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Statement Item 14: Space Exploration

Mr. Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

Italy's heritage in space exploration spans more than half a century, grounded in scientific excellence, technological innovation and strong international partnerships. Both at bilateral level and as an active Member State of ESA, Italy has consistently contributed to pioneering missions and advanced a robust industrial ecosystem that strengthens both national leadership and multinational cooperation in space science and exploration.

Today, lunar exploration stands at the forefront of our national ambitions. Italy is one of only three **Artemis Accords** signatories—alongside the United States and Japan—with a comprehensive national lunar programme. In the frame of the **Artemis Programme**, in partnership with NASA, Italy is developing the **Multi-Purpose Habitation Module-MPH**. It will offer pressurized crew quarters, a microgravity laboratory and standardized docking ports compatible with all partner vehicles. Its regenerative life-support systems, cargo-transfer lock and robotic interfaces exemplify our commitment to sustainable operations and environmental stewardship. Through shared technical standards and open data-sharing, the MPH embodies the Accords' principles of interoperability, transparency and peaceful exploration, and reinforces our vision for a lasting human presence in cislunar space.

In parallel, working with Germany and France, Italy will lead **ESA's Argonaut lunar-lander programme**. Scheduled for launch in 2030, Argonaut will deliver cargo, infrastructure and scientific instruments—including telecommunications, navigation payloads and a rover—to the lunar surface. This initiative represents Europe's autonomous access to the Moon and supports exploration of its scientifically rich southern region.

Italy is also at the forefront of **ESA's Moonlight constellation**, Europe's first dedicated lunar communications and navigation network. Designed to be interoperable with partner systems, Moonlight will provide critical services to future surface and orbital missions, further advancing international collaboration.

Earlier this year we celebrated another milestone for space exploration: the successful launch of **LuGRE, the Lunar GNSS Receiver Experiment**. LuGRE has already demonstrated real-time satellite navigation at unprecedented distances, paving the way for precise positioning and guidance in lunar operations.

Looking ahead, Italy remains resolute in advocating for the sustainable and responsible use of outer space. We support the development of international frameworks that ensure safety, security and environmental protection, and we stand ready to collaborate on defining common rules for sustainable lunar activities. In this spirit, we reaffirm our commitment to the Artemis Accords, and welcome **ATLAC** as a forum to harmonize national efforts and advance a transparent, rules-based regime for lunar exploration.

Mr Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

by working together—sharing knowledge, technology and responsibility—we can ensure that our return to the Moon benefits all humankind.

Thank you.