

Portugal Statement
Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space | 67th
session | Vienna, 19-28 June 2024

Agenda Item 5, "General Exchange of Views"

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Representatives,

As this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor in this session, I would like to congratulate you, Prof. Sherif Mohamed Sedky, on your election as Chair of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) and assure you and the Vice Chairs our full support and cooperation. I would also like to salute the UNOOSA's Director, Aarti Holla-Maini, for her leadership which we continue to strongly support and closely cooperate; a word of gratitude is due to the Secretariat for its excellent work in supporting this meeting and the ongoing works of COPUOS and its Subcommittees.

Allow me also to express our appreciation to the outgoing Chair, Mr. Omran Sharaf, for his steady and skillful guidance over the past two years, and the outgoing Vice-Chair, Ms. Carolina Rêgo Costa, for the support she provided during the last session.

Portugal aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the distinguished representative of the European Union - we fully support in all its extension, including the strong condemnation of those fundamental violations of the UN Charter that undermine the entire

UN system. We would now like to add some additional points in our national capacity.

Mr. Chairman,

COPUOS and its Subcommittees are unique frameworks of international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space, in the development of international space law, guidelines, best practices, and other transparency and confidence building measures regulating space activities.

After long preparation, the Summit of the Future will take place in September this year and the event will be of paramount importance to strengthen and reinforce the role of UNOOSA and COPUOS.

It has already been recognized by the UN Secretary General, in his report "Our Common Agenda", the extreme relevance of this Committee and we are certain that the Pact for the Future will also underline the importance of outer space activities.

Portugal has been actively contributing to the outer space dialogue. As announced during the 65th COPUOS, together with UNOOSA, we organized and hosted the Conference on Management & Sustainability of Outer Space Activities, in Lisbon, in 14th and 15th of May, to discuss the topics outlined in the Policy Brief 7, namely space traffic management, space resources and, space debris.

A report on the Conference has been released as A/AC.105/1315, similarly to what has been done regarding the technical and policy preparatory symposia with the STSC and the Legal Subcommittee, namely through a joint side event in February, a briefing session and a non-paper in April and conference room papers n. 34 and 33, respectively.

In the meantime, Portugal has conveyed to this committee and subcommittees all the procedural information, the discussion's contents and the conclusions reached, aiming thus to ensure a truly transparent, open, and multi-stakeholder process.

As a result of this process, and thanks to the contributions of so many, Portugal prepared the "Lisbon Declaration on Outer Space" that was presented at the conference in Lisbon and that will be presented next week to this Committee in a Conference Room Paper.

All the sessions are also accessible at the conference website: unportugal.ptspace.pt.

We would like to express our appreciation for the useful comments and kind support expressed by several Member States regarding the organization of the preparatory symposia and of the Lisbon Conference and the Lisbon Declaration for Outer Space. Member States that wish to do so, and we encourage them to do so, can still co-sponsor the CRP regarding the Declaration until tomorrow, before we officially submit it.

One latent and transversal topic was the need for States to come together in common grounds at a faster pace. This consideration has implications not only on the safety aspect of outer space but also on the ways this Committee functions and operates. A clear message on the need for modernization and adequacy was sent and we believe it should be heard.

Portugal supports the mandate, terms of reference and methods of work for an Action Team on Lunar Activities Consultation (ATLAC), as per the paper submitted by Romania and the Republic of Korea. Portugal welcomes the proposal of Germany regarding a study group on perspectives for Space Traffic Management and look forward to its development.

Finally, Portugal continues to implement its national space strategy and has launched in March its second satellite into space, Aeros MH-1. Next month in the inaugural flight of Ariane 6 another satellite will be launched, this one being a CubeSat, designed and built by a national university.

We reaffirm Portugal's full commitment towards COPUOS and its Subcommittees, aiming at a fruitful cooperation for a peaceful and a sustainable use of outer space, and we recognize the important role of UNOOSA in supporting this work.

Thank you