

Portugal Statement
Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses
of Outer Space | 62nd session

Agenda Item 3, “General Exchange of Views”

Madam Chair, Distinguished Representatives,

1. As this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor, I would like to compliment you, Madam Chair and the OOSA Director, and assure you of our full cooperation for the works ahead of us during this session of the STSC. Also, a special recognition to the Secretariat for their excellent work in supporting this meeting and the ongoing works.
2. I would like to express to our sorrow on the passing of Emb Andrzej Misztal to his family and to the Polish delegation. Emb Misztal was a very respected and cherished member of the space community that will be missed, not only for its professional skills, most recently in the space resources working group, but also for his personal openness and sympathy.
3. Our sincere condolences also to Nigeria on the passing of Dr. Abiodun, another esteemed member of the space community.
4. Portugal would like to welcome Djibouti and Latvia as new Members States.
5. Further to the statement delivered earlier by the distinguished representative of the European Union, special mention being made to the situation in Ukraine, we would like to convey the following points.

Madam Chair,

6. Portugal actively pursues a strong agenda in education on STEM and Space. As a result, last year Portugal issued the first two launch licences of 2 university satellites:
 - **IST STA 1** involved the full construction of the cubesat, qualified by the European Space Agency (ESA) as part of the ‘Fly your satellite!’ and launched within Ariane 6, operation accompanied by the by the ground station of Santa Maria, in the Azores; and
 - **‘PROMETHEUS** - PocketQube Framework Designed for Research and Educational Access to Space’, with a programmed re-entry, emerged from the partnership program with Carnegie Mellon University, funded by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology

7. Since 2020, Portugal hosts the **Euroc- European Rocketry Challenge**, the first international rocket launch competition for European university students, aiming to promote access to space knowledge. In the 2024 edition, 19 teams with more than 600 students from 13 European countries, participated in a full 7 day competition. Inscriptions for the 2025 edition will open soon.
8. Portugal licensed the launch and command and control operation of the **PoSAT-2 satellite**, whose proposed mission concerns the development of advanced space engineering solutions to improve the safety and efficiency of global maritime communication and navigation for maritime transport companies, government, maritime security agencies and other entities, based on the phased launch of a constellation of twelve satellites with the aim of providing VDES (VHF Data Exchange System) and AIS (Automatic Identification System) communication services.
9. Having in mind the Portuguese Space Agency motto, *“a sustainable Space for a sustainable Earth”*, the Agency continues to develop the **“Earth Observation for Municipalities”** initiative, where the needs of local institutions are discussed and, at the same time, the potential of Earth Observation in seeking concrete solutions is actively promoted and we expect to replicate this model in other geographies.
10. Sustainability is also much needed in space. Portugal is a strong advocate of a sustainable space in which **Space Traffic Coordination and Space Situational Awareness** is vital. We need to ensure global mechanisms to prevent the increase of space debris and mechanisms for space traffic management. We look forward to the developments on this topic and on the proposed expert groups.
11. One of the aspects of sustainability is capacity building, awareness and adherence to international space law and to international guidelines. Portugal was happy to join the **“Space law for new space actors”** project and to assist the Office in the Monaco Technical Advisory Mission, in September.
12. To prepare for long-duration missions beyond LEO - such as the Moon, Mars and beyond - the European Space Agency (ESA) and its international partners have been using the ISS to conduct experiments, analysing the impact of the space environment on human health. The Portuguese Space Agency, ESA and the Portuguese Navy are working together in the first scientific mission to study the **Isolation Standard Measures**. Submarines recreate conditions similar to those of space missions, such as isolation, confined environments and operational challenges, making them ideal for studying the effects of these conditions on crews and developing strategies to deal with them.

13. Portugal already has several terrestrial analogue sites, such as the Capelinhos Volcano and Barreiro da Faneca, in the Azores, and the Selvagens Islands, in Madeira, all to be found in the **Portuguese Space Analogues - Catalogue of Sites and Facilities**.

Madam Chair,

14. Portugal remains fully committed to the **sustainable use of outer space**. The current **Working Group** is scheduled to conclude its works in 2026, with a final report including “information on” and “recommendations” related to each of the three key elements within its mandate. We are aware that we do not have, yet, a possible outline for the report but we do stress the need for a significant conclusion of the works, translated in a substantive report - and not only in a procedural one -, that can effectively support the discussions on these fundamental issues, including further than 2026.
15. We are looking forward to the unfolding of the works during this session, as well as to progresses to be achieved also in the informal consultations of the **Action Team on Lunar Activities Consultation (ATLAC)**, a mechanism that we find of fundamental importance as lunar activities becomes increasingly recurrent by different space actors and latitudes, as we hear regularly in this subcommittee. In this regard, we would like to congratulate China, India and Japan for their recent successes on the Moon, and Romania and Pakistan for co-chairing this Action Team.
16. The **World Space Forum** provided a vital platform for representatives from the global space community to exchange knowledge and elaborate on current and future challenges, including the outcomes of the **Summit of the Future**. We would like to congratulate the Office, Germany, United Arab Emirates and Peru for hosting such a fruitful event. The Pact for the Future, addressed in the WSF, also encouraged the Committee to consult on a potential UNISPACE IV Conference and advocated for broad engagement from private sector, civil society, and other stakeholders to enhance safety and sustainability in outer space activities. We support the general opportunity of **Unisapce IV**, also as a catalyst for the UN system and for the advancement of concrete coordination mechanisms amongst Member States and concrete space governance frameworks, having in mind the need of streamlined works and priorities.

Thank you, Madam Chair.