

Canada Statement
Agenda Item 8 – Report of the Legal Subcommittee on its Sixty-Third Session.
Delivered by: Ashlyn Milligan, Global Affairs Canada

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
Sixty-seventh session, Vienna, 19 – 28 June, 2024

Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

Canada thanks UNOOSA and those Delegations that actively contributed to discussions at the Sixty-Third Session of the Legal Subcommittee. The LSC has the important role of studying the nature of legal issues arising from the peaceful exploration and use of outer space. Building a common understanding of these legal issues is of paramount importance to maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes.

This year's session was very productive right up to the final day. Canada deeply regrets that the Subcommittee was not able to agree on a final substantive report. Our delegation believes that it is imperative that all Subcommittee members exercise flexibility and good faith in report negotiations and adhere to long-standing and widely accepted practices which help facilitate our work. We appreciate the Secretariat's efforts to secure approval of an LSC procedural report and sincerely hope that this COPUOS session can bring forward key decisions and recommendations from the LSC.

The Working Group on Legal Aspects of Space Resource Activities recognized the valuable contribution made by the expert meeting held on 26 March 2024, co-hosted by Luxembourg and Belgium and organized in cooperation with the United Nations. The Working Group also benefited from the presentations made as part of the international conference held during the Sixty-Third session of the LSC. Canada welcomes the report prepared by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Working Group on the outcomes of those two events.

The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Working Group guided delegations through an informative discussion on elements for the development of an initial set of recommended principles for space resource activities, including:

- The freedom of exploration and use of outer space;
- The principal of due regard;

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- Transparency and the importance of information exchange; and,
- The applicability of international law to space resource activities.

The Working Group agreed that the Chair and Vice-Chair would prepare an initial draft set of recommended principles for space resource activities based on these discussions and further contributions from Member States, which are to be submitted by 16 September 2024. The Chair and Vice-Chair continue to make significant commitments of time and effort to advance the progress of the Working Group. Canada commends them for their efforts and encourages all delegations to show their support for the Chair and Vice-Chair through constructive participation.

The Working Group on the Status and Application of the Five United Nations Treaties also made substantive progress at this year's session, including an examination of State practice in relation to Article XI of the Outer Space Treaty. Canada commends the Chair of the Working Group for efficiently guiding its work and providing structure to deliberations for the purpose of achieving practical results.

Chair,

At this year's session of the Legal Subcommittee, there was great interest in discussions regarding the topics of space resource utilization, space traffic management, space debris, and the use of small satellites. It was evident from those discussions that these are high priority issues for many delegations. The Legal Subcommittee should take good note of this interest and structure its work with the aim of addressing those topics. We urge all COPUOS member States to be prepared to actively contribute while the relevant agenda items are open for discussion. It is only through active participation and the exchange of ideas that the Legal Subcommittee can achieve progress in its study of the legal issues relevant to peaceful exploration and use of outer space and deliver the practical guidance needed by space-faring States in the 21st century.

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Thank you.