

(Full version)

Chair, Distinguished delegates,

It is my great honor and pleasure to address the 66th session of COPUOS on behalf of the Government of Japan. I am confident that we will have a very successful session under the able leadership of Mr. Omran Sharaf, Chair of this session. We look forward to working with you. Let me also express our appreciation to the Acting Director Mr. Niklas Hedman and the Secretariat of UNOOSA, for their exceptional work. We also warmly welcome Guatemala and Uzbekistan as new members of the Committee.

Furthermore, Japan welcomes the progress made during the two Subcommittees this year, including the efforts of respective Working Groups. Japan is committed to contributing to productive discussions in the Subcommittees as well as in the COPUOS.

At the outset, I have to note that on 31st May, North Korea conducted a launch using ballistic missile technology which North Korea referred to as “military reconnaissance satellite”. Even if it is called “satellite”, any launch using ballistic missile technology by North Korea is a violation of relevant UN Security Council resolutions and it is absolutely unacceptable. In addition, there is a possibility of further provocations in the future, including another nuclear test. Concerted response of the international community is critical.

Like others, Japan strongly condemns Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine, which infringes upon Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and constitutes a flagrant violation of international law, which is also the very foundation of international cooperation in outer space activities.

Chair,

I would now like to share some new developments in Japan’s space activities. In the area of human spaceflight, Japanese astronaut Dr. WAKATA Koichi recently completed a long duration mission in the International Space Station from October of last year to March this year.

Japan has also been actively engaged in the field of space exploration and space science. In June 2020, Japan updated its Basic Plan on Space Policy, recognizing the importance of the space domain as a frontier for cutting-edge science and technology, and as a driver of economic growth. The next Basic Plan on Space Policy is currently being updated and will be published this summer. Japan will leverage its expertise, and bring in capabilities from various industries sectors to take part in global space exploration efforts. In this regard, I am pleased to note that ispace, a private Japanese company, made its first attempt to land on the Moon in April this year and will continue its activities for the new era of humanity.

In October 2020, Japan signed the Artemis Accords as a political commitment to establish an internationally shared framework on various principles for civil space exploration activities and the use of outer space by national space agencies. In November 2022, Japan signed the Gateway Implementing Arrangement in cooperation with NASA on the Moon-orbiting space station. On the same day, Japan also announced it would participate in extending operation of the ISS until 2030 in order to demonstrate and acquire technologies, including those needed for the Artemis Program.

Japan will also contribute to sustainable lunar exploration. In JFY 2023, JAXA will launch the Smart Lander for Investigating the Moon (SLIM), which aims to pinpoint lunar landing technologies. In addition, JAXA plans

to provide a habitation system and logistics resupply to the Gateway, and to develop a rover for the Lunar Polar Exploration mission (LUPEX), a joint venture with ISRO. As for Mars exploration, JAXA plans to launch the Martian Moons eXploration (MMX) in Japanese fiscal year 2024, which will bring samples back from Phobos, one of the two moons of Mars, technologically succeeding the Hayabusa2 mission, which brought back samples from the asteroid Ryugu in 2020.

In December 2021, the *Act on the Promotion of Business Activities for the Exploration and Development of Space Resources*, commonly known as the *Space Resources Act* of Japan, came into force. As a result, Japan issued its first license to a private company in November 2022. Japan expects to share the knowledge and experience gained from these activities with the LSC working group on space resources.

We regret to inform you that the H3 rocket failed to launch in March this year due to an ignition problem. However, the Government of Japan will continue work diligently towards its next challenge.

Chair,

Japan acknowledges the importance of international cooperation in ensuring the safety, sustainability and stability of outer space. In this regard, information sharing and exchanges on national space legislation is particularly important to safeguarding space activities pursuant to international treaties and norms. For example, the National Space Legislation Initiative (NSLI) under the activities of the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF) provides a regional opportunity to contribute to such objectives.

The Initiative is open to the national governmental organizations in the Asia-Pacific countries. Under this initiative, we presented the Initiative’s

second report to this session of the COPUOS with twelve countries, namely Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Türkiye and Viet Nam. It covers new topics such as national implementation of the LTS guidelines and the involvement of private entities in national legislation as well as the policy making process. As the host county of APRSAF and a participating country of the Initiative, Japan will actively promote its activities to further enhance the development of national space legislation in the Asia-Pacific region.

Furthermore, since 2021, Japan has been supporting capacity-building efforts of emerging spacefaring nations in the Asia-Pacific region by assisting in the drafting of national space laws and regulations in line with international space law through UNOOSA’s Space Law for New Space Actors initiative.

Chair,

With regard to the Summit of the Future in 2024, my delegation took note of the Policy Brief on the future outer space governance issued by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Japan looks forward to constructive discussions among Member States on effective future space governance.

Chair,

Let me conclude my statement by reaffirming our commitment to the peaceful use of outer space. We are looking forward to fruitful discussions during the session in coming two weeks.

Thank you for your kind attention.