



Permanent Mission of Italy
International Organisations - Vienna

**60th SESSION OF THE
LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE (STSC)**

**Statement by
Ambassador Alessandro Cortese**

Item 3: general exchange of views

Vienna, 31 May 2021

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Thank you Madame Chair

Madame Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

Italy fully aligns itself with the statement of the European Union, and I wish to add a few remarks in my national capacity.

I would like to congratulate you, Madame Chair, for presiding over the 60th session of the Legal Sub-Committee, as well as Director Di Pippo and the entire staff of the Office for Outer Space Affairs for the excellent preparation of the meeting.

Italy values the Legal Subcommittee as the pivotal United Nations body for promoting and strengthening the international legal regime governing outer space activities. We recognize the **invaluable role** played by the existing international treaties on outer space, especially the **1967 Outer Space Treaty**. The treaties consolidated a legal regime aimed at fostering the use of outer space and strengthening international cooperation in outer space activities. Under such regime, exploration and use of outer space have flourished.

At the same time, we recognize that the impressive developments in space activities and the diversification of the actors involved have brought to the fore **new legal challenges**.

Madame Chair,

Last year Italy participated in the negotiations and signature of the **Artemis Accords**, which provide non-legally binding guidance for space exploration and establish a set of common principles grounded in the Outer Space Treaty, to increase the safety of operations, reduce uncertainty, and promote

the sustainable and beneficial exploration and use of space for all of humanity. We are committed to sharing our experience in implementing the Accords within COPUOS, with UN Member States and the international space community.

Italy also recalls the important role played by the Committee in the **consolidation of best practices through non-legally-binding instruments**, such as the 2007 Orbital Debris Mitigation Guidelines and the 21 guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities.

Madame Chair,

Looking ahead at our deliberations during the current session, allow me to highlight some elements that my delegation considers particularly relevant.

First, the Italian delegation welcomes the revised Working paper for “draft guidance under UNISPACE+50 thematic priority 2” submitted by the Chair of the **Working Group on the Status and Application of the Five United Nations Treaties on Outer Space**. This can contribute to highlighting current and future perspectives of the legal regime and the global governance of outer space, thus assisting States in carrying out their space activities in a responsible manner.

Second, the Italian delegation attaches special relevance to the item on **capacity building in space law**. Italy welcomes the outcome of the 2020 United Nations/Economic Commission for Africa Conference on Space Law and Policy and is particularly committed to promoting capacity-building initiatives with African countries.

For instance, just before the COVID-19 pandemic, in December 2019 the Broglio Space Centre in Malindi hosted the Training Course on Earth Observation, Remote Sensing and, Space Science, featuring a module on Law and Policy. The Course was organized by the Italian Space Agency, in collaboration with the Kenyan Space Agency and supported by UNOOSA. The legal component of this project is continuing under the title of Outer Space Law for Sustainable Development and is organized by ASI and the Sapienza University of Rome.

Third, Italy fully supports the work of the Legal Subcommittee on **space traffic management** (STM), acknowledging its importance in dealing with the growth of outer space activities and of the global space economy. Having regard to the cross-cutting nature of STM, which encompasses legal and technical aspects, Italy would welcome the opportunity to reflect on whether its consideration by both Subcommittees would provide a more comprehensive perspective. Moreover, Italy commends efforts undertaken to organize the European Space Traffic Management Conference planned for the next 7th of July.

Fourth, Italy is experiencing an increasing involvement of private operators in **small-satellite activities**, and we therefore welcome the general exchange of views on the application of international law to small-satellite activities, which can be highly beneficial for the on-going national debate on this topic.

Fifth, my delegation has always supported the inclusion of an agenda item on potential legal models for **space resources** exploration and utilization on the agenda of the Sub-Committee and **we are in favour of establishing a dedicated Working Group**, with a clear mandate, workplan and expected results. Italy takes this opportunity to thank Andrej Mitzal and Steven Freeland, co-moderators of the process, for their continued efforts, and we look forward to participating in the informal consultations scheduled during this session.

We equally appreciate the efforts of Germany and Finland to facilitate the establishment of a Working Group on Space Resources at this session and we support, in broad terms, the proposal set out in their non-paper, concerning the mandate, terms of reference and work plan of the Working Group.

Madame Chair,

to conclude, we underline the importance of finalizing, at this session, the **Space2030 Agenda** and implementation plan. Italy remains fully committed to this process, and we count on the cooperation of all delegations to present a final, consolidated document to the Committee at its 64th session.

Thank you.