

Agenda Item Three: General exchange of views

New Zealand, 3

Thank you Chair.

We would like to thank you for your continued efforts in leading these important discussions. We also recognise the work of the secretariat who do so much to enable our work. I will keep these remarks short in the spirit of efficiency, heading the Director's pertinent and sobering remarks. A longer version of this statement is available online.

At the outset, we would like to recognise the building momentum towards a possible UNISPACE 4 conference, and in particular the secretariat's non-paper which will help facilitate discussions among member states over the next two weeks. Our delegation looks forward to working constructively with other delegations on this important issue.

Chair,

Ensuring the peaceful use of space is a fundamental element of maintaining international peace and security and requires all countries to abide by their international legal obligations.

[For publication in the online statement. Not delivered in the plenary room] The Outer Space Treaty is of principal importance to ensuring the space environment remains safe, secure and sustainable. We call on all states to abide by their international commitments in the Outer Space Treaty, in particular Article IV, and to refrain from placing nuclear weapons into orbit, or from developing the capability to do so.

We highlight the valuable role that this Subcommittee has in supporting an effective international legal framework which enables the growth of the global space sector, and facilitates effective cooperation amongst States and with other space stakeholders.

This includes our work to overcome shared challenges with connectivity and resilience, to foster economic development, to conduct research including on climate science, and to help States respond quickly and effectively to natural disasters.

This Subcommittee's important work includes assisting States to better understand and apply the existing international legal framework, and ensuring that this framework remains fit for purpose as the space environment continues to evolve.

Chair,

It is also important that our domestic regulatory frameworks continue to function well to support the peaceful, safe and sustainable use of space.

New Zealand is committed to developing space policy and regulation that promotes the peaceful, safe, and sustainable use of space. Our flexible and enabling regulatory regime supports the growth of a safe, responsible, and secure space industry that meets our international obligations. We continue to ensure this regime is fit for purpose, and have announced amendments our domestic legislation. [The following sentence is for publication in the online statement. Not delivered in the plenary room] We continue to progress efforts to improve the operation and effectiveness of our space activities.

[For publication in the online statement. Not delivered in the plenary room] Late last year, New Zealand became the third-most prolific launching state in the world. New Zealand's space sector brings together our distinct geographic advantages with the effective regulatory settings, skills, infrastructure and international connections. We serve as a real-world testbed with diverse geography, open airspace, controlled test corridors, and strong industry partnerships.

Our policies on active debris removal and in-orbit servicing are examples of innovative regulation that have created a pathway for novel space activity to take place from New Zealand.

[For publication in the online statement. Not delivered in the plenary room] We were pleased to sign an arrangement between New Zealand and the United Kingdom space agencies setting out how the two countries would cooperate on active debris removal and in-orbit servicing missions. Through this work we developed principles that assist with the application of the international space law treaties to these novel space activities, in the hopes that we can enable missions to improve the safety and sustainability of Earth orbit.

We look forward to welcoming all member states to a UK, Japan, New Zealand hosted side event on this topic on 7 May.

Chair,

Finally, we confirm our commitment to working constructively and efficiently to ensure that COPUOS continues to have the central role in supporting and developing the rules and norms that keep Space accessible to all.

Thank you.