



Ministry of Economic Affairs
and Employment of Finland

Statement by Finland in the 60th session of the Legal Subcommittee of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space Vienna, 31 May – 11 June 2021

Agenda Item 14 – General exchange of views on potential legal models for activities in exploration, exploitation and utilization of space resources

Thank you Madame Chair, Good afternoon,

Since this is the first time our delegation takes the floor during this meeting, let me congratulate you Madame Chair on your election and assure you our delegation's full support during this 60th session of the Legal Subcommittee. We thank the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, Director Simonetta di Pippo and the Secretariat for the excellent organisation of this meeting, which allows for a continued dialogue and exchange among the Member States of the Committee.

Madame Chair, distinguished Delegates,

Finland is of the opinion that exploration, exploitation and utilization of space resources are best to be coordinated at international, multilateral level for the peaceful and sustainable exploration and use of outer space, that is carried out in accordance with international law and in the benefit and interests of all States.

Finland recognizes the Committee on Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, including its Subcommittees, as the main forum for an international dialogue on space policy and space law, and considers it as a positive sign that the space resource activities have been in the past years deliberated in the Legal Subcommittee as a single item for discussion.

Finland welcomes with appreciation the Scheduled Informal Consultations on the issue of Exploration, Exploitation and Utilization of Space Resources in ensuring meaningful and effective exchange among the member States of the Committee. We find that the Draft Plan provides an appropriate way to continue discussion, and wish to thank the co-moderators, Andrzej Misztal and Steven Freeland, for their efforts, and wish to convey our support to this process during this session.

Consequently, Finland supports the timely creation of a dedicated working group on space resources, and has initiated together with the German delegation a working paper. We wish that this contribution could on its part facilitate the discussion during the scheduled informal consultations. The working paper builds upon previous working papers submitted on the issue of space resources, which have been instrumental in advancing the debate on the establishment of a working group. We are pleased that the delegations of Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Greece, Slovakia and Spain have joined to co-sponsor this initiative.

Madame Chair,

Finland acknowledges the UN space treaties as the cornerstones of international space law forming the primary international legal source for the governance of outer space activities. Finland supports furthering of common interpretation of the principles set out in the UN space treaties and other relevant international instruments developed in the UN, in particular taking into consideration the technological development, the rise of new space actors and novel uses of outer space. Finland believes that is of paramount importance that space activities are carried out at all times with respect to rule of law. All norms should seek to ensure that space

resource activities are conducted in a sustainable, economically viable and rational manner, with due regard to the rights of others.

Finland has particular interest in the themes of sustainable use of outer space and the NewSpace economy. The Finnish space strategy supports innovation and sustainable growth in the space sector. We believe that having a legally clear and predictable operating environment is key in promoting competitiveness as well as sustainable development of the space industry. Furthermore, it can enable the entrance of new actors, as well as investments to the space sector. Ensuring substantially similar interpretation of the principles creates a level playing field for the non-governmental entities, and supports the development of the space sector at large.

We are looking forward to a fruitful exchange and wish to actively work towards finding consensus during this session on establishing a working group on space resources, with the objective to ensure that space resources activities are conducted in a safe, sustainable and peaceful manner, for the benefit and in the interests of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development, and in accordance with international law.

Thank you Madame Chair and distinguished Delegates.