

**Statement by Norway to the 61<sup>st</sup> session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee – agenda item 4: General exchange of views and introduction of reports submitted on national activities**

Madam Chair,

Norway wishes to congratulate you with your election as Chair this 61<sup>st</sup> session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. Please rest assured of Norway's support. We would also like to thank the outgoing Chair, Ambassador Juan Francisco Facetti of Paraguay, for his outstanding work in leading this Subcommittee during the last period.

Norway also welcomes the new UNOOSA Director, Ms. Aarti Holla-Maini and, as always, we thank the Office for Outer Space Affairs for their steadfast work in preparing this session.

Madam Chair,

Norway condemns Russia's illegal full-scale war against Ukraine. Norway calls for Russia to unconditionally withdraw all forces and military equipment from Ukraine within internationally recognized borders.

As several other States, Norway also has concerns with the draft resolution entitled "Space Science and Technology for Promoting Peace". Norway is a strong supporter of the promotion of peaceful uses of outer space as well as of equitable access to space - and recognizes the important role of technology in that regard. Among other issues, however, this draft resolution muddles the agenda of this committee with that of the First Committee and its disarmament affairs. In large part, it appears to overlap thematically with efforts under agenda item 97(d) of the General Assembly on reducing space threats through norms, rules and principles of responsible behavior. Norway is thus not able to support this draft resolution in its current form.

Madam Chair,

Norway places great importance on the role of the United Nations as the paramount arena for fostering cooperation among states on issues related to outer space. Space activities are not just national issues, but also to a greater extent performed to benefit humanity. Outer space must continue to be a global common good, something that will be used for the benefit of all of us.

This subcommittee is the multilateral entry gate to our further developing standards and guidelines relating to space. As with most countries present here today, Norway's priorities in COPUOS are among others: the Working Group on Long-term Sustainability and the Working Group on Legal Aspects of Space Resource Activities, space as an asset to combat climate change, the Space 2030 Agenda and the up-coming Summit of the Future.

During this session, we particularly look forward to the discussions in the Working Group on Long-term Sustainability and its workshop.

Madam Chair,

Allow me to present an update on some of the latest developments in our space activities:

There are several Norwegian satellites in orbit. Though the majority of our space activities are being carried out through Norway's participation in the space programmes of the European Space Agency, EUMETSAT and the European Union. We also have bilateral agreements with several other nations regarding space research and applications.

In April 2023, NorSat-TD was launched. This is a technology demonstrator – testing new capabilities, such as satellite-to-ground laser communication, maritime surveillance and communication, electric propulsion, and orbit navigation and manoeuvring. NorSat-TD is a cooperation with the Netherlands Space Office, the French Space Agency, and the Italian Space Agency.

Also last year, the Huygens and Birkeland satellites were launched as part of the MilSpace2 project, developed by the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment and the Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research. Their main task is to detect, classify, and geolocate radio frequency systems of interest.

Norwegian universities are also developing their own small satellites. SmallSatLab at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology in Trondheim already has the small hyperspectral satellite Hypso-1 in orbit. Hypso-1 does oceanographic and maritime research. More small satellites are on their way from Trondheim. The University of Tromsø is also developing its own small satellite for space debris detection.

When looking further ahead, a new generation of Norwegian small satellites for maritime surveillance are on their way, for both commercial and government use. In this regard, the Norwegian Space Agency, in cooperation with national users, have established the Arctic Surveillance Program, which will be developed in close concert with national industries.

On 2 November last year, Andøya Spaceport was officially opened. Given its location far north on our coastline, the Spaceport will offer launches to polar orbits, and the first launch is planned for 2024.

Through Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI), and now as just announced during COP28 in Dubai, in partnership with the Bezos Earth Fund, Norway will continue to provide the world with free access to high-resolution satellite data to support efforts to stop the destruction of the world's rainforests.

We also continue our work under the Blue Justice Initiative, in partnership with UNDP. By using microsatellites to track fishing in the waters of developing countries, we will strengthen the ability of developing countries to discover and to counter illegal fishing.

Madam Chair,

It should go without saying but permit me to emphasize Norway's staunch dedication to the work of COPUOS and its subcommittees and to the crucial processes that are taking place in

these. We look forward to contributing constructively to safe and sustainable uses of outer space both at present and in the future.

Thank you, Madam Chair