

**Check against delivery**

**Sixty-fourth Session**  
**of the Legal Subcommittee**  
**of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space**

**Agenda item 3**  
**General Exchange of Views**

**Statement by Mr. Gregor Schusterschitz, Austria**

**6 May 2025**

Mister Chair,

As this is the first time that Austria takes the floor, I would like to thank you, Chair, for your excellent chairmanship. We are confident that our work during this session of the Subcommittee will greatly benefit from your skills and experience. I would also like to express our gratitude to the Director of the *Office for Outer Space Affairs*, Ms. Aarti Holla-Maini, and her able and dedicated team for the preparation of this session.

At the outset, let me welcome the two most recent members of COPUOS, Djibouti and Latvia.

Let me also express our deepest condolences on the passing of Ambassador Andrzej Misztal, earlier this year. Ambassador Misztal was an exceptional diplomat, who was appreciated not only for his detailed knowledge of space law and his professional skills, but also for his friendly and open approach to everyone he met. As a long-standing delegate and former Chair of this Subcommittee, he left an indelible mark on its work. We will miss him, not only as Chair of the Working Group on Legal Aspects of Space Resource Activities, but above all as a dear friend and colleague.

Mister Chair,

Austria fully aligns itself with the statement of the European Union, including the condemnation of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine.

The information shared by Ms. Holla-Maini yesterday about possible budget cuts affecting UNOOSA is worrying. Austria supports that UNOOSA is provided with sufficient resources to fulfil its important tasks, in particular referring to the outcome of the recent Strategic Review of UNOOSA.

Due to the exponential increase of space activities, there is a clear need for effective multilateralism to ensure the safety and sustainability of human activities in outer space. Austria therefore encourages all States, which have not yet done so, to ratify and implement the UN treaties on outer space, including the Moon Agreement, and to cooperate in order to develop and implement new sets of rules.

Austria closely followed the first session of the *UN Open-Ended Working Group on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space in All its Aspects*, which took place in April of this year in Geneva. We are disheartened by the valuable time lost in procedural debates

and urge all Member States to cooperate in good faith to fulfil the whole mandate of that comprehensive working group. Without infringing on the work and mandate of other processes and bodies in the UN system, Austria wishes to reiterate that COPUOS and its Subcommittees have always had the mandate to also consider security-related aspects of their work. Austria supports a holistic, intergovernmental process for the global governance of outer space, which we hope will produce meaningful results across a broad agenda of topics bringing together diverse national interests and values.

Mister Chair,

Austria wishes to express its gratitude to the Secretariat and all contributing Member States that ensured the success of last year's Summit of the Future. *The UN Pact for the Future* contains a clear message that the work of COPUOS will be crucial for advancing the interests and development of humanity. In this respect, we welcome the mandate to hold a *fourth UNISPACE conference*. In light of the success of previous *UNISPACE conferences*, which have all been held in Vienna, we are looking forward to the Committee agreeing on the programme of work and venue of this conference.

Additionally, Austria wants to emphasise the need for new initiatives to advance work on concrete measures regarding the issue of Space Traffic Management in COPUOS. In this context, we support the proposal made by Germany to establish a Study Group on this issue. We also welcome the complementary proposal from the United Arab Emirates on Space Situational Awareness. In order to remain relevant, the Committee should utilise both of its Subcommittees, to consider the issue of Space Traffic Management from their respective perspectives.

Mister Chair,

In December of last year, Austria became the 50<sup>th</sup> Signatory of the *Artemis Accords*. We appreciate the opportunity of the 64<sup>th</sup> session of the Legal Subcommittee to reaffirm our commitment to all UN treaties on outer space, including the Moon Agreement.

Austria also wishes to congratulate the *European Space Agency*, which for fifty years has been and remains an anchor and a pioneer for regional cooperation in space activities, research and exploration.

We also want to thank the Vice-Chair of the *Working Group on Legal Aspects of Space Resource Activities*, Steven Freeland, for his *Initial Draft Set of Recommended Principles for*

*Space Resource Activities*. It will provide an excellent basis for further discussion under the able stewardship of the Vice-Chair.

Mister Chair,

Austria attaches great importance to the strengthening of the Legal Subcommittee as the prime multilateral body with the mandate to promote the progressive development of international space law for the peaceful uses of outer space.

In concluding, let me underline that the Austrian delegation will continue to provide strong support to the work and deliberations of this Subcommittee and is looking forward to a productive and rewarding session.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.