

**UNCOPUOS Legal Subcommittee  
60<sup>th</sup> Session 31 May – 11 June 2021, Vienna**

**Statement by Germany**

**Agenda item 3 – General exchange of views**

Honorable Madam Chair, distinguished delegates,

On behalf of the German delegation I want to congratulate you, Madam Chair, on your election and assure you of our delegation's full support. We thank Ambassador Misztal for his able guidance throughout the past two sessions. We also want to express our appreciation for the excellent work of the Office for Outer Space Affairs – not only during the preparation of this session, which takes place under unprecedented difficult circumstances, but also in fulfilling the Office's multiple challenging tasks and mandates.

Honorable Madam Chair, distinguished delegates,

Due to the tremendous disruption caused by the COVID pandemic, it has been two years now that this Subcommittee has convened. We regret that we were unable to conduct the sessions of the Legal Subcommittee and the Main Committee last year. But the pace of space activities has not slowed down and addressing the challenges facing us is growing ever more urgent.

As outer space and space infrastructure are key to solving global challenges, Germany is committed to:

- preserving outer space as a global common,
- safeguarding the freedom of exploration and use of outer space as the province of all humankind and
- shaping the future global governance of outer space activities.

At times, where we increasingly rely on space infrastructure and explore new space ventures, we remain firmly convinced that the **rule of international space law** is the key to the sustainable and safe exploration and use of outer space and celestial bodies for the benefit and in the interest of all.

The five United Nations treaties on Outer Space continue to form the constitutional basis for all present and future space activities. Their fundamental principles as well

as complementary instruments developed by COPUOS and its Subcommittees continue to serve the international community well in regulating present and future activities and in preserving peace and stability. With the emergence of new space actors across the globe and a significant increase in space objects, it is important to promote their universal application.

In this regard, the guidance document prepared by the “Working Group on the Status and Application of the Five UN Treaties” will be an important contribution. Containing essential information on the legal regime governing outer space, the German delegation looks forward to finalizing the draft document and continuing the work under UNISPACE+50 thematic priority 2 under a continuous work plan.

Madam Chair, distinguished delegates,

new technologies and the unprecedented scale of space activities warrant us to further develop the applicable international legal regime for space activities.

COPUOS and its Legal Subcommittee have a very **positive track record in developing international space law**. Therefore, Germany is committed to maintaining the Legal Subcommittee as the central forum for developing the legal regime of outer space and the global governance of outer space activities, firmly based in multilateral cooperation and adhering to the ‘Vienna spirit’. We have a joint responsibility to preserve outer space for peaceful exploration and use by present and future generations. Therefore, our delegation is committed to continue to work towards the development of legally binding rules for the mitigation and remediation of space debris, an international regime on space traffic management as well as an international regime for the utilization and exploitation of space resources.

We welcome the **scheduling of informal consultations on space resources** and would like to assure the appointed moderators of our full support. As we have expressed in our written contribution to this process, we are convinced that the establishment of a Working Group on Space Resources at this Legal Subcommittee is the appropriate and necessary next step to **pave the way for an international legal regime on space resources**. We are committed to fostering consensus on the mandate, terms of reference and work plan of a dedicated working group including agreement on the nomination of a chairperson. For Germany, it is important that the

working group will take up its work without further delay and in continuation of the scheduled informal consultations. Therefore, we appeal to all delegations to work towards reaching the necessary consensus at this session in order to avoid losing another year to work on this important topic.

Honorable Madam Chair, distinguished delegates,

COPUOS is still mandated to submit to the General Assembly the text of a “**Space2030 agenda and implementation plan**”. We continue to believe that the agenda will be an important and timely tool for raising awareness on the contributions of space for sustainable development and the importance of global space governance. Therefore, we look forward to engaging in the work of the pertinent working group and hope that all outstanding issues will be solved in due time.

With this I would like to thank you for your kind attention.