

Agenda item 7 - “National legislation relevant to the peaceful exploration and use of outer space”

Madam Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

Japan established the Basic Space Law in 2008. The purpose of this Law is to comprehensively and systematically promote Japan’s space development and use in order to improve the lives of its citizens, and to promote national economic development, international peace and the welfare of humankind.

According to the Law, Japan formulates and publishes the Basic Plan on Space Policy as a comprehensive space policy of Japan, and has updated it five times. The current Basic Plan was updated last year, and like its four predecessors, it contains a section referring to the promotion of international cooperation of Japan’s space activities.

The Basic Space Law provides that the Government shall legislate necessary laws and regulations to deal with space activities and the implementation of treaties and agreements as comprehensively, systematically and promptly as possible. In 2016, two national space acts regarding non-governmental space activities and remote sensing data utilization were enacted.

The “*Act on Launching of Spacecraft, etc. and Control of Spacecraft,*” commonly known as the “*Space Activities Act*” established systems of authorization for non-governmental launches and for the control of satellites, and compensation schemes regarding third party liability for damage caused by launches, in order to ensure accurate and smooth implementation of the United Nations Space Treaties on outer space. This is to ensure public safety, and to contribute to enhancing the livelihoods of people and the development of their activities. The Act and related orders came into effect in November 2018.

The “*Act on Ensuring Appropriate Handling of Satellite Remote Sensing Data*”, established a licensing regime for using satellite remote sensing instruments and to address necessary measures with respect to restrictions associated with satellite data, in order to ensure the adequacy of using systems of satellite remote sensing and of handling data derived from the system. The Act and related orders came into effect in November 2017.

Considering the growing diversity of space activities including for commercial use, it is essential for governments to ensure appropriate uses of outer space in accordance with international laws. It is also very important to promote commercial activities by setting up rational standards, and deal with safety and security concerns appropriately. The Japanese government is willing to address these challenges through the formulation of these laws.

Madame Chair,

Japan acknowledges the importance of information sharing and mutual learning on national space legislation for enhancing space activities pursuant to the treaties and other international norms on space development and utilization. In this regard, the “National Space Legislation Initiative (NSLI)” which was launched in the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF)-26 held in Nagoya, Japan in November 2019 provides a regional opportunity to contribute to such objectives.

One of the aims of the Initiative is to promote information sharing and mutual learning on the practices of national legislation and policies in the Asia-Pacific region. This Initiative also aims to enhance drafting capacities and implementation of national space legislation and policies in Asia-Pacific countries, in accordance with international norms. Under this Initiative, a study group consisting of practitioners in space policy and law from nine countries, namely Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Thailand, and Viet Nam conducted a joint study to draft a report on the status of national space legislation. This report was jointly submitted by the nine countries to the 60th session of the Legal Subcommittee of COPUOS. We believe the information contained in the Report would be beneficial to the space community. As the host country of the APRSAF and a participating country of the Initiative, Japan will actively promote the activities of the Initiative to further enhance the development of national space legislation in the Asia-Pacific region.

Madam Chair,

Japan is pleased to announce the new cooperation between Japan and UNOOSA on the “Space Law for New Space Actors” project of UNOOSA. Considering the growing interests from Asia-Pacific countries in international space law, Japan decided to make a financial contribution to this project, which will be used for capacity building in the establishment of national space legislation and supporting these countries to conduct space activities responsibly and sustainably. Japan looks forward to working with Asia-Pacific countries in this new cooperation.

Finally, on behalf of the Japanese delegation, I would like to reiterate that Japan is committed to promote space activities pursuant to the treaties and other international norms on space development and utilization.

Thank you for your kind attention.