

Republic of Korea, Item 3

**UN COPUOS Legal Subcommittee, Sixty-second Session 21 Mar, 2023**

Madam Chair, Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates,

I would like to begin by thanking Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, Mr. Niklas Hedman, and the Secretariat for their contribution to organizing the 62<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Legal Subcommittee. Also, it is my pleasure to congratulate you on your chairmanship of the Legal Subcommittee.

With the sharp increase in the number of space actors and the dramatic expansion of outer space activities, I believe that the role of the Legal Subcommittee has become even more important as a focal point for discussions on legal framework regarding space activities. For the coming weeks, my delegation looks forward to a constructive debate, aiming at strengthening space norms and laws and fostering international cooperation to ensure the safety and sustainability of space activities.

Madam Chair,

I am honored to have this opportunity to introduce to you the national space activities of the Republic of Korea. Last

November, the Korean government announced ‘The Space Economy Roadmap,’ which represented the country’s long-term space activity plans for the next 20 years and beyond. Based on this Roadmap, we are planning to establish a government agency exclusively dedicated to space and aeronautic matters by the end of this year and to launch a Lunar lander by 2032. Also, to establish an advanced legal system for space development, we are pursuing a new piece of legislation, the Basic Act of Space Development.

The Republic of Korea has continued its efforts to improve domestic space legislation to regulate space activities in accordance with international space norms, rules, and principles. Last year, we revised the Space Development Promotion Act to regulate space activities by private actors for a safe and sustainable space environment. The definition of ‘suborbital launch vehicle’ has also been introduced to “an artificial space object that is designed and manufactured to ascend to a height of more than 100 kilometers above sea level by its own propulsion system and then descend.” According to this new definition, not only low-orbit satellites but also test launch vehicles which do not reach a satellite orbit can be managed as suborbital launch vehicles by domestic law. Test launch vehicles are now required to obtain prior permission and to complete preliminary registration.

Madam Chair,

I would like to draw your kind attention to Korea's endeavor to contribute to the mitigation of space debris, in the consideration of an increasing interest in protecting the space environment. We have adopted the 'Space Debris Mitigation Recommendations for the Development and Operation of Spacecraft' in 2020. Last year, the Republic of Korea hosted the meeting of the IADC (Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee) in Jeju Island. It was a meaningful occasion for space experts and organizations to share opinions on such issues as active removal of space debris, the necessity of additional guidelines to protect the space environment, and so on.

Like many others, under the principle of the peaceful use of outer space, we are interested in promoting space resources development activities. Space exploration is one of the main priorities in Korea's space policy. The Korean government is working on a project for building a lunar lander. At the same time, Korea intends to contribute more to the international governance discussions on space resources development activities. As a case in point, we are willing to actively participate in the UN COPUOS Working Group on Legal Aspects of Space Resource Activities and the Artemis Accords Working Group on Deconfliction and Emerging Actors.

Madam Chair,

I would like to conclude by emphasizing once again how international space law provides a sound basis for the peaceful use of outer space and for the safety and sustainability of outer space activities. As a member state to relevant space treaties, the Republic of Korea will continue to promote acceptance and implementation of international space law for the benefit of all. My delegation stands ready to provide its full support for the significant and vibrant discussions for the next two weeks.

Thank you. Madam Chair.

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