

United Kingdom, Item 11

UK Statement on LTS at the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the Scientific and Technical

Subcommittee of COPUOS, 3rd-14th February 2025

Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

The long-term sustainability of outer space activities and the ability to maintain our current use of the space environment, while preserving it for future generations, continues to be a key priority for the UK Government. The UK Space Agency takes a multi-faceted approach to delivering on its space sustainability commitments across the development of new missions, technologies, and our national regulatory framework.

In terms of new missions, the UK continues to support preparations for a national debris removal mission which will demonstrate the capability to rendezvous, dock with and safely remove two unprepared, UK-licensed objects from orbit, in addition to wider investments in space sustainability research and technology development including atmospheric ablation.

Additionally, the UK maintains focus on its space surveillance and tracking capabilities through our National Space Operations Centre (NSpOC), established in May 2024, which provides conjunction analysis and warning to UK operators along with re-entry and licence compliance. The UK welcomes UNOOSA's work in this area, particularly the Sustainability Days held ahead of this session. The UK looks forward to continuing to explore practical mechanisms to improve information sharing and ensure the safety and sustainability of future space operations.

Chair, the UK recognises that to achieve our goal of a sustainable space environment, international collaboration and the dissemination of best practices, knowledge and experience is vital. The UK welcomes the annual release of the IADC report on the "Status of the Space Debris Environment" which was released at this session as CRP A/AC.105/C.1/2025/CRP.10. The report serves as a critical insight into the global compliance with the space debris mitigation guidelines and the forecasted environmental challenges we may begin to face on-orbit.

Noting the importance of evidence-based approaches for international agreements, the UK Space Agency commissioned a study to support the development of threshold-based models and begin to evaluate their incorporation into existing and new frameworks for space governance/regulatory coordination. Earlier in this session, the UK provided a under this agenda item titled "Findings from the UKSA & UNOOSA Space Environment Sustainability Assessment" which highlights our initial findings from this topic.

To continue this discussion, a side-event was co-hosted with UNOOSA to gather member state reflections on this topic.

The UK would like to thank the Chair of the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities Working Group and UNOOSA as secretariat for their significant efforts in coordinating and advancing our discussion in this area. The UK attaches great importance to the work of the working group and look forwards forward to further progress at this session. To support this work, at this session, the UK produced a Conference Room paper [A/AC.105/C.1/2025/CRP.21] which provides an update to the UK's approach to the implementation of the guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities. Reporting on implementation of the guidelines is a vital tool to share practices and uncover common challenges in their implementation which may guide future work of the committee. In recognition of this, the UK Space Agency is supporting the development of a repository, agreed at the 60th session of this committee, to provide an easily accessible and searchable open-source repository of implementation practices which we hope will serve as a tool for building transparency, confidence and capacity. We hope delegates were able to attend our side event demonstrating the repository, held on Monday, co-hosted with UNOOSA.

Chair, an important discussion at this session will be the development of the report for the working group and its next steps. To support this discussion, the UK along with Canada, Chile, Spain, and France have released the Conference Room paper [A/AC.105/C.1/2025/CRP.14]. The paper identifies a set of potential consensus recommendations gathered from our current schedule of work and identifies a set of next steps for future work which will ensure long-term sustainability continues to be a key topic of discussion at UNCOPUOS.

Thank you, Chair.