

**68<sup>th</sup> session of the UN COPUOS**

**Agenda item 4 General Exchange of Views**

**Statement by the Head of the Delegation of Poland, Amb. Marek Szczygiel, Permanent Representative**

**Vienna, 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

Mr. Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

I would like to wish you, Mr. Chair, every success in leading the 68th session of COPUOS in the spirit of collaboration.

We are grateful to Mr. Sherif Mohamed Sedky for his excellent leadership and dedication to COPUOS activities throughout his term as Chair.

I wish to extend our sincere appreciation to Ms. Director Holla-Maini and to the UNOOSA for their excellent management of COPUOS sessions and its Subcommittees.

Excellencies,

My delegation aligns itself with the statement of the European Union, including strong condemnation of Russian unprovoked aggression against Ukraine and full support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We wish to make some additional remarks in our national capacity

Poland values the initiatives and activities carried out during the ongoing annual cycle of work by COPUOS and its Subcommittees, aimed at ensuring the safe, peaceful, and responsible conduct of space activities.

Nowadays, we observe a rapid development of the outer space sector and technology, the increasing involvement of new actors and the commercialization of outer space activities. However, we really advance in exploring the outer space with the return of humankind to the Moon. In this context, we welcome the progress made by the Action Team on Lunar Activities Consultation aimed at facilitating the information exchange on lunar exploration activities, fostering international cooperation and avoiding harmful interference in the interest of peaceful, safe and sustainable lunar activities for the benefit of all humankind.

We strongly propose starting the discussion on the preservation of lunar heritage sites and objects of scientific or historical significance. In our view, the preservation of lunar heritage should be a global concern related to the recognition of the value of outer space heritage and its vulnerability in the absence of universal norms or mechanisms ensuring its protection.

Mr. Chair,

During its Presidency of the Council of the European Union, Poland prioritized discussions on the strategic use of satellite technologies and data – including Earth observation constellations – for crisis management, as a vital element of strengthening the security and resilience of the EU and its Member States.

The Council Conclusions adopted under Poland's leadership emphasized the potential of artificial intelligence algorithms and the integration of satellite data in disaster response, climate change impact assessment, cross-border security challenges and the importance of synergies between the space and defence sectors.

Poland also hosted a series of significant events, including the European Space Agency's 3rd Security Conference in Warsaw; the EU Space Days in Gdańsk.

Mr. Chair,

On 25 June 2025 at 8:31 a.m. CET, Axiom Mission 4 (Ax-4) was launched from NASA Kennedy Space Center. Part of this endeavour is the IGNIS Mission – the first Polish mission to the International Space Station (ISS), marking a milestone in our nation's space history.

After reaching orbit, Dr. Sławosz Uznański-Wiśniewski, second Polish astronaut ever in space, said quote: *"Today, we are taking a giant leap towards Poland's technological future – Let this mission be the beginning of an era in which our courage and determination shape a modern Poland. For us and for generations to come"*. Unquote

The IGNIS Mission is a landmark technological and scientific undertaking that reflects Poland's growing role in the global space sector. It was possible thanks to the agreement concluded between Poland and the European Space Agency (ESA) on 4 August 2023. Its primary aim is to test state-of-the-art Polish space technologies in orbit and stimulate innovation capacities across the Polish space industry.

During this mission Polish astronaut, will conduct experiments prepared by Polish industry and academic institutions, covering fields such as engineering, biotechnology, artificial intelligence, machine learning, neuropsychology, and neurophysiology. A key benefit for Polish science and industry will be the acquisition of "flight heritage"- critical experience and validation of technologies in space, positioning Poland as a valuable partner in future international projects and missions.

Mr. Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

We would like to underline that COPUOS should remain central to space diplomacy, given that nowadays the biggest challenges encountered in exploration of the outer space are of an intrinsically multilateral nature.

Thank you.