

AFRICAN GROUP STATEMENT ON THE FUTURE WORK OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE

Chair

Thank you for the opportunity to present the African Group's views on the future work of the subcommittee.

The Group supports the subcommittee returning to in-person participation to facilitate enhanced deliberations and engagement during the meetings. Accordingly, the Group supports holding 3-hour sessions with full interpretation opposed to the current practice of 2 hours.

The Group supports holding discussions in a consecutive manner as it would allow for delegations to engage on the subject matter in an organised way as well as provide an opportunity to respond timeously. This would also be beneficial for experts attending only one week of the meeting. Having a clear understanding of when agenda items would be held would allow for more efficient and cost-effective planning both administratively and financially.

However, the Group submits that an element of flexibility could be provided for those agenda items that tend to have a lengthy list of interventions such as General Exchange of Views (GEVs), which could be spread out across the first week. As COPUOS is an intergovernmental process, member states should be afforded the opportunity to deliver their interventions ahead of other stakeholders.

The Group is also of the view that the subcommittee should endeavour to hold Working Group meetings during the plenary to allow delegations to benefit from interpretation services in all six UN languages thus making the meetings more inclusive and constructive.

Looking ahead, the Group also supports the inclusion of Dark and Quiet Skies in the STSC agenda as well as the proposal to establish an Expert Group as part of the sub-committee's future work.

To conclude, the Group supports efforts to create synergy between the STSC and LSC on the complementary issues.

I thank you.