

Sweden, Item 4 (General Exchange of Views) COPUOS STSC,  
January- February 2024

Madam Chair,

Please allow me to welcome you as Chair of this session and assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation. I would also like to join others in welcoming the new director of UNOOSA, Director Aarti Holla-Maini and thank her and the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs for the preparation of this session.

Sweden fully aligns itself with the statement by the European Union. Please, allow me to add the following in a national capacity.

COPUOS and its Subcommittees are unique platforms. And space sciences and technologies are critical in tackling many of the common challenges we are facing. It is our hope and expectation that COPUOS's important role for the peaceful, safe and sustainable use of outer space, will be

translated into action. Especially now when we work towards the Summit of the Future. The input of the Vienna space community to the Pact for the Future will be important to ensure that space issues will be featured on the agenda of the Summit.

Sweden supports the active participation of women in all space fora and activities. I would like to congratulate Canada on successfully hosting the Space for Women Expert Meeting last fall.

And thank UNOOSA for its leadership and commitment to this cause.

Madam Chair,

Also this year's session takes place during a very difficult time with an ongoing war in Europe. The unjustified and unprovoked war of aggression by the Russian Federation and the illegal annexation of Ukrainian territory, is a flagrant violation of the UN charter and international law. We continue to condemn these actions, stand with Ukraine

and urge the Russian Federation to cease its illegal military aggression and fully respect Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence within its internationally recognized borders.

Chair,

Sweden is a firm believer in multilateralism and the rule-based international order. Our national space strategy underlines the importance of international cooperation and defines space as a global common. Sweden remains committed to promoting the preservation of a safe, secure and sustainable space environment. And to the peaceful use of outer space on an equitable and mutually acceptable basis.

In January this year a Swedish ESA astronaut was successfully part of the Axiom Mission 3, launching 4 astronauts to the ISS. Astronaut Marcus Wandt has now spent a week at the ISS, and is contributing to more than 20 different experiments at ISS.

This is the second Swedish ESA astronaut who travel into space. It is a testament to Sweden's commitment to explore space-based science and to our support to the international collaboration in space and the ISS – which for decades has been a constant in the peaceful exploration on space.

Sweden has been an actor in space for more than 60 years. We have an advanced space industry and invest in cutting-edge research. The Esrange Space Centre in northern Sweden, has had more than 600 successful launches of sounding rockets. Esrange Space center also accommodates one of the world's largest civilian satellite ground stations, as well as European launch capability for small satellites.

Our government is continuing to invest in the space sector. Since 2020, the Esrange Space Centre has also developed and tested rocket engines and reusable space technology.

Conducting national space activities in a safe, secure and sustainable manner is of utmost importance to Sweden, as space systems, space technology, applications and space

data are invaluable assets to society.

The growing population of space debris is therefore of great concern. Sweden firmly believes that states through national regulation of space activities play pivotal roles in mitigating the creation of debris, and maintaining safe, secure and sustainable access to space for all.

Madame Chair,

In order to continue to reap the benefits from space, it is of course a prerequisite to ensure the long-term sustainability of space activities. As our increasing use and reliance on space poses new challenges, COPUOS has a crucial role in tackling these.

Sweden fully supports the continued work of the Working Group on the long-term sustainability of outer space. We want to emphasize the important task that rests on Member States to continue the implementation of the adopted guidelines. We note the positive effects that come

from such national implementation – not only on the safety and sustainability of the outer space environment, but also the positive impact it has on space security. Additionally, we appreciate the opportunities to learn from other countries' experiences.

The LTS guidelines enshrine many transparency and confidence building measures. Sharing information on national space policies and their implementation, facilitates a greater understanding between us of intentions and activities in space. With a better understanding of the development of the global space sector, we decrease risks of misunderstandings and miscalculations that may lead to escalation of conflicts or transfer conflicts on earth into space.

Sweden also contributes to the EU Space Surveillance and Tracking capabilities. We welcome the development of regional STM initiatives, as they increase transparency and

help building confidence among space actors in rapidly evolving environment.

Finally, as regards the topic of Dark and Quiet Skies, and the problem of light pollution for science and society.

Sweden supports the issue of dark and quiet skies on the agenda of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. We welcome the work of the group of friends of Dark and Quiet Skies, and would like to thank Chile and Spain for convening a side event this week to further this discussions.

Madam Chair,

To conclude, Sweden will continue to actively engage in multilateral cooperation on space issues, in COPUOS, other UN fora and elsewhere. We look forward to working together with delegations to ensure a fruitful session.

I thank you.