

Agenda Item 4: General Exchange of Views – New Zealand

Thank you Chair

Tēnā tatou katoa. We would like to join our colleagues in recognising your work and the work of the secretariat in ensuring this meeting can proceed under these challenging circumstances following last year's cancellation. We are pleased to be back here with all of you this year and are looking forward to working together to progress the important work on the agenda.

Chair

Aotearoa New Zealand is wholly committed to the peaceful, safe, and sustainable use of space. In order to ensure our own space regulation facilitates innovation and commercial activity in a manner consistent with these principles, we recently announced a review of our Outer Space and High Altitude Activities Act. This review was built into the legislation when it was passed in 2016 to ensure the operation and effectiveness of our domestic regime. At the same time, we also announced our intention to undertake a round of public consultation to ensure New Zealanders can have their say on the government's space policy settings.

Chair

New Zealand welcomes Mr Umamaheswarn to his role as Chair of the Long-term Sustainability Working Group. We look forward to supporting him as we collectively move that work forward. Ensuring forward momentum in this area is critical for COPUOS to achieve its aims.

The Long-term Sustainability Guidelines adopted in 2019 were important in the development of new norms and standards to maintain access to, and use of, space. New Zealand urges all space actors to implement the Guidelines.

Chair

On the 1st of June, New Zealand was pleased to sign the Artemis Accords. The Accords are designed to ensure the next phase of space exploration is conducted in a safe, sustainable, and transparent manner. They confirm that space resource utilisation activity must be done consistently with existing international law and that a multilateral process is required to progress this issue. New Zealand's view is that the Accords are a useful first step towards developing international practices and rules. New Zealand also looks forward to pursuing these issues through the Space Resources Working Group over the course of this COPUOS session.

To this end, New Zealand was pleased to see the unanimous agreement to set up a formal working group on space resources at the Legal Subcommittee meeting earlier this year. This is a critical issue. The exploration, exploitation, and utilisation of space resources will be a key enabler of the next phase of space exploration. It will deepen scientific understanding and be a driver of innovation, opening economic opportunities across the space sector and beyond. It is an inherently multilateral issue that affects all states, civil society and commercial actors – COPUOS is therefore uniquely well placed to lead this work.

New Zealand welcomes the progress that has already been made in no small part owing to the efforts of the Chair Mr Misztal and Vice Chair Professor Freeland. We look forward to making further quick progress on finalising the mandate and terms of reference in order to allow for substantive discussions over the coming year.

Chair

The Space2030 agenda is an important one for all COPUOS participants. We need the global governance of space activities to keep pace with modern developments, including in the commercial sector, so as to ensure it remains fit-for-purpose in the 21st century, and this document helps focus our work to achieve this.

Following several years of negotiation we find ourselves on the cusp of agreement of the Space2030 Agenda. We are 99 percent of the way there. It would be lamentable if we were unable to achieve consensus during this session. New Zealand sincerely hopes we can move forward with adoption of the text, and we urge flexibility from those states who have insisted on including language that has not achieved consensus in the agenda.

Chair,

Finally, and separately to our work here, another further aspect critical to the safe and sustainable use of outer space is the articulation of norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviours in outer space. New Zealand was pleased to have made a submission to the UN Secretary-General articulating our initial contribution to this area, under the First Committee resolution 75/36. While existing international law provides the core regulatory framework for all activities in outer space, further specific rules, norms and standards are needed to effectively operationalise these core obligations, and develop and articulate responsible

behaviours in outer space and we welcome the work being done in that regard by our colleagues in Geneva.

Thank you Chair.