

[The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Item 3](#)

UK General Statement at the 61st session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of COPUOS, 28th-9th February 2024

Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

Firstly I 'd like to congratulate you, Chair, on your appointment. We wish you every success in this role.

Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate Ms Aarti Holla-Maini on her appointment as Director of UNOOSA and thank her and the wider UNOOSA team for their work in ensuring the success of this STSC.

Before the United Kingdom makes its general statement, let me first clearly state that Space science and exploration missions, and commercial activities, rely on co-operation and collaboration between states. Russia's violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and its ongoing war against Ukraine has had a significant impact on this essential co-operation between space faring nations and is damaging international co-operation on the peaceful uses of outer space. We call again on Russia to end this war and withdraw from Ukrainian territory.

Now let me move onto our General Statement

The United Kingdom continues to work collaboratively on ground-breaking space science and exploration missions with international partners. An example of this are the ESA EUCLID and Jupiter Icy Moons Explorer (JUICE) missions which both launched in the past year and carried significant United Kingdom contributions, such as the J-MAG instrument led by Imperial College London. The UK is also proud to be leading on ESA's Moonlight mission and adding the Enfy instrument as part of our contributions to the Roselind Franklin rover as it explores for signs of life on Mars.

The UK Government is proud to work with both domestic and international partners to champion space-based technologies and their uses for climate action. The UK was active at last year's COP28 meeting in Dubai raising awareness of the importance of space for climate action, through curating a series of panel events, attending the Space Agency Leaders' Summit and hosting an exhibition stand, alongside Space4Climate. The UK also hosted a very successful event for the UK-led climate satellite mission, TRUTHS, which is part of a future global system of collaboration and is designed to detect infrared emissions from Earth.

Space Sustainability continues to be a key priority for the United Kingdom as we set out in the National Space Strategy and UK plan for Space Sustainability. The past year has focused on delivery of measures to prevent irresponsible behaviours, protect the space environment, and promote UK thought leadership. Notable examples of this include: a

consultation looking at incentivising the adoption of more sustainable missions through variable liability limits and licence fees, continued funding of two teams to prepare for a UK national debris removal mission which will be the subject of a technical presentation later in the week, and continued research into approaches to achieve a sustainable space environment. The United Kingdom is also proud to work with UNOOSA on two projects, including one to promote awareness of the Long-term Sustainability guidelines, and another on enhancing international expertise in the registration of objects launched into outer space.

To support its work on sustainability, the UK also acknowledges the critical role and important work of the Inter-Agency Debris Coordination Committee (IADC) whose guidelines remain the most effective method to reduce the long-term environmental impacts of global space activity.

The delegation of the United Kingdom wishes to express its recognition of the ongoing and constructive efforts of the Working Group on the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space. We remain committed to actively contributing to the future activities of the Working Group, and we look forward to participating in its continued work towards advancing the use of nuclear power in outer space.

The UK also continues to emphasise the importance of finding solutions to the issue of Dark and Quiet Skies and it is our strong hope that

agreement can be achieved at this meeting on how this issue should be tackled at COPUOS.

Finally, Chair, distinguished delegates, we look forward to a constructive session to further our cooperation and dialogue in the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space.