



STATEMENT BY THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

June 2021

**LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF
OUTER SPACE: 60 TH SESSION**

AGENDA ITEM NO 8: CAPACITY BUILDING IN SPACE LAW

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Chairperson, and Distinguished delegates

The South African delegation appreciates the opportunity to make a statement on the capacity building in space law during this session of the Legal Subcommittee of the UNCOPUOS.

South Africa, as a developing country recognizes the significance of having the item on capacity-building, on the agenda, not only for the exchange of information, knowledge and programmes in space law amongst the Member States but also for strengthening the essential international and national capacity to support the implementation of the international space treaties that are ratified, the obligations arising out of these Treaties and any non-legally binding international space rules that are incorporated in the national laws, policies and regulations of various countries.

In this regard, South Africa continues to build and strengthen national capacity in space law, which remains a fundamental component and a critical mechanism to support the implementation of South Africa's national space legislation, policies, relevant strategies and programmes and, particularly, significant in ensuring that the national space stakeholders including the private sector have the essential knowledge and understanding of the requirements and obligations posed by the International Space Treaties that South Africa is a party to.

Chairperson

South Africa utilises various approaches to contribute to the capacity-building efforts in space law, particularly, through formal academic training and education for students interested in career development in space law offered by various universities in the country, and informal training and development workshops convened by space organisations, that are aimed to equip individuals and institutions with the relevant knowledge of the legal frameworks with which space activities are carried out, so that they can be responsible users of the outer space environment, for the benefit of all mankind.

In this regard, South Africa is engaging the various academic institutions of higher learning, with established programmes in space science and law, to encourage that they offer comprehensive and multi-disciplinary introductory modules on space law and policy. This multi-disciplinary approach will strengthen the efforts to ensure the long-term sustainability of these programmes to a wider audience in various space-related fields. South Africa also continues to offer informal space law workshops that are aimed to cultivate knowledge sharing in space law amongst the South African space stakeholders and has organized the workshop on space treaties, that took place in February 2021. The workshop was aimed at providing the relevant stakeholders, including the private sector

an opportunity to share International and national perspectives on liability and insurance requirements for objects launched into outer space.

Chairperson

South Africa continues to host the Africa regional round of the Manfred Lachs Space Law Moot Court Competition, in collaboration with the International Institute of Space Law (IISL) and the National Department of Trade, Industry and Competition. The Moot Court competition is an important and unique vehicle and platform to expose students, academics, legal professionals and the space community to legal debates on matters of international space law.

South Africa has noted a growing interest in the participation by various teams representing different countries on the African continent such as South Africa, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Nigeria, Kenya, and Ethiopia.

During the past two years, the University of Calabar, Nigeria and the University of Pretoria, South Africa, emerged as the winners of the Africa Regional Round, with the opportunity to represent the Africa Continent in the World finals held in 2019 and 2020 respectively, with the 2020 competition hosted virtually due to Covid 19 travel limitations.

The South African delegation is proud to inform this legal Subcommittee that, South Africa will continue to hold this year's competition virtually later this year and we are looking forward to the participation of the African teams in the competition.

South Africa has noted with interests the concerted efforts by the member states of UNCOPUOS to fast-track the establishment of accessible opportunities through online and distance education learning platforms, including incorporating tools for virtual attendance for conferences.

The South African delegation also notes the activities undertaken by intergovernmental and non-profit organizations, which are dedicated to providing opportunities and platforms for women, students and young professionals to get involved in space law activities and South Africa is appreciative of the notable increase in availability and accessibility of virtual conferences and online distance education learning platforms.

My delegation notes with appreciation the efforts of UNOOSA to take on the programmes to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women.

In conclusion, Chairperson, South Africa continues to explore various mechanisms to build capacity in space law not only to strengthen the national capacity necessary to support the implementation of South Africa's international obligations but those of the Continent at large.

Thank you.