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Thank you Chair.

New Zealand welcomes the ongoing progress of the Working Group on Legal Aspects of Space Resource Activities towards developing principles in support of ensuring the safety and sustainability of the space environment. In the spirit of efficiency a longer version of this statement is available online.

Thank you Professor Freeland for providing the initial draft set of recommended principles for space resource activities. We hope that the group produces an outcome that is practical to implement and supports our shared ambitions in Space.

[For publication in the online statement. Not delivered in the plenary room] We recognise the many benefits of the exploration and utilisation of space resources, including for enabling the deeper exploration of our solar system and beyond. To enable these benefits to be realised, New Zealand supports the need for space resource utilisation and associated activities to be conducted in a safe, sustainable, responsible, and peaceful manner that is consistent with international law.

[For publication in the online statement. Not delivered in the plenary room] As a launching state, we are committed to ensuring that all space activities from New Zealand are carried out safely, sustainably and in accordance with international law.

Chair,

New Zealand notes that the existing international legal framework, while providing a strong foundation for the governance of outer space activities, is not sufficient to regulate space resource utilisation and adjacent activities in the long term. We recognise the need to supplement existing international law, including the Outer Space Treaty, with more detailed rules and norms to ensure the safety and sustainability of these activities, including protection of the space environment.

Non-binding instruments and fora can also be useful in guiding the behaviour of States and in supporting the development of rules and norms. Of relevance to space resource utilisation are the Artemis Accords, which New Zealand became a signatory to in 2021. The practical work of the Artemis Accords continues to support the space community, including on space utilisation issues. And we encourage states to consider signing up to the principles contained within them.

[For publication in the online statement. Not delivered in the plenary room] New Zealand sees the Artemis Accords as being complementary to the efforts of the Working Group on Space Resources and a strong place for advancing technical work. We are heartened by the increase in signatories to the Accords, with over fifty nations now joined, and encourage states to consider signing up to the principles contained within them.

[For publication in the online statement. Not delivered in the plenary room] As space activity reaches ever further, we are seeing new and more frequent activity on and around the Moon. These exciting endeavours will bring new knowledge and also new challenges. We look forward to continued progress by the Action Team on Lunar Activities Consultation in this regard.

Thank you Chair.