



**PERMANENT MISSION OF GREECE
TO THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
IN VIENNA**

63rd SESSION OF THE LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE OF COPUOS

ITEM 4: GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

STATEMENT BY GREECE

Mr Chairman,

As this is the first time that we are taking the floor on this agenda item, we would like to join previous speakers in congratulating you on your election and wishing you success in your important task. We would also like to express our appreciation to the outgoing Chair, Ms Majaja, for having skillfully guided the work of the Legal Subcommittee over the past two years and take the opportunity to congratulate Mrs Aarti Holla-Maini for her appointment as the new Director of UNOOSA and to extend to her our best wishes for every success in her endeavors.

(Greece aligns itself with the EU Statement on this agenda item)

Mr Chairman,

Distinguished colleagues,

Over the past decade, humanity's access and operations in outer space have fundamentally changed and the driving factors behind these changes are likely to accelerate in the coming decades. This change presents us opportunities and risks and we need to develop further the existing governance, so that we can sustainably accelerate innovation and discovery with a view to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. It is our shared responsibility to ensure that existing international space law is fully implemented and that effective governance is in place to propel innovation and mitigate risks.

Greece strongly believes that the five UN treaties on outer space and the relevant UN General Assembly sets of principles constitute the cornerstone of international space law. In this context, Greece considers COPUOS and its Subcommittees as the main fora for the development of international space law, guidelines, best practices, and other transparency and confidence building measures, as well as for an inclusive

dialogue on space law, policy issues and international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

As to international cooperation, in particular, we believe that **it** should, by all means, prevail over any use of force in space. We welcome, in this regard, the adoption by the UNGA of Resolution 78/72 of 2023 “*on international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space*” which, among others, expresses its serious concern about the possibility of an armed race in outer space, stresses the importance of article IV of the OST and reaffirms the importance of international cooperation in developing the relevant norms of international space law, for a space free from an arms race and conflict, for the benefit of all. The importance of international cooperation is more than crucial and, in this connection, we believe that any other existing multilateral initiatives, fora or models of constructive multilateral cooperation on the matter are welcome, and could contribute to our collective aspiration

It is in the spirit of this cooperation that, in February 2024, Greece acceded to the *Artemis Accords*, which constitute a successful model of constructive multilateral cooperation, offering a roadmap for a future, where humanity unites in space exploration, fostering peace and progress. Named after *Artemis*, the ancient Greek goddess symbolizing the Moon, the *Artemis Program* embodies our collective aspiration to expand the horizons of human exploration and knowledge.

Mr Chairman,

The upcoming *Summit of the Future* provides a key opportunity to bring outer space issues high on the international agenda and strengthen space governance. We hope that the *Pact for the Future* will facilitate the implementation of the Space2030 Agenda and we also believe that it should aim at fostering a peaceful, safe, secure and sustainable use of outer space. In this context, we would like to praise Portugal for its contribution to the outer space dialogue through the organization of the upcoming international conference on the Management & Sustainability of Outer Space Activities, in May 2024, with the assistance of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, as a dialogue forum open to all UN Member States, on the topics to be discussed in the Summit of the Future. The two preparatory virtual Symposia on the matter that have preceded, one on technical challenges and the other on policy issues, gave us the opportunity to participate in, meet and consult with international experts from industry, academia and the Member States.

Mr. Chairman,

The COPUOS Legal Subcommittee has proven its ability to deliver on its mandate. We welcome the progress made so far within the Legal Subcommittee's Working Group on the Legal Aspects of Space Resource Activities. In this connection, we would like to highlight the importance of the "***Expert meeting collecting preliminary inputs for consideration at the international conference in Vienna,***" co-hosted by Belgium and Luxembourg, as well as, in particular, the importance of the ***International Conference on Space Resources***, held just two days ago, here in Vienna, on the sidelines of the 63rd Session of the Legal Subcommittee. These two events, gave us all the opportunity to participate in an inclusive and transparent discussion of consensually agreed topics of utmost importance for the development of an international framework on space resource activities. The realization of the said two events proves, for once more, that, ***when there is a will, there is always a way***, and we are proud to have been part of them.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me, in concluding, to give you a brief insight into my country's endeavors in the space sector:

During the past year, Greece faced devastating natural disasters, namely extensive wildfires and floods, prompting the government to pivot the National MicroSatellite Program. The renewed focus is on selected Earth Observation products, including high-resolution, high-revisit time, optical-thermal-SAR imaging of the Hellenic territory, through the development of several, multi-purpose small satellites. These satellite products will support *space-system-based disaster management*, will serve systematic user needs, such as high-resolution mapping, and will supplement already available observations (through the European Union Copernicus program), towards effective monitoring of climate change. At the same time, Greece is actively investing in upgrading critical infrastructures to support the implementation of the national microsatellite program. Key initiatives include the upgrade of the Hellenic Aerospace Industry for micro-satellite assembly and the development and operation of a Space Debris Tracking Radar, as part of the European Union Space Situational Tracking (EU-SST) Program.

Greece will continue to intensively work for the promotion and deepening of international cooperation in the space domain, and the conduct of space activities in accordance with international law, as required by article III of the Outer Space Treaty.

I thank you