunity to introduce Japan's recent developments related to space resources. This June, the National Diet passed a bill concerning the exploration and exploitation of space resources including private sectors. The law was established to promote these activities especially by private sectors, considering the growing expectations of commercial activities in this area. It defines obligation when applying for license to conduct exploration and exploitation of space resources and acquisition of ownership of space resources, and ensuring international cooperation. The law also sets rules to ensure that its enforcement does not interfere with the implementation of treaties and other international agreements concluded by the Government of Japan, and that the law will not interfere unduly with the interests of other States in exercising their freedom of the exploration and use of outer space. The law also provides that Japan, through cooperation with international organizations and other international frameworks, shall endeavor to build internationally consistent systems.

Through the implementation of this law, Japan is committed to pursue our exploration and utilization of space resources in consistent with international norms and frameworks.

Mr. Chair,

Last but not least, I would like to express Japan's respect for international norms on outer space and the important role played by the Legal Subcommittee to ensure the peaceful exploration and

use of outer space.

Thank you for your attention.