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**Committee on the Peaceful  
Uses of Outer Space**  
**Sixty-seventh session**  
Vienna, 19–28 June 2024

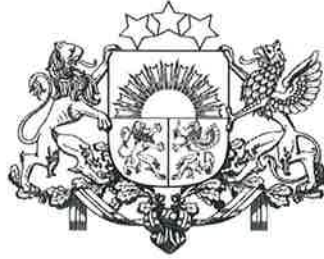
**Application for membership of the Committee on the  
Peaceful Uses of Outer Space: Republic of Latvia**

**Note by the Secretariat**

The present document contains the Note Verbale from the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Latvia to the United Nations (Vienna), ref EDSO-9084 of 29 April 2024, with the application of the Republic of Latvia for membership with the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

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*Latvijas Republikas Pastāvīgā pārstāvniecība ANO, EDSO  
un citās starptautiskajās organizācijās Vīnē  
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Latvia to the UN, OSCE  
and other International Organizations in Vienna*

No. EDSO-9084

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Latvia to the UN, OSCE and other International Organizations in Vienna presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs and has the honour to inform that the Republic of Latvia has decided to apply for the membership of the Committee of the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS).

Additional information on the development of Latvia's space industry and concerning the application of the Republic of Latvia to join the COPUOS is attached to this note verbale.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Latvia to the UN, OSCE and other International Organizations in Vienna would be grateful if the Secretariat of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs could circulate this note verbale to the current Member States of the COPUOS to inform them about the membership application of the Republic of Latvia.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Latvia to the UN, OSCE and other International Organizations in Vienna avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs the assurances of its highest consideration.

Vienna, 29 April 2024

**Secretariat of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs  
Vienna**



## **Background information on Latvia's efforts to enhance its engagement with the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS)**

Aiming to actively contribute to international cooperation in the peaceful use and exploration of space, as well as the utilization of space science and technology for sustainable economic and social development, Latvia has submitted its application for membership of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

Latvia, a nation of 2 million residents situated in the innovative northern region of Europe, recognizes its potential within the emerging space economy by identifying and seizing opportunities for innovation. Leveraging its historical heritage in space technologies and competences established in the latter half of the 20th century, Latvia has embarked on a journey to advance its engagement in the space sector.

In the coming months, Latvia will begin the national process for ratifying the Outer Space Treaty and possibly other outer space treaties. In addition, Latvia is collaborating with the Centre for Space Governance to analyse the opportunities of national regulation.

Latvia has developed its first Space Strategy for the years 2021-2027, an operational document jointly developed by the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Economics with the support of the European Space Agency. The overarching aim of the strategy is to structure a systematic framework and coordinate the space policy related matters in Latvia as well as to demonstrate the willingness of the stakeholders to work together for the development of the space sector. The four main pillars of the strategy are: (i) education and skill development, (ii) entering in the space supply chain and having an international impact; (iii) scientific and engineering research, and (iv) governmental services.

The oversight of Latvian space activities is under the authority of the Ministry of Education and Science, which collaborates closely with the Ministry of Economics and other relevant ministries and institutions to promote and raise awareness of space activities.

Despite the occupation of Latvia by the Soviet Union, Latvian scientists made significant contributions to early space exploration and military space research. Since then, Latvian scientists have contributed to a number of important space programs. Notable achievements include cooperation on the first-ever satellite telescope and range finder, as well as developing expertise in thermal isolation materials for launch vehicles. The first national satellite, Venta-1, was launched on 23 June 2017 using ISRO's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle. The Automatic Identification System satellite was developed

by Ventspils University of Applied Sciences and Bremen University of Applied Sciences in cooperation with OHB-System AG.

Latvia's collaboration with international space organizations is also expanding. The first Cooperation Agreement with the European Space Agency (ESA) signed in 2009 was followed by the European Cooperating State Agreement, effective upon the signature of the Plan for European Cooperating States (PECS) Charter in 2015. In 2020, the relationship was upgraded to an associate membership, initially for a duration of 7 years. Currently Latvia participates in several ESA programs, including the General Support Technology Programme (GSTP), the Earth Observation Programme (EO), the Human and Robotic Exploration Programme (HRE), Space Safety, and Commercialization program Scale-UP.

Furthermore, Latvian companies are actively engaging in various aspects of the space industry, focusing on niche products and services such as earth observation applications, scientific instruments, electronic components, and materials. Space activities can significantly help Latvia develop its “value chain” through knowledge-intensive and innovative products. Such space activities undertaken in Latvia can be considered as capabilities that are yet to be fully exploited in the space sector. In addition, Latvia will contribute to two important global space missions – the Lunar Gateway mission and the planetary protection mission Hera.

Latvia strategically places particular emphasis on the use of space data for earth observation, environmental protection, and sustainable development, in alignment with its priorities for green, sustainable growth. The country is committed to promote the efficient use of space-based services and technologies to achieve sustainable development goals.

Moreover, Latvia recognizes the importance of addressing challenges such as space debris and space traffic management that ensures the security, sustainability, and peaceful use of outer space. Latvia is the only Baltic state represented in the EU Space Surveillance and Tracking (EU SST) Partnership Agreement by the Ministry of Education and Science, along with the University of Latvia.

Latvia is willing and ready to contribute to international efforts, including those led by COPUOS, to address these challenges and promote the responsible use of outer space.