Statement by Norway to the 62nd session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee – agenda item 3: General exchange of views and introduction of reports submitted on national activities

Madam Chair,
Norway wishes to thank you for chairing this 62nd session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. Please rest assured of Norway's support.

As always, we express our appreciation to the Office for Outer Space Affairs for their excellent work in preparing this session.

My delegation also wishes to express our condolences to the Polish delegation on the passing away of Ambassador Misztal.

Norway is pleased to see that COPUOS' membership is steadily increasing. In that respect, we welcome our new members: Djibouti and Latvia.

Norway condemns Russia's illegal full-scale war against Ukraine. Norway calls for Russia to cease hostilities and unconditionally withdraw all forces and military equipment from within Ukraine's internationally recognized borders.

Madam Chair,
The Pact for the Future encourages the holding of a UNISPACE IV conference in 2027. This is an opportunity for COPUOS to set direction towards 2030 and beyond at a high level. Norway supports the proposal to hold such a conference in 2027.

The working group on long-term sustainability shall present its final report at next year's session of the STSC. To do so, the Working Group must strive to reach consensus on its work during this session. We urge all Member States to contribute in a constructive way so that we can move forward.

Allow me now, Madam Chair, to present an update on some of the latest developments in Norway's space activities.

The majority of our space activities are being carried out through Norway's participation in the space programs of the European Space Agency, EUMETSAT and the European Union. We also have bilateral agreements with several other nations regarding space research and applications.

In our own capacity, Norway currently has fifteen satellites in orbit, three of which were launched in 2024, and one last month.

On 14 January this year, NorSat-4 was launched from Vandenberg Space Force Base. This is a maritime monitoring microsatellite and carries a 5th generation Automatic Identification System (AIS) ship tracking receiver and a first-of-its-kind low-light imaging camera. The low-light optical camera increases our ability to detect and track vessels in Norway's Arctic territorial waters by supplementing the AIS receiver aboard the satellite.

The three satellites launched in 2024 were the Arctic Satellite Broadband Mission (ASBM), and Hypso-2. The ASBM is a partnership between Space Norway, the Norwegian Armed Forces, Inmarsat and the US Space Force. It consists of two satellites and was launched 11 August 2024. The mission will provide broadband coverage in the Arctic, north of the 65th latitude.

As a payload on the ASBM mission there is a Norwegian-developed radiation monitor (NORM). It will map the radiation environment in the unique orbits that the satellites are travelling through, increasing the knowledge about the space weather radiation environment affecting space infrastructure and enabling better mitigation measures.

Hypso-2 was launched on 16 August 2024 and is a hyperspectral satellite for ocean observation.

Looking ahead, we see a new generation of Norwegian small satellites for maritime surveillance, for both commercial and government use. In this regard, the Norwegian Space Agency, in cooperation with national users, have established the Arctic Surveillance Program, which will be developed in close concert with national industries.

On 22 August, Andøya Spaceport received its Launch Site Operator license. With this license Andøya Spaceport is now formally a Launch Site Operator, with the overall responsibility for developing, operating and ensuring safe operations from the spaceport.

The ESA Arctic Phi-Lab has been established in Tromsø. The Arctic Phi-Lab shall foster innovative research and development of satellite-based technologies, products and/or services with an Arctic focus.

From the beginning of 2024, the Norwegian Space Agency has been given civil responsibility for space surveillance and tracking, as well as space traffic management. The arrangement ensures that national needs are met within space surveillance and tracking and space traffic management, as well as handling of warnings nationally, including in emergency response settings. The arrangement will be evaluated after a three-year period.

In May last year, the Norwegian Space Agency hosted the International Space University's (ISU) Executive Space Course, which was co-organized with ISU.

We look forward to productive discussions in the days ahead.

Thank you, Madam Chair.