

Mr. Chair, Distinguished delegates,

Space exploration represents a substantial challenge in the quest to explore new frontiers for creating knowledge and expanding human presence deeper into space. Japan has been participating in this challenge for humankind in cooperation with our international partners.

Last June, Japan updated its Basic Plan on Space Policy, recognizing the importance of the space domain as a frontier for cutting edge science and technology, and as a driving force for economic growth. Japan will leverage its expertise to take part in global space exploration efforts, and will also bring in capabilities from various industry sectors. In October 2020, Japan signed the Artemis Accords as a political commitment to establish an internationally shared framework on various principles for civil space exploration activities and the use of outer space by national space agencies.

In the field of lunar exploration, Japan is participating in the

lunar “Gateway” as part of the Artemis Program. Japan plans to provide habitation capability and logistics resupply to the Gateway by offering the knowledge and technology acquired from the ISS program and its space science missions. In the Japanese fiscal year 2022, JAXA plans to launch the Smart Lander for Investigating Moon (SLIM), which is designed to demonstrate pinpoint landing capability on the lunar surface. JAXA is also developing the Lunar Polar Exploration mission in collaboration with the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), which aims to investigate the presence of water and the possibilities for resource utilization in the lunar polar region. Additionally, JAXA is conducting research on a pressurized crewed rover as a means of transportation to support sustainable lunar surface exploration in the late 2020s and beyond.

Regarding space science missions, in 2010, the Japanese asteroid explorer Hayabusa accomplished the world’s first sample return mission from an asteroid. Following the success of its earlier mission, Hayabusa2 arrived at the C-type asteroid Ryugu in 2018 and conducted surface exploration as well as two touchdowns. Last December, Hayabusa2 successfully brought back samples of Ryugu to the Earth, and the initial analysis of the sample has started. Hayabusa2 is now on the way to explore another asteroid, 1998 KY26.

Moreover, JAXA is currently developing the Martian Moons eXploration (MMX), which will technologically succeed Hayabusa2, with a target launch in JFY 2024. Through this mission, JAXA plans to explore the two Martian Moons and collect a sample from one of the Moons called Phobos to bring back to Earth.

Japan has been cooperating with Japanese universities to pursue our exploration missions. Late this year, two CubeSats called OMOTENASHI and EQUULEUS developed by JAXA and the University of Tokyo will be launched by NASA’s Artemis I. These CubeSats will demonstrate small spacecraft technology and carry out scientific missions near and on the moon for future exploration.

Collaboration with Japanese industry is also important for space exploration. We have been promoting joint research with Japanese industry through JAXA’s Space Exploration Innovation Hub Center since 2015. Through the activities of the Hub Center, JAXA has been collaborating with companies, universities, and research institutes on research and development of technologies that will contribute to future space exploration, such as automatic and autonomous exploration technology, In-Situ Resource Utilization (ISRU) technology, and common technology adopted for both space and non-space.

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Space exploration is in the common interest of all humankind and the ultimate challenge of exploring new frontiers. Moreover, we believe that these space exploration endeavors are great opportunities to benefit humanity by contributing to the development of science and technology on Earth as well as promoting social awareness among young people and advancing economic development. Japan would like to participate in this spectacular challenge for humankind along with our international partners, and contribute through Japanese technical expertise.

Thank you for your kind attention.