

58th Session, Vienna/Online, 19-30 April 2021

Item 12: Long-term sustainability of outer space activities

Madam Chair,

Distinguished Delegates,

the increasing interest in sustainable space activities and the growing acceptance of the 21 LTS guidelines by the international community are positive signs for current and future generations.

The new working group on LTS offers great opportunities to intensify our work to ensure a safe and sustainable conduct in outer space. This objective can only be achieved on the basis of a multilateral consensus and international cooperation. In this regard, we regret that the working group has not yet been able to agree on a bureau to lead its work. We believe that we must urgently begin with our substantive work on space sustainability, and therefore ask everyone to show as much flexibility as possible to overcome the current deadlock. This decision should be guided by our common desire to ensure a safe and sustainable space environment for us and generations to come. A lot of work lies ahead of us, both in implementing the guidelines and in addressing new challenges. We are eager to work together with all of you on these pressing issues.

On this note, Germany would like to highlight its commitment to the national implementation of the adopted 21 guidelines. We are currently evaluating our implementation practice together with various national stakeholders as a means to identify potential recommendations for further actions. We look forward to sharing our experiences and lessons learnt with the international community once we have a clear picture.

In addition, the new working group is tasked to identify and study further challenges to the long-term sustainability and to potentially develop new guidelines. Topics that need to be addressed are wide ranging and could encompass improving space debris mitigation and post-mission disposal as well as enhancing communication and information exchange. The working group might also address sustainability issues related to large-scale satellite constellations such as presented to this committee by the International Astronomical Union.

Madam Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

With increasing dependence on space activities and growing space traffic, we have no choice but to continue our dialogue to find common solutions in ensuring that the benefits of space activities are accessible for our and future generations.

Consequently, allow us to reiterate that we look forward to continuing our exchange with you on the implementation practices of the 21 LTS guidelines under this agenda item.

We thank you for your kind attention.