

**Statement by Charge d’Affaires Barry Fullerton, U.S. Mission to the United Nations in Vienna, COPUOS Legal Subcommittee
Agenda Item 3 – General Exchange of Views
May 6, 2024**

Thank you, Chair. The United States is looking forward to working with you to ensure a successful session. We thank Director Aarti Holla-Maini and the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs for their work preparing for this session. We would also like to welcome Djibouti and Latvia as the newest UNCOPUOS member States. And as we think ahead to the important discussions we will have about the future of space resource activities, we would like to express sincere condolences to the delegation of Poland for the loss of Ambassador Andrzej Misztal, who served as Chair of the LSC’s Space Resources Working Group.

Chair, the United States reaffirms the importance of the use and exploration of outer space in advancing humanity. Consistent with the 2020 U.S. National Space Policy, we believe that all nations have the right to explore and to use space for peaceful purposes and for the benefit of all humanity, in accordance with applicable law.

Now, in 2025, we are on the precipice of possibilities that our predecessors at the beginning of the space age could only imagine. Fortunately, the four core space treaties created a legal framework which adequately addresses the fundamental issues that underly activities in outer space.

We look forward to working with this subcommittee to discuss how to address this session’s agenda items within this existing framework and identifying where additional non-legally binding principles, initiatives, and guidance may be useful. Since our last meeting, 18 more countries signed the Artemis Accords, committing to the safe, transparent, and responsible exploration of space. As of today, 54 countries have now signed the Accords. The Accords signatory countries are committed to provide lunar mission data parameters to the United Nations, as evidenced by the United States’ Article XI submission earlier this year.

Further, as we will discuss in greater detail under Agenda Item 12, we envision a future with a global, coordinated system of space situational awareness providers. The work by the U.S. Department of Commerce to develop the new Traffic Coordination System for Space, or TraCSS, will leverage data from operators, governments, commercial, academic, and international sources. TraCSS will provide space situational awareness information and services to spacecraft operators around the world in support of spaceflight safety and sustainability and will begin operations later this year. TraCSS plans to be one part of a larger hub-based coordination effort. Better understanding of the current issues and frameworks regarding space situational awareness data and information sharing could improve the methods or expectations for coordination between such providers.

As we look to the future, we believe partnering with and facilitating the activities of commercial endeavors is also essential. Only through unlocking the opportunities can we truly open the door to outer space's true potential for technological innovation, scientific discovery, and exploration. Our deliberations should be open to inputs from those on the cutting edge of technology and discovery. Our deliberations this session should seek to ensure that we consider the ways we can support the activities of non-governmental actors in outer space, while always remaining cognizant of our international legal obligations as well as the need for safety and predictability to maintain the benefits of space for all humanity.

Thank you, Chair.

