

Item 4 – Norway

**Statement by Norway to the Committee on Peaceful Uses of Outer Space under Agenda Item 4:
“General Exchange of Views”**

Delivered by Ambassador Kjersti E. Andersen, Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Vienna

Vienna, 25 August 2021

Chair,

Norway is pleased to see the Committee on Peaceful Uses of Outer Space reconvene after the cancellation of its sixty-third session in 2020. There is much to discuss and issues to resolve.

Countering the effects of climate change and promoting the sustainability of outer space activities are among Norway’s priorities. Member States must make every effort to finalize the Space 2030 Agenda this year, so that space activities will contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. There are only nine years to go. It is vital that a final consolidated draft is presented during this session.

In order to combat climate change by supporting efforts to stop the destruction of the world’s rainforests, Norway provides universal access to high-resolution satellite monitoring of the tropics. Through our International Climate and Forests Initiative, imagery of all tropically forested landmass between 30 degrees North and 30 degrees South has been made available to all. Mosaics will be updated every month until August 2022, when an extension for a further two years will be considered.

Norway commends the adoption of the 21 Guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space in 2019. We look forward to taking part in the new working group under Indian leadership. These guidelines provide important transparency and confidence building measures that will support sustainability. Their implementation will complement the initiative of the General Assembly on responsible behaviour in outer space, and ensure that this initiative can remain dedicated to the objective of preventing an arms race in outer space.

Space resources is also a topic of interest to Norway. We welcome the establishment of a new working group on space resources and look forward to taking part under the leadership of Poland and Australia, as chair and vice-chair respectively.

In this regard, we would like to mention that the Norwegian Space Agency has commissioned a feasibility study on Norwegian competence for in-situ resource utilisation and mining. The objective is to identify areas where Norwegian expertise is particularly relevant, as well as to identify Norwegian actors that already contribute, or have a potential to contribute to this field.

In late 2019, the Norwegian government published a national White Paper on Space Policy. It sets out our efforts to promote industry and economic growth, to ensure that space-based services meet societal and user needs, and to protect space-based infrastructure, as well as our overarching approach to space security. The White Paper emphasizes COPUOS’s essential role as the primary arena for normative efforts to further the peaceful uses of outer space.

Norway's current space law has served us well since 1969, but we are currently working on a proposal to Parliament for a completely new law. Our objective is to develop a progressive and industry-friendly regulatory system that will ensure high-quality space activities from Norway that are fully in accordance with our international commitments.

In April, Norway launched a new satellite for maritime surveillance, NorSat-3, which brings our maritime surveillance constellation to four satellites. As our previous satellites, it is equipped with an AIS-receiver. In addition, NorSat-3 carries an experimental navigation radar detector, which enables ship detection capabilities when AIS signals are missing or manipulated.

Sounding rockets have been launched from Andøya in Northern Norway since 1962. Since then, satellites have gained an increasingly important role for communications, environmental monitoring, and other crucial activities. Recent advances in the space industry have allowed for smaller satellites and the development of smaller launch vehicles. This has enabled Andøya Space to proceed with the establishment of a launch site for small satellites to polar orbits.

The spaceport will serve launch vehicles designed to deliver payloads of up to 1,5 metric tons to orbit. As launch site operator, Andøya Space provides the technical infrastructure, launch pads and support buildings and services. Launch service providers will supply the launch vehicles. So far, contracts have been signed with two German launch service providers, with the first launch planned for 2022.

In conclusion, let me underline Norway's dedication to the work of this Committee and to the several processes that are taking place. We look forward to contributing constructively to safe and sustainable uses of outer space both at present and in the future.

Thank you