

Japan Item 7 – “Report of the Legal Subcommittee on its sixty-second session”

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Chair, Distinguished delegates,

Japan places great importance on the Legal Subcommittee as it provides a unique platform to discuss various legal aspects of the peaceful exploration and use of outer space. We would like to express our sincere appreciation to the Chair Ms. Nomfuneko Majaja for her excellent work and dedication, which led to a fruitful session of the Legal Subcommittee.

Chair,

Japan would like to reiterate the importance of observe the rule of law in outer space to ensure the safety, sustainability and stability of outer space activities.

In this respect, we are pleased to highlight that in 2021, nine countries, including Japan, submitted a report on the status of their national space legislation *via* the National Space Legislation Initiative (NSLI) study group, operating under the framework of Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum. Recently, the group, this time comprised of twelve countries, namely Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Türkiye and Viet Nam, submitted a second report to the 66th session of the COPUOS. The report covers new topics on national implementation of the LTS guidelines and the involvement of private entities in national legislation and the policy making process. Japan will continue to support regional efforts in space law.

Since 2021, Japan has been providing financial and technical contributions to UNOOSA’s *Space Law for New Space Actors project*, which is aimed at building the capacity of Indo-Pacific countries in establishing national space legislation and conducting their space activities in a responsible and sustainable manner. Japan looks forward to implementing this project in 2023 in close cooperation with UNOOSA.

Chair,

Japan believes that the debate on the rules and norms of activities related

to the exploration and utilization of space resources should ensure the sustainability of future space exploration missions by confirming that the activities of all innovative players, including industry, are consistent with existing international norms. Discussions should reflect current technology, the economic realities and needs of industry, as well as the space exploration programs of each country. In this respect, Japan appreciates the efforts made by the working group on legal aspects of space resource activities, its Chair, Mr. Misztal, and its Vice-Chair, Mr. Freeland.

We would also like to take this opportunity to introduce Japan's developments related to space resources. 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. The Act defines an entities' legal obligation when applying for a license to conduct exploration and development of space resources as well as resource acquisition of ownership. The Act also stipulates that its enforcement does not interfere with the implementation of treaties and other international agreements concluded by the Government of Japan, and that the Act will not interfere unduly with the interest of other States in exercising their freedom in the exploration and use of outer space.

Japan issued its first license to a private entity in November 2022 and publicized its business activity plan, including its purpose, project duration, place, methods and content, on the website of the Cabinet Office of Japan. Based on the Act, Japan is keen to promote international coordination and establish internationally harmonized systems on the exploration and development of space resources in collaboration with other countries and international organizations.

Through the implementation of the Act, Japan commits to pursuing its exploration and utilization of space resources in line with international norms and frameworks and in a transparent manner.

Chair,

Finally yet importantly, we would like to express Japan's respect for international norms on outer space and the important role played by the Legal Subcommittee to ensure the peaceful exploration and use of outer space.

Thank you for your attention.