

## AUSTRIA, ITEM 4

**General Exchange of Views and introduction of reports submitted on national activities.  
61st Scientific and Technical Subcommittee (29 January–9 February 2024)  
Johann SPITZER, Minister-Counsellor**

Chair,  
Excellencies – Colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Austria fully supports the statement of the European Union. In addition, we would like to highlight the following issues in our national capacity:

We recall that Austria condemns in the strongest possible terms the Russian aggression against Ukraine. It is perfectly legitimate to mention this unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine, which grossly violates international law and the UN Charter, because it also has an impact on the functioning of space applications and has a negative impact on international co-operation in space.

Let me thank you, Ms. Botezatu, for chairing this Committee, as well as HE Amb. Facetti for so successfully guiding us this past year. And also many thanks to the UNOOSA team for preparing this session.

We cordially welcome the new **Director of UNOOSA** and the new Senior Adviser. We wish them a good start in their position and lots of success. We would like to express our greatest support for you and your vision for UNOOSA and our work. Please count on the Austrian delegation.

With regard to the **„Summit of the Future on Multilateral Solutions for a Better Tomorrow“** in September 2024, we will discuss further ways in which we can better achieve our goals for a sustainable future for all. Austria has provided a **national contribution** to the **Zero Draft of the Pact of the Future**, and has provided input to the contribution of the Group of Friends of UNOOSA as well as to the one of the European Union.

The following elements are important for us:

We expect the Pact of the Future to recognise the **significant role of space science, technologies and their applications** for sustainable development and for realising the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its goals and targets.

The Pact should also reaffirm the **unique role of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), and its subcommittees**, supported by the **Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA)** as **unique platforms** for international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes. COPUOS is the **main forum** for developing international space law, and should therefore also address the following three topics: Space Traffic Coordination, space debris and space resources.

We also expect the Pact to recognize **intergenerational equity** in the **peaceful use of outer space on an equitable and mutually acceptable basis for all.**

The Pact should encourage COPUOS, in cooperation with relevant bodies of the UN system, to develop a mechanism for **broader stakeholder inclusion**. This mechanism should facilitate consultation with commercial actors, civil society representatives, academic institutions, scientific and technical research centers and other relevant actors as well as the young generation. In that context, I would like to mention last year's **World Space Forum on "Space 4 Our Common Future"** that focused on the contribution of space solutions to the topics of the Summit of the Future-

Thanks to **Portugal** we will have more occasions to discuss and develop recommendations on **„Management and Sustainability of Space Activities“** in Lisbon this May.

Another milestone towards the Summit will be the **High Level Political Forum** taking place in New York in July 2024. At this event, a series of Sustainable Development Goals will be reviewed in detail, including the **SDG 13 – climate action**. Space technologies, space data are key to monitor the Essential Climate Variables (ECVs). More than half of the 54 ECVs defined by the World Meteorological Organization can only be monitored from space.

Austria has worked intensively to draw more attention to space solutions for climate action. We therefore propose to elaborate a **contribution of this subcommittee to the ministerial declaration at the High Level Political Forum**.

As host country, Austria attaches great importance to the work of **COPUOS and its mandate**. We reaffirm our position, that topics related to the work and affecting the work of the relevant UN bodies here in Vienna should be discussed here, before they are submitted to the UN General Assembly.

Let me reiterate our support for discussing the topic „**Dark and Quiet Skies for Science and Society**“ within COPUOS and STSC. We hope that the Committee can agree on a way forward to deal with this imminent topic important for science and society.

We thank Canada and UNOOSA for co-hosting the **2023 Space4Women Expert** meeting in Montreal, where an Austrian expert participated. The outcome of this meeting was the creation of the **first ever Gender Mainstreaming Toolkit for the space sector**. We look forward to the publication of the toolkit, which will increase visibility and advance gender equality in the space sector.

We also support the proposal that the year 2029 is designated by the **United Nations as the “International Year of Planetary Defence 2029”**. This will be an opportunity to raise understanding of asteroids and comets that might impact our Planet in the future. In this context, we would like to thank the **Space Mission Advisory Group** and the preparation teams of the **Planetary Defence Conferences** for their efforts to increase awareness and interact with relevant stakeholder groups.

In the framework of the AMADEE-24 Project a simulated human-robotic Mars mission will be conducted in the Armash region in Armenia in March and April 2024. Lead by the Austrian Space Forum, a carefully selected crew of six analogue astronauts will be conducting experiments in the fields of robotics, geoscience and human factors pertinent to future human-robotic Mars missions. They will be supported by a team of more than 250 researchers from 26 COPOUS member states. We greatly acknowledge the significant support of the Armenian government and the Armenian Space Forum that enable this field simulation, which is also the first mission to be conducted under the recently established International Standards and

Guidelines for Space Analogs, in observance of the Topical Team on Human Factors research recommendations of the European Space Agency.

Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Last but not least, I would also like to take the opportunity to invite you all to a **Joint Side Event co-organized** by the Government of Austria, the Space Generation Advisory Council and the Office for Outer Space Affairs on 7 Feb. 2024, starting 6 p.m. Vienna time (CET). We will discuss "**Space - Youth - Future Generations**" in room M2 at the ground floor of the M-building at the VIC followed by networking opportunity. Please find the invitation flyer with further details on the session website. The event will also be streamed, for those that cannot be there in person.

Let me conclude by emphasising that the Austrian delegation will continue to strongly support the work and deliberations of this subcommittee. We look forward to a constructive and impactful session.

Thank you.