

Committee on the peaceful uses of Outer Space
Scientific and Technical Subcommittee Sixty-first session
Vienna, 19-28 June 2024

Item 6: Ways and Means of Maintaining Outer Space for Peaceful Purposes

Mister Chair, distinguished delegates,

Italy remains steadfast in its commitment to actively contribute to the work of the Committee and support its efforts toward maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes. As mandated by the UN General Assembly Resolution 78/72, requesting COPUOS to consider this item as a matter of priority, Italy recognizes maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes as essential for the international community.

We acknowledge the relevance of multiple fora with different mandates to collectively advance the global governance of outer space. While matters directly related to security issues in outer space are best addressed in fora specifically mandated to tackle such aspects, such as the Conference on Disarmament, it is crucial to foster the leadership of the COPUOS and the General Assembly and ensure complementarity between different entities. We must avoid unnecessary duplication and ensure that the specific mandates of each body are duly respected, while ensuring the necessary coordination. We need a concerted effort to reinforce and adhere to the established framework of norms and principles.

Mr. Chair,

Italy would like to emphasize its efforts as President of the G7 in 2024 to build a frank dialogue with countries from Africa to Asia, Latin America, and the Gulf. Under the Italian Presidency of the G7, Ministers addressed outer space multiple times, particularly at the Industry, Tech, and Digital Meeting, highlighting the role of space technologies in the global economy and encouraging efforts to ensure the long-term sustainability of outer space activities. At the Foreign Affairs Meeting, the Ministers reiterated the importance of upholding the existing legal framework, notably the Outer Space Treaty, remain committed to fostering international cooperation, transparency, and confidence-building measures to promote responsible behaviour with the goal of improving space security for all states.

We are committed to fostering international cooperation, transparency, and confidence-building measures to promote responsible behaviour and improve space security for all States. Italy has actively supported the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) on reducing space threats through norms, rules, and principles of responsible behaviours to reduce the risks of misperceptions and miscalculations. We believe that the European Union Space Strategy for Security and Defence helps build transparency and trust among States, emphasizing the importance of considering not just space objects, technologies, or space capabilities per se, but behaviours as well.

Mr. Chair,

Italy is committed to not conducting destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile tests, as announced by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, following the adoption of UN General Assembly Resolution 77/41 in December 2022, which Italy co-sponsored.

Through initiatives led by the Italian Space Agency, Italy also promotes international, regional, and interregional cooperation. This cooperation aims to establish strategic partnerships with other countries and space agencies to advance technological development and space research, in accordance with international norms, including the Outer Space Treaty in its entirety. Specifically, Article 4 of the treaty addresses the prevention of the placement of nuclear weapons or any other kinds of weapons of mass destruction in outer space and promotes the use of outer space for peaceful purposes. We expect that all Nations similarly strive to uphold these principles of international cooperation and space governance.

In terms of cooperation, the Italian Space Agency has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding such as with the Egyptian Space Agency, aimed at strengthening cooperation in the space sector. Furthermore, Italy continues to consolidate its international relations in the space field with other strategic partners, such as Japan, India and the Republic of Korea. These agreements attest to Italy's commitment to promoting international cooperation and technological development in the space sector.

We place great value on Policy Brief 7 by UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, "For all humanity: The Future of Outer Space Governance," underscoring the challenges of space debris, space traffic coordination, and

space resources. Italy looks forward to the Summit of the Future and encourages all states to prepare for the Summit in September, complimenting the work by Germany and Namibia as co-facilitators of the Zero Draft Pact of the Future.

We also commend the work done by Portugal Space Agency and UNOOSA with the organization of the Management and Sustainability of Outer Space Activities Conference. As we endorse the Lisbon Space Declaration, Italy trusts that the upcoming efforts at the Summit of the Future and within the UN will reinforce effective multilateralism and consolidate the role of COPUOS as an unparalleled forum for addressing the entire range of matters related to the peaceful exploration and utilization of outer space.

The consistent expansion of COPUOS over the years serves as a strong testament to the global acknowledgment of this unparalleled function, considering its inclusive approach to engaging various stakeholders, including young people and civil society organizations.

Italy intends to strengthen the global governance of space and the international framework for space activities grounded in established norms and principles, for the benefit of intergenerational sustainability and accessibility of all States to outer space. We will continue to advocate for a safe and secure space environment and the peaceful use of outer space on an equitable basis.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.