

**Statement Kingdom of the Netherlands regarding agenda item 5 (General Exchange of views)**

Delivered by: J. Kroon, Dutch Authority for Digital Infrastructure, Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Dear Mr. Chairman,

1. Please allow me to thank you, Mr. Chairman, and the Office for Outer Space Affairs, for the preparation of this meeting of the COPUOS Main Committee. Furthermore we would like to congratulate Mr. Hasan Abbas en Ms. Hesa Al-Khalifa with their election as second vice-chair.
2. We are fully aligned with the statement made by the European Union and would like to make the following remarks in its national capacity to highlight a few developments in the Netherlands, to reaffirm our priorities.
3. Whether on earth or in outer space, the Netherlands is committed to the international rule of law. Hence, the Netherlands is signatory to all five United Nations Treaties related to outer space. And accordingly, the Netherlands has established the Dutch Space Act.
4. The number of space activities in the Netherlands is growing structurally, resulting in an increase in the number of Dutch space operators and satellites under Dutch jurisdiction and control. This year there are four licensees under the Dutch Space Act which operate twenty-two Dutch satellites: ten Geostationary satellites and twelve Low Earth Orbit satellites.

Based on several recent developments we believe the number of satellites under Dutch jurisdiction will increase significantly over the coming years.

5. In light of this, we advocate for a robust normative and legal international framework for sustainable, safe, and secure use of space. With this in mind, the Netherlands stands ready to update its own national space act, taking into account the changing space environment. We will also align our national legal framework with the United Nations Long-term Sustainability Guidelines. Ultimately, we need to foster sustainable space activities, by providing our stakeholders a clear legal framework.

Mr. Chairman,

6. As outer space becomes increasingly more congested, there is a need for reliable and sustainable space traffic management. Our economies, societies, and security depend more than ever on space infrastructure. And yet, our current regime of space traffic management is inadequate and unsustainable.

7. The Netherlands is convinced that the international community must strive towards a legally binding instrument for space traffic management, negotiated here, within the framework of the UN. We need governance that enables safe and sustainable space-travel, while providing a global level playing field.
8. Moreover, in developing strategies and adequate regulatory frameworks, we need to include private and public stakeholders. Not only because the space sector is a global market. But because technologies advance rapidly, implicating that we should adopt a technology-open approach as much as possible.
9. The Netherlands supports the use of satellite data for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. For example, the Netherlands has been investing in the Geodata for Agriculture and Water (G4AW) programme for ten years. The programme promotes and supports private investments for large scale, demand driven and satellite-based information services targeted at actors in the food production chain. It has performed beyond expectations and the number of users and beneficiaries is still growing. Like in the GEOPOTATO project in Bangladesh. An SMS-based service that timely warns potato farmers so they can use crop protection products at the right moment and so reduces environmental impact. However, more public investment is needed in order to further scale up existing information services that help smallholders increase their productivity in an environmentally sustainable manner and to ensure an efficient use of water. The Netherlands works closely with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in providing data on water productivity in agriculture.
10. Whether in outer space or on earth, there is an urgent need for the establishment of a comprehensive legal regime governing space resources activities. As previously highlighted during the Legal Subcommittee (LSC) sessions, this issue holds significant importance for our government. The Moon Agreement, unique among the five UN Space Treaties, foresaw the potential for space resources activities and anticipated that effective regulation would be essential to prevent conflicts. Only with adequate regulation can the exploration, exploitation, and utilization of space resources occur without discrimination and in accordance with international law. As a State Party to the Moon Agreement, the Netherlands is particularly committed to the creation of an international regime, including appropriate procedures, to govern the exploitation of space resources initially, and possibly their utilization at a later stage. This commitment is reinforced by our participation as a signatory to the Artemis Accords, reflecting our dedication to cooperative and constructive regulation of space resources activities. Furthermore, we continue to underscore the significance of the Building Blocks of the Hague International Space Resources Governance Working Group which provide a comprehensive

framework outlining the necessary elements for the robust regulation of space resources activities.

11. As space is now an indispensable part in our daily lives and for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, the global community needs clear rules and a forum where dialogue is possible to develop a global consensus. Looking ahead, the Netherlands stands ready to play its role in space for the years to come, supported by a comprehensive national long-term space agenda. Lastly, we believe COPUOS and UNOOSA should continue to play an important role in this context and we will continue to support the activities in this arena.

Thank you for your attention.