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STATEMENT BY THE CHAIR  
Scientific and Technical Subcommittee  
Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space  
Sixty-first Session  
Vienna, 29 January - 9 February 2024

Distinguished Delegates and Representatives,

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you to the sixty-first session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

I take this opportunity to thank States members of the Committee for electing me to serve as Chair of the Subcommittee for the period of 2024-2025 and for the trust they have placed in me to advance the work of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee.

It is an honor for me to take on this important role, which was successfully filled by my predecessor, Mr. Ambassador Juan Francisco Facetti of Paraguay, to whom I express my sincere thanks.

I would also like to express my appreciation to the new leadership of the Office for Outer Space Affairs and the entire secretariat team for outstanding preparations made for this session.

Distinguished Delegates,

I note with appreciation that the membership of the Committee is 102 States, which demonstrates the continuing importance of this body as a crucial forum for States to cooperate internationally on the peaceful exploration and use of outer space.

With reference to General Assembly resolution 78/72 of 11 December 2023, I welcome the European Astronomical Society and Three Country – Trusted Broker as the newest international organizations with observer status with the Committee.

Distinguished Delegates,

Last year we celebrated the 60th anniversary of the first spaceflight performed by a woman, Valentina Tereshkova, the twentieth anniversary of the first human space flight by China, and the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Space Station. This year we recognize the 60th anniversary of European cooperation in space and the 55th anniversary of the Apollo 11 mission for the first-time placing humans on the surface of the Moon. Celebrations like these underscore the significance of space exploration, advancements in science and technology, and the role of international cooperation and diplomacy in this field.

As we embark on the sixty-first session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, I would like to underscore the relevance and importance of this Subcommittee, evidenced by the important international instruments developed in its framework, including the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the Safety Framework for Nuclear Power Source Applications in Outer Space, and the Guidelines for the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. These instruments provide an important guidance on keeping the outer space environment operationally stable and safe, and we should do more to maintain it for peaceful purposes and open for exploration, use and international cooperation by current and future

generations, in the interest of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development, without discrimination of any kind and with due regard for the principle of equity.

The Subcommittee forms part of the unique intergovernmental platform of COPUOS and its two subcommittees which together are the preeminent fora for fostering dialogue, reinforcing mutual understanding among nations and promoting international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space. They thrive to maximize the benefits of space science and technology and their applications, and help us advance the attainment of SDGs.

Distinguished Delegates,

The Subcommittee has a special and important task to consider many areas of space science and technology and their applications. In this context and in accordance with previous decisions by the Committee, I would like to recall the different working groups to be reconvened during this session: The Working Group of the Whole of the Subcommittee, the Working Group on the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space Activities, and the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities.

I am looking forward to the Workshop on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities to take place next Tuesday afternoon, as it will undoubtedly contribute to the rich considerations of our current session.

I also note with appreciation the continued work carried out by the international bodies whose establishment was facilitated by the Subcommittee, namely the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems (ICG), the Space Mission Planning Advisory Group (SMPAG), the International Asteroid Warning Network (IAWN), as well as the Space and Global Health Network, that was recently established by the General Assembly as a result of long-standing work of the subcommittee in the field of space and global health.

I will work closely with all delegations in responding to the request made by the Committee to us last year – to agree on a title, duration and scope of an item on dark and quiet skies and megaconstellations to recommend it to COPUOS for inclusion on our agenda starting from 2025.

Distinguished Delegates,

Our reliance on satellite infrastructures, specific technology capabilities and space applications in facilitating the present economic and growing societal challenges, should encourage us in our efforts today in promoting international cooperation and enhanced use of space technologies for socioeconomic development and for addressing global challenges.

I would like to recall that the interrelationship between major space-faring nations and emerging space nations, increased international cooperation, and capacity-building efforts for the benefit of developing countries, have laid the groundwork for success over the years. Furthering international coordination and cooperation among all space actors including partnerships among States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, industry and private sector entities will be key in promoting sustained economic growth and sustainable development in all countries.

Distinguished Delegates,

Space applications, such as telecommunications, observation, positioning and navigation, tele-transmission and remote control, are substantially facilitating the present economic and societal challenges. It should therefore be our aim to share the benefits of space science and technology in achieving our commitments under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is of critical importance that we advance space utilization, exploration and

innovations and the development of technology, but also continue to coordinate efforts to strengthen the implementation of the United Nations treaties and principles on outer space and to complement existing international space law, when appropriate, to respond to emerging issues, as outlined in the “Space2030” Agenda - the forward-looking strategy for reaffirming and strengthening the contribution of space activities and space tools to the achievement of global agendas and addressing long-term sustainable development concerns of humankind.

Distinguished Delegates,

The Subcommittee remains a key platform under COPUOS for fostering dialogue, strengthening international collaboration on scientific and technical aspects of the peaceful uses of outer space and providing valuable contributions to advancing the global governance of outer space activities.

This role of the Subcommittee is becoming particularly more important in these recent years, as we are witnessing the thriving of space activities, an unprecedented rate in the development of new technologies in the space sector and an increased diversification of space actors. I encourage the international community to discuss ways and means of reinforcing space governance in the interest of maintaining the sustainability of outer space for present and future generations, and I encourage States and colleagues here to use this opportunity to the fullest and maximize this vital multilateral work over these next two weeks. I am open to leading the work of the Subcommittee in increasing the visibility of the role of the Committee and in highlighting the importance of outer space in global agenda.

Distinguished Delegates and Representatives,

In my capacity as the newly elected Chair of the Subcommittee, I have confidence that our collaborative efforts will result in tangible advancements in our work, and I eagerly anticipate a session marked by high productivity, constructive spirit, cooperation and tangible outcomes.

Thank you.

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