

Germany, Item 10

UNCOPUOS Scientific and Technical Subcommittee

62nd Session, Vienna, 3–14 February 2025

Statement by Germany on

Agenda item 10: Long-term sustainability of outer space activities

Madam Chair, distinguished delegates,

As we noted in our general statement already, the Working Group on Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities is entering its final stretch. This year, we will begin our work on the draft report of the Working Group, which will provide information and recommendations on the three elements of its mandate, and we will also begin to consider future activities and areas of work under this agenda item. We spent a considerable amount of time last year discussing working methods and procedural approaches, and this has come at the expense of substantive debates. With two more sessions to go before the workplan expires, we hope that we can conduct focused exchanges on the substantive issues of this Working Group so that next year we can finalize a thorough report that adequately reflects the amount of work and effort of each delegation throughout the past years.

During the intersessional meeting in November of last year, the Chair of the Working Group produced a non-paper that contained, among other things, a list of repeated themes and possible groupings of ideas on challenges based on the input provided by members of the Working Group to the table that the Chair had compiled. This list was well received and highly appreciated, and it also reflected some of the themes that Germany had raised in various contributions over the past years, such as a focus on sustainability aspects of large constellations, better information sharing and coordination between space actors, spacecraft manoeuvring and collision

avoidance, as well as active debris removal. We believe that this list provides a good basis to start our work at this session.

Madam Chair,

our discussions under this agenda item and in the Working Group this year take place in the context of a broader recognition that more action is necessary to address the growing number of objects in space and the question of how to approach this high amount of space traffic as well as the associated lack of information and space situational awareness. The importance of a framework for space debris and space traffic was recognized in the UN Pact for the Future, which states that the growth in the number of objects in space, among other issues, demands urgent action. This is also linked to our discussion on future activities and areas of work on LTS. Germany has always viewed the 21 LTS guidelines as important building blocks in an international approach to space traffic, and we strongly believe that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee should play a role in defining how the international community addresses space traffic at the global level. We therefore welcome a number of proposals raised during this session for mechanisms for space situational awareness and global space traffic coordination and will play a constructive role in choosing the best path forward. Space traffic will be the central issue in the coming years, and we believe that COPUOS and its two subcommittees are the best place to address it at the global level.

Thank you for your kind attention.