

Agenda Item 15: Nuclear Power Sources

Republic of Korea

UN COPUOS Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, Sixtieth Session February 13, 2023

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

First of all, the Republic of Korea highly appreciates the activities of the Working Group on the Use of Nuclear Power Sources and the delegations' efforts in preparing the draft report on the Implementation of the Safety Framework for Nuclear Power Source Applications in Outer Space.

Korea recently adopted the 4th Basic Plan for Space Development, which sets space exploration as its primary mission and presents specific goals, including lunar surface exploration by 2032 and lunar base acquisition in 2040s. It also emphasizes international cooperation throughout the whole process.

As the Committee, the Working Group and the delegations have highlighted in common, nuclear power sources will play a key role in space exploration. Korea has been conducting related research and development while deeply understanding the importance of nuclear power sources and propulsion technologies in space exploration. In particular, the Korea Atomic Energy Research Institute successfully demonstrated the functioning of Electrically-heated Thermoelectric Generator last year in space area, through which Korea acquired the space heritage of Radioisotope Thermoelectric Generator (RTG).

As we are planning to load a RTG in the Korean Lunar Lander to be

developed in the future, Korea will be able to contribute to areas such as nuclear power and propulsion in the outer space.

For Korea, strengthening safety always remains a top priority in using nuclear power sources in outer space. We take into account that even a single nuclear and radiological accident can significantly impact the outer space activities of every State.

In this regard, the experience of implementing the “safety framework” and evaluation of the Working Group will serve as important references for the future use of nuclear power sources and related technologies.

We support the continuous efforts of the Working Group to share experiences and best practices. And the Republic of Korea will actively participate in further discussion under the renewed Work Plan.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.

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