



**STATEMENT BY THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
THE 63RD SESSION OF THE LEGAL SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE
UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE**

**TO BE DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR RUPULANE MOLEKANE
AGENDA ITEM 4 GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS**

Date: 15 April 2024

*Please check against delivery
Word count: 688 (5 min)*

Chairperson

South Africa congratulates you on your election as the new Chair of the Legal Subcommittee (LS) and pledges to support you, at the same time we look forward to tapping into your expert knowledge on the development of international space policy and regulation well into the future work of the LSC as we seek to develop new norms and regulations for the continued peaceful use and exploration of outer space.

My delegation also commends the work carried out by the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA), including its Director Ms Aarti Holla-Maini; and the Secretariat for their dedicated work in the preparation for this meeting.

Chairperson,

At the outset, South Africa aligns with the statements of the Africa Group and G77 and China. South Africa is committed to ensuring that outer space activities are conducted in accordance and in compliance with existing rules of international space law. South Africa maintains the view that outer space activities should be beneficial to all mankind and should contribute to the prosperity and sustainable development of all nations. These activities should be governed by the rule of law and the progressive development of Space Law to safeguard the continued peaceful use of outer space for the benefit of all. We are vehemently opposed to militarisation of outer space by anybody.

Chairperson

The process of reforming our domestic space legislation to incorporate new trends in national space activities is undergoing executive consideration. The proposed legislation incorporates substantive issues that are increasingly relevant to the emerging global space dispensation, including proactiveness in application of the Registration and Liability Convention, as well as Guidelines being developed by this Sub-Committee, including the application of international law to small satellite activities and the review of international mechanisms for cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space.

South Africa's new draft legislation also takes into account technological advances that are capable of keeping pace with new trends and developments, inclusive of but not limited to in-orbit refuelling and transfer of assets in orbit.

South Africa is also in the process of developing the necessary space value chain for its space programme. This includes developing a rocket engine for its indigenous launching capability. The South African Council for Space Affairs (SACSA) strives to foster a safe and responsible regulatory environment for technological developments to ensure that national licensing activities are in alignment with all existing treaties and non-binding guidelines.

South Africa remains committed to international cooperation for mutually beneficial and peaceful uses of outer space. Countries should not be discriminated against implementing their respective developmental strategies. Accordingly, the National Space Policy focuses on harnessing space technologies and applications towards contributing to the country's economic growth and social development. South Africa is also pleased to inform that it would be hosting the 2024 Africa Round of the Manfred Lachs Competition to build capacity in space law on the continent.

Chairperson,

The upcoming Summit of the Future is a timely initiative to further accelerate the implementation of the 2030 SDG Agenda. With regard to the Space Track, the Secretary General has called for the development of a global regime to coordinate space traffic and for the elaboration of a new instrument to prevent an arms race in outer space in order to keep outer space peaceful, safe, secure, and sustainable. In

the face of unprecedented challenges, International Cooperation in space affairs must be built on the principles of trust, equality, and solidarity to safeguard future generations

Chairperson,

Our contemporary reality is characterised by stark inequalities and is compounded by increasing threats to humanity such as climate change and consequential disasters that grossly affect the entire world. Developing nations continue to be severely challenged as they lack the means to mitigate, respond to, and manage such disasters.

Space technology has the capacity to equip countries to better deal with these situations and sharing of space-based data is critical in this regard. Thus fostering closer co-operation and increased trust amongst nations is imperative.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the Sub-committee for affording South Africa, through Ms Nomfuneko Majaja, the honour of leading the LSC for the past two years and we reiterate our best wishes to Mr Santiago Ripol Carulla, during his tenure as Chair of the LSC.

I thank you.