

Japan Item 6 – “Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes”

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Chair, Distinguished delegates,

As space activities have diversified in recent years, Japan acknowledges the importance of upholding the rule of law and calls upon all states to consider ways and means to maintain the safety, sustainability and stability of outer space. COPUOS can serve an essential role to this end. Japan believes COPUOS can also contribute to increasing transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities, through its unique information-sharing platform to encourage improved mutual understanding of each other’s space activities.

Chair,

Given the rapid evolution of the outer space environment and of related technologies, the guidelines for long-term sustainability (LTS) of outer space activities are increasingly becoming a relevant tool to tackle the proliferation of space debris, the increasing complexity of space operations, and the increasing risks of collision and interference that affect the sustainability of space activities.

Space debris, in particular, is becoming an increasingly serious threat to our daily lives as our reliance on space assets grows. Japan retains a long history of research and development in space debris such as mitigation, protection, measurement, modeling, and remediation and reiterates the importance of a holistic approach to realize sustainable space activities.

Active debris removal (ADR) is one of the solutions for debris remediation. The joint project of JAXA and Astroscale Japan, called CRD2, has been operating to demonstrate ADR technologies to achieve orbital debris remediation.

To accelerate the discussion on space debris, Japan submitted a non-paper reflecting our idea on space debris to the last Law Subcommittee. We expect to see continuing discussions on this matter with Member States in the framework of COPUOS.

Japan further supports UNGA resolution 77/41, and reiterates its commitment not to conduct destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile testing (DA-ASAT) and encourages others to follow suit. In order to further develop this initiative, Japan will continue working with like-minded countries to ensure the safety, security, sustainability and stability of outer space.

Chair,

Japan has actively participated in various space cooperation projects for the peaceful uses of outer space. International cooperation promotes mutual understanding, enhances transparency, and builds confidence among nations. I wish to draw your attention to two activities in this regard.

The first activity is the KiboCUBE program. This joint program between UNOOSA and JAXA supports developing countries in deploying their CubeSat from the Japanese “Kibo” module of the ISS. Kibo, which means “hope” in Japanese, has so far helped five international teams from Kenya, Guatemala, Mauritius, Indonesia, and Moldova, realize their hopes of successfully deploying their own CubeSats. The program also offers a unique opportunity for participants to learn and experience elements of international space law through the development and operation of their own CubeSats.

The second activity is the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF). As one of the Indo-Pacific countries, Japan has led this successful initiative for regional peaceful space cooperation for more than 30 years. This open forum attracts participants from space agencies, governmental bodies, and international organizations, such as the United Nations, as well as private companies, universities, and research institutes from over 30 countries. The open framework of APRSAF enables a wide range of entities to participate in various programs under the Forum. In this connection, the APRSAF secretariat and the European Space Policy Institute (ESPI) are organizing a joint side event on the margins of COPUOS titled

“4th Inter-Regional Space Policy Dialogue between Asia-Pacific and Europe,” on Saturday, 22 June at 9:30 a.m. at ESPI headquarters.

Later this year, Australia and Japan will cohost the 30th session of APRSAF from November 26 to 29 in Perth, under the theme “Collaborating to Build a Sustainable and Responsible Regional Space Sector.” We invite all interested parties to participate in the meeting.

Thank you for your attention.