

USA - General Exchange of Views – February 4, 2025

To be delivered by Howard Solomon, Chargé d’Affaires, ad interim, and Acting Permanent Representative at the U.S. Mission to International Organizations in Vienna

Thank you, Chair. The U.S. delegation appreciates your leadership during this 62nd session. We thank Director Holla-Maini and her team for their tireless work over the past year to bring the world together to advance our efforts in space. Since this is our first time taking the floor, we would like to express our sincere condolences to the delegation of Poland for the loss of Ambassador Andrzej Misztal. Ambassador Misztal served as co-chair of the LSC’s Space Resources Working Group and did so much to advance the peaceful uses and exploration of space.

Chair, America’s space program continues to make giant strides to explore, discover, and inspire – all while bringing tangible and substantial benefits to humanity. Consistent with our 2020 National Space Policy, the United States’ space program is deepening the commercial and international partnerships that will help NASA lead humanity back to the Moon and then to the red sands of Mars. New missions were launched to study our solar system and our universe in captivating new ways. NASA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the entire U.S. civil space community observed our changing Earth through our eyes in the sky – our ever-growing fleet of satellites and instruments – and shared that data with all of humanity. And we opened the doors to new breakthroughs on the International Space Station and to new wonders in space travel.

Chair, NASA and its commercial and international partners continue moving forward with its Artemis campaign, including progress toward its first mission around the Moon with crew in more than 50 years, and advancing plans to explore more of the Moon than ever before. Since our last meeting, 19 more countries signed the Artemis Accords, committing to the safe, transparent, and responsible exploration of space with the United States. As of today, 53 countries have now signed the Accords. The United States Delegation congratulates the committee for establishing the Action Team on Lunar Activities Consultations (ATLAC) and looks forward to actively and constructively contributing to its success. Achieving peaceful and sustainable activities on and around the Moon

will require transparency among Moon-faring entities to ensure a safe and sustainable future in space for all.

Closer to home, in 2024, a total of 25 people lived and worked aboard the International Space Station, helping to complete science for the benefit of humanity, open access to space to more people, and support exploration of the Moon in preparation for Mars. A total of 14 spacecraft visited the microgravity laboratory, including eight commercial resupply missions, as well as international partner missions, delivering almost 20,000 kilograms of science investigations, tools, and critical supplies to the space station.

Chair, NASA and our partners are unlocking the mysteries of the universe. In October, NASA's Europa Clipper embarked on its long journey to Jupiter, where it will investigate Europa, a moon with an enormous subsurface ocean that may have conditions to support life. A joint effort with the European and Canadian space agencies, the James Webb Space Telescope marked more than two years in space, transforming our view of the universe, by studying the most distant galaxies ever observed, while raising exciting new questions about the atmospheres of planets outside our solar system.

The United States makes its Earth observation data freely and openly available. The U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), together with partners in Europe, Japan, Korea, and India, provide access to observations that help decisionmakers better understand and predict environmental threats. NASA's Earth Information Center provides critical data to the world.

The USGS National Land Imaging Program proved its worth once again with new Landsat-derived land cover information products and science contributions—and was validated by a report estimating the Landsat mission's economic value at \$25.6 billion. That progress includes preparing for the upcoming NASA and USGS mission, Landsat Next, with support from our international partners.

Chair, we urge UNCOPUOS and its subcommittees to strengthen its focus on expanding international cooperation between countries in the peaceful exploration and use of space. As the committee continues to grow, members will need to carefully review new proposals for UNCOPUOS and its subcommittees to ensure they leverage the Committee's unique strengths within the UN system.

Consideration of proposals for new work also should take into account the respective mandates of other UN fora.

Chair, in closing, the United States welcomes Latvia and Djibouti to COPUOS, bringing the total number of Member States to 104. The growing size of the Committee and the increase in space activity around the world further underscores that as the number of space actors and activities continues to accelerate, the work of this Committee is more important than ever. Thank you, Chair.