

## **Czech Republic, Agenda item 4. General exchange of views**

64<sup>th</sup> session UN COPUOS

Mr. Chair,

Allow me, on behalf of the Czech Delegation, to express our sincere appreciation to you and to the entire UNOOSA team for excellent work and efforts that allow us to arrange this year's COPUOS sessions in a hybrid form.

Mr. Chair, distinguished delegates,

With respect to the work of COPUOS, the Czech Republic acknowledges the achievements of this year's sessions of the Scientific and Technical and Legal Subcommittees of COPUOS and fully endorses their reports. Despite the COVID-based technical challenges, we look forward to a fruitful and successful plenary session of the Committee addressing a great array of important and challenging issues we are facing today. In this regard, let us briefly highlight the priorities from the perspective of our delegation:

- 1) We have noted with satisfaction the consensus on the composition of the bureau of the new WG on the Long Term Sustainability of Outer Space activities (WG LTS 2.0). This working group represents an important step forward that will help the community to implement existing LTS guidelines and will allow us to continue to work on further ones. We support the non-paper by the Chair of the working group containing the way forward towards the terms of reference, methods of work and the workplan of the working group and we look forward to soon begin our work.
- 2) Our delegation would like to reiterate the importance of the initiative on the long-term protection of „Dark Skies“ and respective „Recommendations to Keep Dark and Quiet Skies for Science and Society“. Bearing in mind April's STSC discussion, the COPUOS opinion is not unanimous at this stage – but – sooner or later, the committee will have to address this issue and the Czech Republic is ready to support these discussions at future COPUOS sessions.
- 3) Our delegation attaches great importance to the adoption of the Space2030 Agenda and its Implementation Plan. We encourage all delegations to work tirelessly on achieving consensus on the last two pending paragraphs. Space community is waiting for an

approved implementation plan that will help us to enhance the use of space science and technology to achieve the goals of 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

- 4) Our delegation highly appreciates Austrian initiative entitled „Space4Climate Action“. Global droughts, floods, forest fires and for example also the first ever recorded F4-category tornado in the Czech Republic in June 2021 have shown us the power of a rapid climate change. Every single initiative that will help us face these kind of challenges deserves our careful consideration.
- 5) With respect to Space Debris, we have to highlight that it is important to address all the related technical, as well as legal issues, in particular the emerging agendas with a significant connection to Space Debris, such as Space Traffic Management, Active Debris Removal, Servicing of Space Vehicles orbiting the Earth, or the risks of the generation of space debris in connection with large satellite constellations. A closer cooperation between STSC and LTS is essential in achieving this goal. In addition, international standard-setting effort in this area needs to be complemented by adopting relevant national technical regulations applicable to space debris. In this regard, the Czech delegation welcomes recent updates and additions to the compendium of space debris mitigation standards, available on the website of the Office of Outer Space Affairs, and encourages other States and relevant organisations to contribute to the compendium.
- 6) The Czech delegation supports the discussions on potential legal models to govern activities in exploration, exploitation and utilization of space resource and welcomes the decision of the Legal Subcommittee to establish a working group under the agenda item on the general exchange of views on this topic. As one of co-sponsors of the original initiative, we are convinced that the Working Group, under the newly elected Chair and Vice-Chair, will successfully complete on-going consultations on its mandate, terms of reference and methods of work.
- 7) Our delegation appreciates the outcomes of the discussions of the Working Group on the Status and Application of the Five UN Treaties on Outer Space. The finalized guidance document and related follow-up activities and questionnaires should serve as a means of capacity-building and increase awareness in space law at the national level. We are also aware of the importance of the issue of large constellations and megaconstellations and welcome that the Working Group agreed that it should discuss

registration practices concerning these constellations at the next session of the Legal Subcommittee.

Mr. Chair, distinguished delegates,

Let me inform you that the Czech Republic, despite the global pandemic situation, actively continues in the implementation of the National Space Plan 2020-2025 (NSP). I'm pleased to announce that, under the NSP framework, the Czech space sector has initiated the work on the new national space mission „SLAVIA“ (Space Laboratory for Advanced Variable Instruments and Applications), which will be composed of two 20kg satellites carrying various instruments designed mainly for characterisation of the chemical composition of asteroid fragments entering the Earth's atmosphere. The scientific data collected through this mission may lay one of the cornerstones for future asteroid mining technology. Our delegation will gladly share with you more detailed information at the next STSC COPUOS Session.

Let us also draw your attention to the international non-governmental scientist-led initiative for Peaceful Use of Lasers in Space (“PULS”). In reaction to the UNGA resolution 75/36, the PULS initiative submitted a report to the UNSG on the benefits of lasers for space applications and how this technology might be used responsibly in outer space. We would like to invite all delegations interested in peaceful use of lasers in space to visit the webpage [lasers4space.com](https://lasers4space.com), where delegations will find the report, together with a text of the PULS Declaration and information on upcoming events.

Mr. Chair,

In concluding, let me assure you that the Czech Republic remains committed to international cooperation in outer space at all levels and would like to reiterate its strong support for the work and the mission of the UN COPUOS and its Subcommittees.

Mr. Chair, distinguished delegates, I thank you for your kind attention.