

Portugal Statement
**Sixtieth second session of the Legal Sub-Committee of the United Nations Committee on the
Peaceful Uses of Outer Space**
Vienna, 20-31.03.2023

Madam Chair, Distinguished Representatives,

1. As this is the first time the Portuguese delegation is taking the floor in this session, I would like to start to assure you, Madame Majaja, our full cooperation and support in your chairmanship of the Legal Subcommittee. I also would like to thank UNOOSA, its acting Director, Mr Headman, and the Secretariat for their excellent work in supporting this meeting and the ongoing works of this session.

2. Further to the statement delivered earlier by the distinguished representative of the European Union, which we fully support in all its extension, including the reference to the military aggression in Ukraine, we would like to convey some additional points in this Subcommittee under our national capacity.

Madam Chair,

3. During the next decade we will continue to assist the massive transformation of the space sector: new ways of space exploration and mostly new ways of space exploitation and we need to be prepared and to plan ahead for them all. Therefore, we reaffirm Portugal's full commitment towards **COPUOS** and its **Subcommittees** as they present the platform that can host and foster a fruitful cooperation for a peaceful and a sustainable use of outer space.

4. In that sense, Portugal strongly supports the “**Our Common Agenda**” proposed by the UN Secretary-General and “a stronger, more networked and inclusive multilateral system, anchored within the United Nations”, that also encompasses a “multi-stakeholder dialogues on outer space” for a peaceful, lawful, secure and sustainable use of outer space.

5. Portugal will actively contribute to the outer space dialogue and host an international conference on the topic of **Management & Sustainability of Space Activities**, a road map in support of the track of the outer space track of the **Summit of the Future**, in May 2024.

The goal of the event is to provide contributions for the Summit of the Future, with regular status presentation to COPUOS and its subcommittees. To achieve this goal two preparatory symposiums will be convened, one mere centred in technical issues, other more focused on governance, in order to consult international experts and member States.

The conference, organized in full alignment with the appointed co-facilitators of the Summit of the Future, should address the need for the international community to come together and discuss ways to reinforce space governance and further strengthen the sustainability of human space activities.

6. In this regard, Portugal is committed to follow closely the complex ongoing discussion regarding the definition and delimitation of **outer space** and its relation to space governance, trough the Working Group to be reconvened in accordance with paragraph 4 of General Assembly resolution 77/121 also having in mind high-altitude platforms and suborbital flights

7. Regarding Dark and Quiet Skies, Portugal most welcomes the Symposium organized by the International Institute of Space Law and the European Centre for Space Law on “**Legal aspects of a dark and quiet sky**”, as we strong advocate for importance of the sustainability and preservation of nocturnal skies no only to enhance our understanding of the Universe, but also to protect space as a heritage of all humanity and for the

protection of nocturnal wildlife from light pollution. Discussions in the legal principles and mechanisms to enable effective protection of the night sky, especially regarding the impact of the satellite constellations on astronomy and in navigation, are much appreciated.

8. With respect to **Space Resources**, Portugal fully supports the Working Group and salutes Mr. Misztal and Mr. Freeland, as Chair and Vice-Chair, for their leadership in all the fruitful work during the intersessional period, hoping that consensus can be reached in some outstanding issues already during this session.

9. We all know and signal in our declarations the paramount importance of the Outer Space Treaty. But we also know that the obligation on transparency on information about space activities with the UN Secretary-General, as well as the public and the international scientific community, is not always fulfilled. In this sense, we welcome the paper presented by Luxembourg, Germany and others on “Dedicated tools and practices for Enhanced **Information Sharing**”, stressing the importance of “Information Sharing for Safety and Sustainability”. During agenda item 2, on Monday morning, we’ve heard the number of member states that have ratified the Outer Space Treaty and the number of States that have ratified the **Registry** or the **Liability conventions**.

We urge those member states that have not done so yet, to do it and in a timely manner in order that we all can be compliant to the already agreed upon international legal framework on space activities.

10. Portugal continues committed to actively promote the preservation of a safe and secure space environment and to the safeguard of the long-term use of outer space, having incorporated a reference to the LTS guidelines in its national regulation on the licencing procedure of space operations, being those understood as launch and return operations or command and control operations. Portugal intends to also apply this reference to future licencing procedures on the establishment of launch centres, being those in land or in sea platforms.

Madam Chair,

11. I will conclude, mentioning that this year edition of the Portuguese Space Agency's annual conference, the **New Space Atlantic Summit**, will have Space Diplomacy and International Relations as one of its prime focus themes and we expect to address topics such as space governance and inter agencies coordination. We are also going to debate space as an economic development instrument and the importance of coordinated Earth Observation data policies.

We would like to invite all delegations to come to Portugal already next May and engage in an open discussion on this topics.

Thank you for your kind attention.