

68th Session of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), Vienna, 25 June – 2 July 2025

Agenda item 4: General exchange of views

Statement by Bulgaria

Chair,

Distinguished Delegates,

Bulgaria fully aligns with the EU statement and would like to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

Chair,

At the outset, the Bulgarian delegation would like to extend its congratulations to you Dr. Rafiq Akram for assuming the chairmanship of COPUOS and to wish you every success in this important task. We also express our appreciation to the Director Aarti Holla-Maini and the Secretariat for their continued efforts to facilitate access to the benefits of space in support of sustainable development.

Chair,

The role of UNOOSA and COPUOS in promoting transparency and fostering cooperation based on the 1967 Outer Space Treaty are indisputable, and also recognized in the Pact for the Future, adopted by the UNGA last year.

This year's COPUOS session is taking place in a complex geopolitical environment, which poses challenges to UNOOSA and the Committee. As highlighted in the recent Strategic Review, essential reforms are urgently required to address the disparity between the mandate of UNOOSA and its limited resources to ensure that UNOOSA will continue to help us, the Member States, harness the full potential of space and space technologies to improve the daily lives and wellbeing of our societies.

Bulgaria expresses its support for the convening of United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space IV (UNISPACE IV) in Vienna in 2027 and emphasizes the importance of providing the adequate resources to UNOOSA for its realisation.

We also reaffirm our support for the Action Team on Lunar Activities Consultations (ATLAC), co-chaired by Romania and Pakistan, and look forward to the adoption of its workplan. We believe ATLAC will contribute to the development of safe, sustainable, and transparent lunar activities.

As a country with longstanding traditions in space science, research and development Bulgaria welcomes the discussions on "Dark and Quiet Skies for Science and Society" within the STSC agenda, which will contribute to our joint efforts to find a way for sustainable coexistence of satellite constellations and astronomical research. In this regard we support the Conference room paper on this topic presented by Spain and Chile.

Chair,

On a national policy level our short-term top priority remains the development of a National Space Strategy and a National Space Programme. These core documents will outline the strategic direction for the Bulgarian space sector and will be aligned with national strategies for industry, science, and innovation.

Bulgaria is actively working to accelerate its transition toward Associate Membership in the European Space Agency.

In parallel, we are committed to enhancing our engagement with the European Union Agency for the Space Programme. Bulgaria sees great potential in strengthening its involvement in the Union's key initiatives, such as the Galileo satellite navigation system, the Copernicus Earth observation programme, and secure governmental satellite communications. We also seek to expand international cooperation and partnerships that support the strategic growth of our national space sector. In 2023 Bulgaria joined the Artemis Accords and sees its participation as an opportunity to stimulate innovation and business development.

Chair,

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that Bulgaria is a strong supporter of multilateralism, with the UN at its core. Multilateralism plays a vital role in maintaining peace and security, as it fosters cooperation among nations. This collaborative approach is closely linked to development, including the goals outlined in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this regard, we urge all parties to uphold the rules-based international order, underpinned by the UN Charter, and abide by their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law.

We look forward to fruitful deliberations during the present session.