

## Statement of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

### Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

#### Legal Subcommittee (64th session)

5 – 16 May 2025

#### Item 12. Application of international law to small satellite activities

### **H.E. Chairman of the sixty-fourth meeting of the Legal Subcommittee**

### **Distinguished delegations**

### **Peace, mercy and blessings of God,**

The Delegation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia thanks His Excellency the President for the opportunity to share the Kingdom's view regarding the application of international law to small satellite activities. Satellites have been growing increasingly over the past years due to technological developments and the low cost of launching, making them the focus of attention of national and international legislative and regulatory authorities. This growth will enable satellite communications services that will provide communications and connectivity services to uninhabited areas, and will enable emerging applications for various sectors such as industry and agriculture, and this empowerment is in line with the basic principles set out in the 1967 Outer Space Treaty to which the Kingdom is bound.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has worked to create national regulatory frameworks concerned with enabling non-terrestrial networks (NTN) in general, which include small satellites and aerial platforms, through the publication of the Communications and Space and Technology Commission (CITC) satellite station registration regulations that ensure the registration of all satellite communication stations that provide telecommunications capacities over the Kingdom and ensure that these capacities are made available to service providers operating non-terrestrial networks in a regular manner. These organizations contributed to the registration of satellites Small industrial for research and educational purposes and providing satellite communications services for various applications, reflecting the Kingdom's environment supportive of innovation in accordance with regulatory frameworks.

When we look at international treaties related to outer space, such as the United Nations treaties and principles on outer space, as well as the Constitution of the International Telecommunication Union, we find that space activities have not received sufficient space for study and attention to enhance their implementation, such as space monitoring activities via small satellites (such as imaging and remote sensing). Therefore, the Kingdom considers it important to take the above-mentioned activities into account when studying new draft regulations. In addition, the Kingdom believes that it is important to define "small satellites" in an approved manner, including the size and dimensions of these satellites and the orbits in which they operate, when initiating the preparation of any projects for new systems.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, through the Communications and Space and Technology Commission, is working to modernize the regulations of non-terrestrial networks (NTN) and is studying the technical developments and global challenges of direct communication technology with devices (D2D), and therefore the Kingdom invites distinguished delegations and all interested

parties to submit their views on this through the Space and Technical Communications Commission platform concerned with receiving visuals.

In conclusion, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia stresses the importance of accommodating national and international regulatory frameworks for the increasing growth of small satellite activities in order to ensure the availability of orbital and radio resources for all, enable research and educational purposes and emerging applications, and ensure the existence of appropriate international regulations for some space activities such as space monitoring, in order to ensure the achievement of the peaceful purposes of these activities in accordance with the Principles on .Remote Sensing of the Earth of 1986

## **Statement of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

### **Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS)**

#### **Legal Subcommittee (64th Session)**

**5–16 May 2025**

#### **Agenda Item 12: Application of International Law to Small Satellite Activities**

#### **Mr. Chair of the 64th Session of the Legal Subcommittee, Distinguished Delegates,**

The delegation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia expresses its gratitude to the Chair for the opportunity to share the Kingdom's views on the application of international law to small satellite activities. In recent years, satellites have witnessed rapid growth due to technological advancements and the decreasing cost of launches. As a result, this growth has drawn the attention of legislative and regulatory bodies at both the national and international levels. This growth will contribute to the enablement of satellite communications services, which can provide connectivity to uninhabited areas and support emerging applications across various sectors, such as industry and agriculture. This advancement aligns with the fundamental principles in the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, to which the Kingdom is committed.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has developed national regulatory frameworks to support the deployment of non-terrestrial networks (NTN), including small satellites and high-altitude platforms. Through the Communications, Space and Technology Commission (CST), the Kingdom has issued a Regulation for the Registration of Telecommunication Space Stations, ensuring that all satellite stations providing communication capacity over the Kingdom are registered and available to non-terrestrial network service providers. These regulations have facilitated the registration of small satellites for research and educational purposes and for the provision of satellite communication services across various applications, reflecting the Kingdom's supportive and innovative regulatory environment.

Considering the United Nations treaties and principles on outer space and the Constitution of the International Telecommunication Union, it is noticed that some space activities need more studies and consideration, like space observation activities conducted via small satellites, such as imaging and remote sensing. Therefore, the Kingdom sees the importance of taking these activities into account when considering the development of new legally binding international frameworks. Furthermore, the Kingdom expresses the need for an internationally recognized definition of "small satellites" that includes their size, dimensions, and the orbital parameters in which they operate, especially when preparing any proposed regulatory frameworks.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, through the Communications, Space, and Technology Commission, is working to update its regulations on non-terrestrial networks (NTN), studying emerging technologies and

global challenges related to direct-to-device (D2D) communication. Accordingly, the Kingdom invites all esteemed delegations and interested stakeholders to provide their views on this topic through the Commission's public consultation platform.

In conclusion, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia reaffirms the importance of adapting national and international regulatory frameworks to accommodate the growing activities of small satellites. This will ensure equitable access to orbital and radio spectrum resources, facilitate research and educational objectives, and enable emerging applications. It also ensures the need for appropriate international regulatory systems for specific space activities, such as space-based observation, in order to ensure their peaceful use in line with the 1986 United Nations Principles Relating to Remote Sensing of the Earth from Outer Space.