

Canadian Statement
Agenda Item 13 – Future Role and Method of Work of the Committee.
Delivered by: Jordan Miller, Canadian Space Agency

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
Scientific and Technical Subcommittee
Fifty-eighth Session, Vienna, April 19-30, 2021

Madame Chair, distinguished delegates,

Space activities are ever changing and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space must continue to evolve in order to address this dynamic mission area. In 2017, the Committee requested that the Secretariat develop proposals to improve the overall governance and the method of work of the Committee. Canada would like to thank the Secretariat for their recommendations in A/AC.105/C.1/L.384 and provides the following comments in response to recommendations.

First and foremost, COPUOS has been successful in safeguarding the peaceful exploration and use of outer space for the benefit of all by adopting a consensus approach to decision making and, in that regard, we believe all decisions by COPUOS should continue to be done by consensus.

Technical presentations are important capacity-building activities, however, as the Committee has expanded, so has the demand on the schedule and the Secretariat has made a number of recommendations to address that demand. We support the following recommendations regarding technical sessions. Technical sessions should be held over lunch for no more than 1 hour, as there are often informal working group sessions over lunch, and then again starting at 5 pm. As the lunch period will be in English only, preference for non-English presentations should be given for the 5 pm time period to allow for interpretation. We also agree there should be an equitable opportunity for all member states to provide technical presentations. Therefore we support limiting the allocation of time slots as well as limiting the presentation time to 15 minutes, for both Member States and Permanent Observers. In addition, we support setting a deadline for requests for technical presentation time periods so the Secretariat has adequate time to prepare the session schedules.

In addition, we agree that Working Groups mandates should be reviewed on a 5-year basis in order to ensure the maximum use of the limited time available during very busy sessions. Further, Working Groups should meet in Plenary, prior to the technical presentations, to ensure their important work is given proper consideration with interpretation services.

Canadian Statement
Agenda Item 13 – Future Role and Method of Work of the Committee.
Delivered by: Jordan Miller, Canadian Space Agency

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
Scientific and Technical Subcommittee
Fifty-eighth Session, Vienna, April 19-30, 2021

Madame Chair,

Due to the complexity of space issues, Canada believes that consideration should be given to allow for cross-cutting issues to be addressed in both the STSC and LSC. Similar to the cross-cutting nature of the Space 2030 Agenda, there are a number of emerging space activities that will require similar consideration. In particular, the issues around deep-space exploration and sustainable lunar activities, such as that proposed by the Moon Village Association-led Global Expert Group on Sustainable Lunar Activities in A/AC.105/C.1./2021/CRP.20, need to address legal and technical issues in order to develop a comprehensive international framework. It is therefore proposed that consideration be given to allow for working groups to span both STSC and LSC on such cross-cutting discussion.

Finally, Canada appreciates the proposal regarding Dark and Quiet Skies, submitted by Chile, Ethiopia, Jordan, Slovakia, Spain and the International Astronautical Union last week with A/AC.105/C.1./2021/CRP.17. We acknowledge the urgent need to consider the issue of Dark and Quiet Skies, however, we feel that the recommendations would benefit from a more fulsome evaluation that includes participation from the science community, non-governmental organizations, industry and government, particularly from the regulatory community, before determining the best approach for consideration of this issue.

Thank you for your kind attention.