

New Zealand National Statement

Item 5: General Exchange of Views

Sixty-Seventh Session of the Plenary

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

19 May to 28 June 2024, Vienna

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Thank you Chair.

Tēnā koutou katoa. Greetings. Aotearoa New Zealand would like to thank you Chair for your efforts in leading these important discussions and we assure you of our full support.

New Zealand is one of the busiest launch countries worldwide, hosting the fourth highest number of orbital launches globally in 2023. We are also home to the world's only fully private orbital launch site. We take our role seriously as one of only a small number of gateways to space, and we are committed to promoting the peaceful, safe, secure, and sustainable use of space.

We also know that to navigate and overcome global challenges, we must work together as an international community to find global solutions. New Zealand is actively playing its part.

Our neighbourhood in the Pacific region is particularly vulnerable to the **impacts of climate change**. We are focused on utilising the opportunities that space technology and space-enabled data provides to better understand and mitigate these impacts, and working with the international community to build resilience.

Our investment in MethaneSAT alongside the NGO Environmental Defense Fund is one example. MethaneSAT, which launched earlier this year, will track global methane emissions. Data will be used to engage with oil and gas industry operators and regulators to drive rapid reductions in fugitive methane emissions. It will be made freely available from early 2025.

Chair,

New Zealand is also committed to sustainable space practices. We continue to apply and implement the **Guidelines for the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities** and addressing ongoing challenges to their global implementation and capacity-building is essential to enhancing international cooperation. We particularly encourage continued cooperation on space debris and debris removal.

New Zealand also supports the need for **Space Resource Utilisation** to be conducted in a safe, sustainable, responsible, and peaceful manner, consistent with international law. We see the benefits of a multilateral approach to these issues and the potential for non-binding instruments and fora – such as the Artemis Accords – to guide the activities of States and be a useful complement in supporting the development of rules and norms in this regard.

In addition, we welcome the progress made to establish the **Dark and Quiet Skies**, astronomy and large constellations agenda item under this Committee. Of particular relevance to New Zealand is the impact of satellite visibility on customary uses of the night sky by Māori communities (our indigenous population), such as navigation and Maramataka, (time-keeping).

Chair,

While progress is being made, space has also become congested, contested, and competitive. We share concerns [expressed by several delegations] regarding potential activities that may risk the free and open use of space for all.

Earlier this year, New Zealand was pleased to cosponsor the first **Security Council resolution on outer space**, alongside 64 member states. We deeply regretted the use of the veto on this resolution. We call on all states to abide by their international commitments in the Outer Space Treaty, in particular Article IV, and to refrain from placing nuclear weapons into orbit, or from developing the capability to do so.

Chair,

Multilateral cooperation continues to be critical as we work to address the shared challenges faced by us all. We call on all Member States to take a constructive approach towards achieving a consensual outcome for our work this session, as has been the long-standing practice of this Committee.

Lastly, we wish to express our strong support for the important work being led by UNOOSA on the **Space4Women program**, including the Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit. We have a long-standing commitment to supporting gender equality and diversity. Increasing the meaningful participation of women and girls across all space activities, including in space science, technology, innovation, and exploration, is critical to achieving our goals of an accessible and inclusive global space community. We call on all Member States to support this important initiative.

Thank you Chair.