



STATEMENT BY THE SQUARE KILOMETRE ARRAY OBSERVATORY

The 66th session of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

**AGENDA ITEM 6: Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on its
sixtieth session**

Read by: Mr Mathieu Isidro (Communications & Outreach Manager)

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Chair and distinguished delegates,

Thank you for allowing me the floor. On behalf of the Square Kilometre Array Observatory (SKAO), I am pleased to address the 66th Session of UN COPUOS on this important topic.

Chair,

The 65th session of UN COPUOS recognized that astronomical observations for both optical and radio astronomy are an essential aspect of space activities and should be protected from interference. The SKAO has, since obtaining permanent observer status in UN COPUOS, expressed not only concern regarding the negative effect of large constellations of satellites on our science, but also our intent to continue to cooperate with industry and other stakeholders to find implementable technical solutions. We thus remain grateful for the opportunity to support with the European Organization for Astronomical Research in the Southern Hemisphere (ESO) and the International Astronomical Union (IAU), the European Space Policy Institute (ESPI) in hosting the “*Dark and quiet skies: the way ahead*” event held on the margins of STSC60. This event was attended by several delegations and allowed a healthy exchange of ideas for the protection of the Dark and Quiet Skies, and what collaborative efforts are currently going on. The broad and continuing support received for the conference room paper on *the protection of dark and quiet skies for science and society*, submitted by Bulgaria, Chile, the Dominican Republic, Peru, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, ESO, IAU, and SKAO (A/AC.105/C.1/2023/CRP.18/Rev.1) is also appreciated.

Chair,

We see with satisfaction the discussion about Dark and Quiet Skies in the 60th STSC report. In particular, paragraph 279 noting concerns about satellite interference into astronomical observations, both from radio emission and sunlight reflection from the increasing number of satellites in orbit.

Chair,

We wish the UN COPUOS member delegations well in their deliberations during this session on the possible creation of an *Expert Group on the matter of Dark & Quiet Skies*, and the possibility to include an associated agenda item in the draft agenda for the next STSC. We will respect the consensus decision of the committee.

I thank you, chair.