

Portugal Statement
Legal Sub-Committee of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses
of Outer Space | 63rd session

Agenda Item 5, “Information on space law activities”

Muchas gracias, señor Presidente

Chair, Distinguished Representatives,

1. As this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor in this session, I would like to congratulate you, Professor Ripol, on your election as Chair of the Legal Subcommittee and assure you of our best cooperation in the years to come, also congratulating the outgoing Chair for her guidance over the last years and to express the Secretariat our recognition for their excellent work in supporting the current session and the ongoing works.
2. Last February, Portugal has issued the reviewed national space law designing one licence that is able to encompass a full space operation, from launch to control, and also addressing space ports.
3. Regarding the space operations licence, being this understood as the licence to launch and return or to command and control:
Portugal already had in place a system where the traditional space operation licence – one licence to a single space operation and operator – held hands with a multiple licence – being this understood as one licence applicable to a series of space operations of the same type and with the same objects, valid to a determined period of time, that was taught to respond to one of the challenges in the National Space Strategy: the set-up of constellations.
4. Portugal’s Space Law, of 2019, already had the legal provision of a joint licencing procedure of different space operation involved in the Con Ops,

but with this last revision we went further and established a licence that, if the operator so desire, can cover the full range of the space operation, meaning one licence for the launcher, the payload or payloads and their command or control, even if more than one operator is involved.

5. If this fits the internal organization of the operators, Portugal authorities can positively respond to this urge and issue one licence that can encompass the full length of the operation, from launch to control.

Mister Chair,

6. The revision of Portugal's Space Law also envisages, for the first time, the establishment of ground rules to licencing spaceports, that will have to be developed into the technical regulations.
7. At large, the Portuguese Space law stipulates that the license can be granted if the:
 - The applicant has the technical, economic and financial capacity to install and operate the launch centre, as well as recognized suitability and credibility.
 - The intended location of the launch centre, its installation, as well as its infrastructure and operation:
 - i) Duly ensure the safety of launch and/or return operations;
 - ii) They are compatible with applicable public security standards, including those relating to public health and the safety of people and property;
 - iii) Ensure environmental protection, waste management, and minimization, to the maximum extent possible, of space debris, in accordance with applicable international principles and obligations;
 - iv) Respect the strategic interests of the Portuguese Republic and its international obligations, without putting its internal security at risk;
 - v) Comply with all other applicable standards.
8. I will not describe the procedure in detail, but just to conclude, a mention that the granting of a license to operate launch centres requires prior approval from the Government, based on an inquiry process instructed by

the National Space Agency, all within a timeline of 240 days after due receipt of the request.

9. We believe that this is another solid step in Portugal's path towards space and not only by being a flying nation – we have just launched another national satellite, with registration being delivered to the UN - but also a launching space nation.

Thank you, Chair.