

COPUOS 2025**Agenda Item 5: Ways and Means of Maintaining Space for Peaceful Purposes
United Kingdom**

Chair,

There are a growing number of challenges in space. We are seeing an exponential growth in the number of satellites in space, as well as space-faring nations, resulting in a more congested and contested space environment. The threat from space debris is spreading, and the prospect of states developing counter-space capabilities further emphasises the increasing threat to outer space systems. These are just some of the threats and hazards that individually or in combination put access, and use of, space at risk.

At the First and Fourth Committee Joint panel discussion meeting at the 79th UN General Assembly states discussed what more we can do to strengthen international cooperation for the exploration and use of outer space. States must comply with their obligations under the Outer Space Treaty and international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, which applies to outer space and is applicable to all activities of states including those relating to the exploration and use of outer space. We should also have better understanding of how different parts of the UN system can and should contribute to this task within their own respective mandates.

Since then, we have seen the establishment of the Open-Ended Working Group on Preventing an Arms Race in Space. Efforts to strengthen international peace and security in Geneva can also benefit the discussions on safety and sustainability in Vienna, thus benefiting the work of COPUOS, and vice versa. Both committees

consider how norms can be applied to both space security and the long-term sustainability of space, through the establishment of responsible space behaviours and at the OEWG, and the development of long-term sustainability guidelines here at COPUOS.

Both UNGA Committees and their subsidiary bodies play a role in ensuring that human activity in outer space is safe, secure, stable, and sustainable, so that space systems can continue to deliver benefits to humanity into the future.

In this context, Chair, we continue to have concerns about the draft Resolution entitled “*Space science and technology for promoting peace*”. In particular, we are concerned about undermining existing processes, without consensus, and going direct to the General Assembly. The UK believes that, procedurally, such an approach undermines the valuable discussions we are having here at COPUOS, under relevant agenda items at the STSC, and, where appropriate, in Geneva. For this reason, we note that there is no consensus on that proposal.

We encourage all states to engage in the upcoming OEWG, which may build on previous discussions on substantial elements of a Legally binding instrument on PAROS as well as on responsible space behaviours.

Thank you, Chair.