



## **67th session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space**

**19-28 June 2024**

### **Statement by Australia**

#### **Agenda item 8: Report of the Legal Subcommittee on its sixty-third session**

Thank you Chair, distinguished delegates.

Australia welcomed the opportunity to exchange views at the sixty-third session of the Legal Subcommittee.

Australia thanks the Subcommittee Chair, Mr Santiago Ripol Carulla of Spain, and the Secretariat for their organisation of the session.

Since the adoption of the Outer Space Treaty, humanity's use of space has evolved significantly. As science and technology have driven us forward, so has our ability to access and interact with the space environment.

It is for this reason that the principles within the United Nations space treaties, as well as our ability to come to consensus, are now more important than ever.

As a founding member of the Committee, Australia is committed to its international obligations and engagement with Member States through the Committee. Australia reaffirms the Legal Subcommittee as the key multilateral

forum for discussion of legal questions related to the exploration and use of outer space.

This is why Australia expresses its disappointment that the Subcommittee was unable to reach consensus on a report during its sixty-third session – particularly given the Committee’s enduring history of cooperation. We will interpret the conclusion of this year’s session of the Subcommittee as an exception to established practices, and not as setting a precedent.

Notwithstanding these developments, Australia considers that the session provided a welcome opportunity for the Subcommittee to discuss key issues.

### ***Legal aspects of space resource activities***

Australia supports the exploration, exploitation and use of space resources in a manner consistent with international law.

Australia shared its views on legal aspects of space resource activities under agenda item 9 and in the meetings of the Working Group on Legal Aspects of Space Resource Activities. We also attended the International Conference on Space Resources and the expert meeting collecting preliminary inputs for consideration. Thank you to Luxembourg, Belgium, the Secretariat, and Chair and Vice-Chair of the Working Group for their organisation of these events.

Australia was pleased to present a Conference Room Paper (CRP) for the Subcommittee’s consideration, entitled ‘*Consideration of general themes and*

*obligations, commitments or guidelines to an activity contributing to exploration and scientific investigation of the Moon* (A/AC.105/C.2/2024/CRP.24). This paper outlined some general themes and obligations, commitments or guidelines of the existing framework, that may apply to an Australian activity contributing to exploration and scientific investigation of the Moon. The CRP helped to inform discussions regarding the development of a set of initial recommended principles for activities in the exploration, exploitation and utilisation of space resources.

Australia has also been engaging with our domestic space sector to seek their views. On 28 February 2024, the Australian Space Agency hosted a Space Regulation Advisory Collective forum on space resources, which was attended by industry, academia and other non-government entities.

The forum identified themes which overlap with those in our CRP, highlighting areas of particular interest for Australia. These include activities being undertaken ‘in accordance with international law’, cooperation, exploration and use, extraction and utilisation of space resources, and environmental protection.

Australia welcomes the progress made by the Working Group and looks forward to continuing to contribute.

Australia thanks the Working Group Chair Ambassador Andrzej Misztal of Poland and Vice-Chair Professor Steven Freeland of Australia, for their leadership.

### ***Status and application of the five United Nations treaties on outer space***

Australia was pleased to take part in discussions of the Working Group on the Status and Application of the Five United Nations Treaties on Outer Space.

Australia welcomed support for a multi-year workplan, including to develop a template or model submission form as a voluntary tool to submit information to the Secretary-General on the nature, conduct, locations and result of activities in outer space.

Australia thanks the Chair of the Working Group, Dr Franziska Knur of Germany, for her able leadership.

### ***Closing***

Chair,

The sixty-third session of the Legal Subcommittee progressed consideration of important matters in the peaceful uses of outer space.

Australia looks forward to further engagement with Member States at the next session of the Subcommittee. Thank you.