



**67th session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space**

**19-28 June 2024**

**Statement by Australia**

**Agenda item 5: General exchange of views**

Thank you Chair, distinguished delegates.

On behalf of my delegation, I extend Australia's congratulations to those elected to the Bureau of the Committee. We warmly welcome Mr Sherif Mohamed Sedky of Egypt, and Mr Rafiq Akram of Morocco, as Chairs of the Committee for 2024 and 2025, respectively. You have Australia's full support.

We extend Australia's sincere thanks to the previous Chair, Mr Omran Sharaf of the United Arab Emirates, for his leadership of the Committee over the past two years.

Australia also thanks Ms Aarti Holla-Maini, Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, and the Secretariat for their support to the Committee.

Chair

Let me begin by reaffirming Australia's support for the work of the Committee and its Subcommittees. Australia is proud to be a founding member of this

Committee and has enjoyed the continuous and longstanding collegiately this Committee fosters and respects. As we move forward into a new age of innovation and exploration it is important to continue our collective respect for the rules and norms that underpin its work.

As a State Party to the five United Nations Space Treaties, we reiterate that the Outer Space Treaty is the cornerstone of the international legal framework governing the peaceful exploration and use of outer space.

That is why Australia joined 65 States in supporting the Security Council resolution put forward by the United States and Japan in April this year, urging compliance with the Outer Space Treaty and the UN Charter. We call on those who have ratified the treaty to act consistently with their obligations, including the obligations under Article IV regarding nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

The veto of the resolution by one permanent member of the Security Council is a further demonstration of its disregard for international law, peace, and security.

Chair

Australia strongly supports Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and we call on Russia to cease any use of technology in outer space to facilitate its ongoing violations of international law in pursuit of its senseless war.

Chair

Australia looks forward to participating in the Summit of the Future in New York in September.

The Pact for the Future has the potential to accelerate achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, and strengthen the unique role of this Committee in developing the international framework governing the peaceful, safe and sustainable exploration and use of outer space.

In this regard, Australia thanks the Office for Outer Space Affairs and Portugal for their organisation of the Conference on the Management and Sustainability of Outer Space Activities, including the two preparatory symposia.

Chair

In promoting a responsible space sector, Australia is committed to advancing gender equality, diversity and inclusion, including to increase women's representation in space and STEM fields.

Australia thanks Canada and the Office for Outer Space Affairs for hosting the 2023 Space4Women Expert Meeting. We commend the publication of the Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit for the space sector – its implementation will collectively maximize the impact of our space-related activities, as well as support the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Australia also thanks the Office for Outer Space Affairs and the Republic of Korea for launching the Space4Women Landmark Study of Gender Equality in the Space Sector earlier this year. We look forward to the publication of the findings in October and commit to raising and promoting awareness of such work in advancing gender equality, diversity and inclusion in space and STEM fields. Australia is also pleased to share that Katherine Bennell-Pegg has become the first person to complete training as an astronaut under the Australian flag. It is imperative that we expand opportunities for the meaningful participation of women and girls by increasing their representation and creating environments in which they can thrive.

#### Chair

Space science and technology and their applications offer possibilities in driving sustainable development, solving contemporary challenges and improving quality of life here on Earth.

Australia is pleased to join Landsat Next, the pioneering satellite program led by the United States, which will map and observe the changing surface of the Earth. The data will support monitoring of the Earth's climate, water and environment, and management of natural disasters. We hope that this partnership and our long-standing expertise in Earth Observation will benefit our Indo-Pacific region,

including Pacific Island countries that are disproportionately impacted by the effects of climate change.

As we pursue a new and exciting future of space innovation and exploration, we continue to learn from those who have come before us. We recognise Australia's First Nations peoples' strong continuous connection to outer space as Australia's first astronomers. We must ensure that humanity's increasing use of outer space is conducted in a sustainable, inclusive manner as to ensure its preservation and value.

#### Chair

Australia is committed to implementing outcomes of the Committee nationally. This includes continuous improvement of the regulatory framework for space activities, facilitating international interest in Australia as a destination for safe launches and returns, and implementing our international obligations.

Complementary to the development of Australia's regulatory framework, Australia is considering issues and opportunities for the sustainability of space activities in Australia, and the role of Government in addressing them, to support the long-term viability of the space sector. This work aligns with Australia's commitments to COPUOS and its subcommittees.

Australia will co-host the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum with the Japanese Aerospace and Exploration Agency in Perth,

from 26 to 29 November. The theme is ‘*Collaborating to build a sustainable and responsible regional space sector*’.

And, in 2025, Australia will host the 76<sup>th</sup> International Astronautical Congress in Sydney on the theme of ‘*Sustainable Space: Resilient Earth*’.

We look forward to welcoming you.

Thank you.