

Germany, Item 9

UNCOPUOS Legal Subcommittee 62st Session 20 March – 31 March 2023, Vienna

Statement by Germany

Agenda item 9 – Future Role and Method of Work of the Committee

Honorable Madam Chair, distinguished delegates,

This agenda item allows us to discuss how to optimize the way we work together here at COPUOS and its two Subcommittees. Today, we wish to share four points:

First, we welcome the decision by STSC to **limit statements to 5 minutes**. We support that the chairs, assisted by the secretariat, find appropriate ways to ensure that this agreement is honored. Of course, statements serve as an important tool to share information and views on the items on our rich agenda. But with the continued rise of member states and observers participating in the Committee, we must show some self-restraint. Our delegation will continue to present its views on selected agenda items in oral statements in a concise manner. Additionally, written submissions present an excellent means to share information with other delegations as well as the interested international community. Both subcommittees invite written submissions on multiple aspects of their work and we invite every delegation to assess where these serve as an equally appropriate means to share information.

Second, as the exceptional circumstances posed by the COVID-19 pandemic fortunately lie in the past, it goes without saying that COPUOS should go back to **full physical mode** starting next year. However, we do see value in maintaining the webcast of plenary sessions, as it addresses the growing interest in our work, both by governmental as well as non-governmental actors around the globe.

Third, we would like to make a suggestion concerning the availability of revisions to the **draft reports and their final adopted versions**. It is current practice, that the secretariat's drafts are made available online, which are then revised and adopted by COPUOS or its respective subcommittee. However, a considerable amount of time passes until the final report is available. We would like to ask the secretariat to investigate means to make available advance edited version of reports as they have been adopted right after the session. Also, we would ask the secretariat to show all proposed revisions on screen during the adoption of the report.

Fourth, we continue to see the need for increased **coordination, interaction and synergies between the subcommittees on cross-cutting issues**, such as, for example, the long-term sustainability of outer space activities and space resources.

Conference Room Papers, such as the one by the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Space Resources Working Group at LSC to the STSC are an important first step. In the medium term, it could be considered to address cross-cutting issues adequately by inclusion in the agenda of both Subcommittees as well as the Main Committee. This would allow for discussions of scientific and technical as well as legal aspects at the relevant subcommittee which are then reported to the main committee. COPUOS would then be in a position to ground its final deliberations on the work and expertise of both of its subcommittees. A first topic and testing ground for such integrated discussions could be an agenda item entitled "sustainable lunar activities".

Thank you for your attention.