

Canada Statement
Agenda Item 9 – Space and Sustainable Development
Delivered by: Sarah Pacey-Parker, Canadian Space Agency

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

Chair, Distinguished delegates,

Space4Women, an initiative of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA), seeks to raise awareness about the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment in the space sector. Its work is focused on: strengthening and delivering targeted capacity-building activities both at the institutional and individual levels; encouraging women and girls to pursue space and STEM education and careers; and contributing to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 4 – Quality Education and 5 – Gender Equality.

As part of this work, UNOOSA co-hosts Space4Women Expert Meetings. The most recent meeting, co-hosted by Canada, brought together global experts to help prepare the first Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit for the space sector.

The Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit offers simple and practical measures that space organizations can adopt to help bring about meaningful improvements for *gender equality* in the global space community and help organizations overcome the ongoing challenges faced by women in the space sector. The Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit emphasizes the critical role that *quality education* plays in advancing gender equality.

Chair,

The space industry is an innovative and rapidly expanding sector. However, it can only achieve its full potential if firms can access the talent they need to generate and advance cutting edge ideas. There is an opportunity to expand the pool of talent available to space firms by including more women and girls – but we first need to ensure that women and girls have *access to quality education*. Most decent jobs in the global space industry require STEM-related skills. Although several countries are investing in STEM fields, women hold only one in five STEM jobs worldwide. This reflects that women and girls continue to have fewer opportunities to *pursue higher education*. Though most girls

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begin primary education, less than half make it to the upper secondary level where STEM skills are solidified.

Although statistics now show that women are graduating in STEM programmes at faster rates than men, many women are still unable to obtain or advance in jobs in STEM fields due to barriers like gender bias and discrimination. Women are underrepresented in leadership, managerial and technical positions – and these barriers are amplified for marginalized groups of women.

Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

The Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit offers practical measures to help women overcome these barriers. As such, Canada wants to encourage its widespread adoption. Doing so will help to ensure that the future of the global space sector is more equitable for women of all backgrounds, which means the benefits of space can reach everyone.

Finally, we would like to invite you all to the side event “Space Solutions Supporting SDGs - Space Solutions Compendium”, a joint side event co-organised by Austria, Canada, the European Space Agency (ESA) and the Office for Outer Space Affairs (OOSA) to be held from 13:10 to 14:00 on June 27th in room M2.

Thank you for your kind attention.