



Permanent Mission of Ukraine
to the International
Organizations in Vienna

**Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine
at the 67th session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space**

20 June 2024

Agenda item 6: “Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes”

Mr. Chair,

The preservation of outer space for peaceful purposes is a complex and comprehensive challenge that requires international cooperation, transparency and the establishment of a legal framework, adherence to which shall be guaranteed. By building trust, encouraging responsible behavior, including through strengthening international legal liability and preventing the weaponization of outer space, the international community can ensure that outer space remains a realm of peace and possibilities for all humankind.

The development of space activities creates incentives for a new forms and directions of cooperation. At the same time, there is a need for all space actors to ensure and guarantee that space activities remain peaceful and for the benefit of all humanity, and that the environment remains safe. Disputes and problems that arise, should be appropriately mitigated and resolved exclusively through the peaceful ways.

The commercialization of space is driving incredible technological progress and scientific breakthroughs, and the possibilities of the space industry continue to expand. But, as a result, humanity is becoming more dependent on space technologies in daily life.

Today, the most important elements of the national infrastructure of most countries are dependent on satellites and the additional benefits that can be obtained from them. The commercialization of space paves the way not only for cooperation and collaboration. The ideologization of space weapons, in particular anti-satellite systems, is also moving the same path.

The question of what consequences an arms race in outer space could have for the global stability and prosperity, should be considered in the broadest context. The destabilizing effects caused by an arms race in outer space through the deployment of weapons in orbit or the development of ground-based weapons systems capable of reaching targets in orbit do not serve any of the interests of the sustainable and peaceful use of outer space.

Obviously, the transformation of space into a battlefield will lead to long-term, surely unpredictable consequences for the stability and sustainability of outer space and its accessibility not only for all current and possible future users, but for humanity as a whole.

Ukraine believes that the issue of space security concerns space objects as well as space activities. Space security requires a comprehensive response covering both civilian and military aspects. Thus, it is advisable for the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to take an active role in the maintaining of outer space for peaceful purposes engaging political figures and representatives of the scientific sphere in addressing this issue. Deeper and more coordinated cooperation between space actors can contribute to a peaceful space environment.

Mutual trust and understanding will definitely benefit from joint missions, joint research initiatives and projects. However, it is important that such joint activities are not just declared in adherence to the principles laid down in the Outer Space Treaty, but are regulated by a transparent, clear and understandable international treaty. That is why initiatives to develop an international code of conduct for responsible behavior in space should be welcomed.

The increasing number of space objects also raises the important issue of space situational awareness. The effective space traffic control can prevent accidental conflicts and ensure the safe operation of satellites and other space objects. Therefore, the creation of international space traffic control protocols can reduce the risk of spacecraft collisions and further controversy.

Another aspect of the increase in the number of space objects in space is the increase of space debris. An important step in this regard is to ensure that satellites are designed in such a way that they can re-enter the Earth's atmosphere and burn up after completing their mission. From a legal point of view, mandatory procedures for the safe decommissioning of satellites and other space objects should be introduced. This is important since the research and development of active space debris removal technologies will help clean up existing space debris.

International cooperation on these technologies can lead to effective solutions to maintain a safe and sustainable space environment. However, Article VIII of the Outer Space Treaty establishes that ownership rights to space objects launched into outer space, including objects delivered or constructed on a celestial body, and to their components shall remain undisturbed while they are in outer space or on a celestial body or after their return to Earth. A space object does not cease to be an object of property rights after it becomes space debris. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a legal mechanism that would guarantee the clearance of outer space from space debris without violating property rights.

**Mr. Chair,
Distinguished Delegates,**

We would also like to reiterate our position on the draft resolution of the UN General Assembly on "Space science and technology for promoting peace", proposed by the Russian Federation.

Despite the fact that there is a common interest of all humankind in promoting and expanding the exploration and use of outer space as a heritage of all humankind for peaceful

purposes and in accordance with international law, we believe that the draft resolution proposed by Russia is unacceptable. This draft has been tabled for consideration in the most cynical way by the state, which by its own actions hinders not only the development but also the very existence of space science and technology in Ukraine.

During the sessions of the Scientific and Technical and Legal Subcommittees, Ukraine emphasized that the development of space technologies should directly serve the peaceful use and exploration of outer space.

However, Russia's unprovoked and unjustified full-scale invasion of Ukraine, launched on 24 February 2022, once again emphasizes the vulnerability of both outer space and space technologies, and the international space order as such. Space technologies, which should improve people's lives by paving the way for the future, are widely used today by the aggressor state of Russia in the military sphere.

The Russian war of aggression hinders space research, the development of space technologies and space education in Ukraine. The constant threat of missile attacks on educational institutions, research centers, and production facilities of Ukrainian space companies leads to the fact that our country is deprived of the opportunity to use its full potential, which has been accumulated over many years in the space industry.

By its actions, Russia is making it impossible for our country to access space sciences and technologies, hindering the development of national space science and technology, space services and digital technologies.

In addition, the aggressor state physically destroys the existing space infrastructure in Ukraine with constant missile attacks and hinders the conditions for innovation activities.

Another negative factor of Russian aggression that hinders the development of science and technology in Ukraine is the brain drain of highly qualified skilled workers: engineers and scientists from space companies and scientific and research institutions.

Thus, the Russian Federation has deliberately created conditions under which Ukraine cannot benefit from space science and technology, nor can it fully participate in the exploration and use of outer space.

In the view of the above, Ukraine cannot support the Russian draft resolution and would like to indicate that there is no consensus on the endorsement of this document by the Committee for its further submission to the UN General Assembly.

I thank you Mr. Chair.