

Netherlands Statement

Agenda Item 12 – LTS - 19 April PM

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Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, Fifty-eighth session, Vienna, 19–30 April 2021.

Madam Chair, thank you for giving me the floor.

As this is the first time I take the floor, we would like to take this opportunity to assure you of our full support and cooperation during this session and beyond. We are highly convinced that under your leadership we will have a very fruitful and successful meeting.

I would like to express our deep appreciation to the Office for Outer Space Affairs and its Director Ms. Di Pippo and her team for the preparations required for convening this meeting. Especially given the unprecedented global impact of the Corona virus.

We (also) welcomeas new member(s) to the Committee. We also would like to welcome as new observer(s) to the Committee.

Madam Chair, distinguished delegates,

The Netherlands wishes to take this opportunity to underline the importance of measures to enhance sustainability of space activities. The proliferation of space activities and the alarming development of space debris in the low earth orbit has highlighted the need to ensure the safety, stability and sustainability of the outer space environment.

Madam Chair, I would like to express our satisfaction that we agreed on the establishment of a new Working Group for 5 year on the Long-term Sustainability of outer space activities. In our view, this is an important step for sharing experiences, practices and lessons learnt with regard to the implementation of the 21 adopted guidelines. Besides that this new Working Group is also important for raising awareness and capacity-building and for considering new guidelines because space technology and space activities evolves rapidly and the use of space is critically important for society.

We are confident that the composition of the Bureau of this new Working Group will be concluded during this fifty-eighth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and that the Working Group can define its terms of reference, methods of work and work plan, in accordance with its mandate.

The Netherlands is eager to contribute to this new LTS working group because preserving the long-term sustainability of outer space activities is in the vital interests of the entire global community.

Madam Chair, distinguished delegates.

I finally would like to mention that Netherlands is conducting a survey on how the 21 LTS guidelines match up with our existing regulations. The results of this survey are foreseen this year and will be used by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy for further decision making of the intended amendment of the Dutch Space Act in the near future. We look forward to sharing the results of this survey at future Subcommittee and full Committee meetings.

I thank you for your attention.