

Poland, item 4

Madame Chair,

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

Let me at the outset to congratulate you Madame Chair, on behalf of our delegation, on your election and assumption of the post of Chair of the Legal Subcommittee. We are sure that under your leadership we will be able to reach all the goals before us during this session.

We would like to thank Ms. Setsuko Aoki from Japan for her leadership, guidance and dedication she manifested throughout her term as Chair of the Legal Subcommittee, which was crucial for its functioning in the demanding times of lockdowns and related limitations, allowing us to achieve success to be remembered.

Let me also express our appreciation to the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs and the Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Niklas Hedman, Acting Director of the Office, and all his staff, for their ongoing efforts to ensure proper, safe and effective management of the sessions.

At this juncture let me express our appreciation and congratulations to Simonetta di Pippo for her tireless efforts and dedication. She marked the activity of the UNOOSA with her extraordinary commitment; she made her own important impact on the political significance of COPUOS, ensuring thus the smooth and successful completion of many tasks that were before us during the previous years.

All of this has prepared a solid ground for future of the Office, whose importance cannot be overstated. We wish her every success in all her personal and professional plans and future assignments. We will continue with the spirit of compromise that was prevailing during her tenure. We wish all the success to the Acting Director, in the exercise of his duties and we assure him of our full support.

Madame Chair,

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union and wishes to make some additional remarks in its national capacity.

With important developments within the mandate and the successful recent sessions, this session of the Legal Subcommittee of the Committee for the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space is overshadowed by the aggression of Russia against Ukraine.

Poland condemns this deplorable act of barbarity. It is absolutely unthinkable that war is used against all the norms and principles of international law, to promote baseless allegations so shamelessly claimed contrary to the reason and truth.

War itself is unthinkable, and even more -- absolutely abhorrent is the scale of war crimes by the Russian forces that cause enormous suffering of the civilian population, with the most vulnerable groups being those most targeted. From those who succeeded to flee the biggest humanitarian crisis since World War II, more than 2 million refugees were received by my country.

It is absolutely essential for the Russian Federation to comply with the interim measures ruled by the International Court of Justice and especially to suspend its military operations in Ukraine. This war must be stopped. In the meantime, however painful it might be, there is no other choice for us than to continue with the work that this Subcommittee must fulfil.

Madame Chair,

As we stated on several occasions the multilateralism cannot be replaced by any other format or method to achieve the global goals, and this is especially true today. There is no other way to ensure the governance of outer space activities to which we have pledged to contribute and by decisions we took together, which united us for years. We are happy with the growing membership of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and we welcome Angola, Bangladesh, Kuwait, Panama and Slovenia as new members of the Committee.

[Long term sustainability]

There are several subjects that draw our attention throughout this annual cycle of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, and one of them is not reflected in the agenda of this Subcommittee, and I refer to the Working Group on the Long-term sustainability of space activities. It too – due to the precise nature of the subject it deals with has major impact already on the perception of the Guidelines that were adopted in the first stage of the Working Group.

We fully support the implementation of the Long-Term Sustainability Guidelines in the process of undertaking the outer space activities. In this regard, we would like to state again that Poland has recently taken part in the Phase 2 of the Awareness-raising and capacity-building related to the implementation of the LTS Guidelines Project, carried out by UNOOSA, during which we were given the opportunity to briefly

present our country's main activities and objectives in terms of exploration and peaceful use of outer space, as well as to share the challenges that Polish space sector has experienced and is still facing through implementation practices.

We hope to continue our active involvement in the process with the aim of preparing national solutions to deal with the space activity but also which will enable us to participate in the international cooperation in the full dimension of a responsible stakeholder.

We would like to express once again our full support to the work of the new LTS Working Group, and we hope it will be able to contribute to the development of appropriate framework. The norms, supplemented by principles and guidelines that have been formulated throughout the peaceful cooperation within the UN, all this heritage shows us the avenues the Subcommittee may take to provide the international community with appropriate, reasonable, solid, effective framework, sought by many in order to ensure the sustainable use of outer space, with all possible benefits for this and future generations.

[Space resources]

During this session of the Legal Subcommittee most of the delegations, as ours, focus the attention on the agenda item "General exchange of views on potential legal models for activities in the exploration, exploitation and utilization of space resources".

With the establishment of the Working Group on this agenda item of the LSC last year, we made an important step towards the area that requires from us special vision and expertise.

We appreciate very much the work done by the Co-Chairs of the Working Group, Amb. Andrzej Misztal and prof. Steven Freeland in the preparation for this session of the Legal Subcommittee. We believe the further revised version of the five-year workplan, prepared on the basis of inputs from Member states presents a good set of practical elements placed in logical order and will eventually lead us to the adoption of the plan during this session.

We are already in the first year covered by the plan and as the informal consultations of the Working Group held on March 15th, showed it is essential for us all to reflect on the feasibility of the sequence of actions, preserving at the same time the momentum and ambitions that we all demonstrated before since this is a challenge

that requires quick response. We welcome all the efforts made by delegations that provide for substantive inputs and indicate practical ways of dealing with the debates.

[Artemis Accords]

Poland has recently joined the group of signatories of the Artemis Accords. We believe this step will open to us the possibility to participate actively, taking into account our own capabilities and ambitions, in the programs of space exploration. We intend to use our experience to contribute to multilateral efforts to further develop international practices concerning activities on the Moon and other celestial bodies.

Moreover, we believe Artemis Accords, being an attempt to establish a common framework for further space exploration activities, with its philosophy and specific focus can contribute to the development of opinion on the existing norms of international space law. We also hope the experience of signatories to the Artemis Accords and subsequent application of these, will open the discussion on the issues that still need to be solved and new items that were never part of the discussion in the COPUOS or elsewhere, which will eventually lead to the achievement of consensus, in line with the spirit of cooperation that always prevailed in this setting.

Madame Chair,

Let me in conclusion refer to the agenda item 10 - Future role and method of work of the Committee.

We welcome the work that has been done until now by the Secretariat on this issue with the view to cataloguing elements for consideration by delegations, and we have followed with great interest the discussion on the background paper. We think that the small steps the COPUOS community is taking will be beneficial for the process in the long perspective.

In this context we would like to welcome the decision of the Legal Subcommittee to have the meetings of the Working Group on definition and delimitation of the outer space on a biannual basis. This way we are able to use our time more efficiently. My delegation is of the view that we should continue in a cooperative manner to seek possible measures to better use the time of sessions, without prejudice to the mandate and agenda.

One of the elements my delegation considers as important with regards to the methods of work, is the enhanced coordination between the COPUOS and its

Subcommittees. In this context, we suggest that within the reporting by the Subcommittees the respective Chairs have the opportunity to introduce main features of the reports with their assessment and that could be the basis for the debate within the respective agenda items. We are aware that some practical and formal issues have to be solved additionally in order to implement this solution and we are ready to further elaborate on this subject with you Madame Chair and other delegations.

Madame Chair,

Distinguished delegates,

My delegation strongly believes in the potential of this Subcommittee and its ability to shape on a consensual basis the future schemes that would facilitate the activities in outer space. There is no alternative to negotiations, there is no alternative to diplomacy. Let's work together to benefit from the unique platform the COPUOS and its Subcommittees provide to produce further positive results.

Thank you for your attention.