Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
64th Session
Agenda Item 4 – "General exchanges of views"

Japan

Mr. Chair, Distinguished delegates,

It is a great pleasure for me to join this meeting chaired by Mr. Marius-loan PISO of Romania. The Japanese delegation is looking forward to working with you. We are confident that we will have a highly successful session under your leadership. We also warmly welcome Angola, Bangladesh, Panama, and Slovenia as new members of the Committee.

We would like to extend our appreciation to Director Simonetta Di Pippo and the Secretariat of the Office for Outer Space Affairs for their exceptional efforts in realizing this year's COPUOS and Subcommittee meetings in a hybrid format despite the difficult circumstances posed by COVID-19. In this context, let me thank all countries who kindly supported Japanese Chair of the Legal subcommittee, Professor AOKI Setsuko for her successful chairpersonship.

Japan welcomes the progress made at this year's discussions during the two Subcommittees, amidst these difficulties, including the election of a new Chair for the LTS 2.0 WG by the STSC and the establishment of a new space resources WG during by the LSC. To ensure the safety, security, sustainability and stability of outer space, Japan would like to emphasis the importance of the topics of these newly established working groups. We are committed making utmost efforts to enhance their work.

Mr. Chair,

Let me take this opportunity to report on the recent developments of Japan’s space activities. Since the last COPUOS meeting, Japan has conducted six launches, which includes the launch of H-II Transfer Vehicles 8 and 9 (HTV8 and HTV9) by the H-IIB Launch Vehicle, the launch of the Emirates Mars Mission (EMM) developed by the Mohammed bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC) of UAE and launched by the H-IIA Launch Vehicle, and the launch of the sounding rocket S-520 No.31. Japan is currently developing the H3 Launch Vehicle and its maiden flight is scheduled in Japanese Fiscal Year 2021.

In the area of human spaceflight, Japanese astronaut Mr. NOGUCHI Soichi completed the long-duration mission aboard the International Space Station (ISS), where he conducted various microgravity research including biological and material research. He also conducted an extra-vehicular activity (EVA) and contributed to the upgrade of the ISS by installing a new solar array mount, which is a new system to the ISS. This April, Japanese astronaut Mr. HOSHIDE Akihiko was launched to the ISS and began his mission as the ISS commander.

Japan has also been actively engaging in the field of space exploration and space science. Given the importance of the space domain as a frontier for cutting-edge science and technology and as a driving force for economic growth, Japan updated its Basic Plan on Space Policy in June last year. Japan will leverage its expertise, and bring in capabilities from various industry sectors to take part in global space exploration efforts.

In October 2020, Japan signed the Artemis Accords as a political

commitment to establish internationally shared framework principles for civil space exploration activities and the use of outer space by national space agencies. In December 2020, Japan signed the Memorandum of Understanding concerning Cooperation on the Civil Lunar Gateway between the Government of Japan and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration of the United States of America.

Japan will also contribute to sustainable lunar exploration. JAXA will launch the “Smart Lander for Investigating the Moon”, called SLIM. It aims to demonstrate pinpoint lunar landing technologies in JFY2022. Furthermore, JAXA plans to explore Mars and Martian Moons via the “Martian Moons eXploration (MMX)”, following the sample return technology of Hayabusa2 and targeting launch in JFY2024.

In June this year, Japan passed a bill concerning the exploration and exploitation of space resources including by the private sector. Japan will be eager to share the knowledge and experience gained from these activities in the newly established working group on space resources of LSC.

Mr. Chair,

Japan acknowledges the importance of international cooperation in ensuring the safety, security, sustainability, and stability of outer space. In this regard, information sharing and exchanges on national space legislation are essential for enhancing space activities pursuant to the treaties and other international norms. The “National Space Legislation Initiative (NSLI)” under the activities of Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF) provides a regional opportunity to contribute to such objectives. Based on the work of the NSLI Study Group in which more than forty space law practitioners of seventeen national organizations participated from nine countries in the Asia Pacific Region, namely Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Thailand, and Viet Nam. They drew up a joint report on their status of national space legislation (A/AC.105/C.2/L.318), which was submitted to this year’s 60th session of LSC and is currently available on the LSC website. Japan believes that NSLI provides an effective regional model for international cooperation and effectively contributes to promoting sustainable outer space activities.

Japan has also been promoting global navigation satellite system (GNSS) cooperation under the framework of Multi-GNSS Asia. Recently, Multi-GNSS Asia has expanded its activities to include the development of new applications and businesses. We strongly support the cooperation between government, academia and industries in the Asia-Pacific region, and welcome participation from the next generation of professionals and users.

Last but not the least, Japan has been supporting the work of agenda item 15 “Space2030” Agenda over the last few years, and extends its appreciation to the Secretariat and the entire office for their exceptional work in this regard. We look forward to the adoption of the “Space2030” Agenda at this committee, as we are committed to continuing to support the work of COPUOS in this decade and beyond.

Thank you for your kind attention.