

Canadian Statement
Agenda Item 3 – General Exchange of Views
Delivered by: Lisa Campbell, Head of Delegation, President of the Canadian Space Agency

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
Scientific and Technical Subcommittee
Fifty-eighth Session, Vienna, April 19-30, 2021

Madame la Présidente,

La délégation canadienne vous souhaite la bienvenue dans votre deuxième session de présidente. Nous nous réjouissons de travailler avec vous une fois de plus et nous espérons faire avancer les éléments importants, notamment les travaux de suivi des 21 directives sur la viabilité à long terme des activités spatiales.

Ma délégation aimerait également exprimer sa gratitude à la directrice du bureau des affaires extra-atmosphériques des Nations Unies, Madame Simonetta Di Pippo ainsi qu'à son équipe entière pour leurs continuels efforts à supporter les états membres dans leur travail, surtout en ces temps incomparables.

Madame la présidente, distingués délégués,

2020 a été une année difficile pour nous tous, mais nous avons quand même trouvé des moyens de contribuer positivement à l'espace, particulièrement dans les domaines de l'exploration spatiale, et le développement des sciences et technologies spatiales.

Madame Chair, distinguished delegates,

Canada recognizes the exciting opportunities presented by emerging exploration, science, and commercial space activities. In October 2020, Canada signed along with seven other nations, the Artemis Accords, which are a set of principles designed to guide the safe and sustainable exploration and use of outer space. Given the strong alignment of the Artemis Accords with existing obligations under the Outer Space Treaty, Canada believes the Artemis Accords are an important first step to achieving safe and sustainable exploration, science, and commercial activities in deep space, including on the Moon and other celestial bodies.

Although the Artemis Accords are an important achievement, more work is needed to further solidify the framework for deep-space exploration activities, particularly within the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS). The Government of Canada has recently

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consulted with Canadians on the development of a national framework for future space exploration activities. We are equally committed to working with international partners and within the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to further develop an international framework to ensure space exploration and use continues to be for the benefit and in the interest of all humankind. We look forward to sharing outcomes from our consultation and having many fruitful discussions with all member States of COPUOS.

As part of our exciting exploration initiatives, Canada recently finalized a Memorandum of Understanding with NASA to facilitate collaboration on the Lunar Gateway, an outpost orbiting the Moon that will provide vital support for a sustainable, long-term return of astronauts to the lunar surface. Canada will provide the Gateway's external robotics system, including a next-generation, Artificial-intelligence enabled smart robotic system, known as Canadarm3. We will also provide robotic interfaces allowing the Canadarm3 to walk to different locations on the Gateway, along with smaller interfaces to support the handling of both scientific payloads and the replacement units for the maintenance and repair of the Gateway. Canada is proud to be part of such an exciting collaborative initiative, which will ultimately prepare us all for future deep-space missions, including to the red planet.

Madame Chair, distinguished delegates,

In addition to space exploration activities, Canada continues to support its space science and technology development. In particular, we are supporting the advancement of commercially promising technologies in various space domains, such as a hazard avoidance navigation system for landers, and activities to reduce the technological uncertainties of future missions. In addition, Canada has also carried out pre-mission research and technology development activities and supported various pre-space capability demonstration initiatives with Canadian universities, to raise the space readiness of Canadian science and technology, while training post-secondary students in the field of space science and technology.

Canada remains engaged in Women in STEM activities and initiatives, both internally and externally, and has recently signed the Dimension's Charter, endorsed by the National Research

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Council; a Canadian federal government engagement to foster equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

Furthermore, as part of Canada's commitment to combat illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing, Canada is engaged on two initiatives in collaboration with NGOs, private industry and partner countries to leverage space-based data to illuminate IUU fishing and support responses to its impact. The Dark Vessel Detection project utilizes multiple sources of space-based data including Canada's Radarsat Constellation Mission to build a real-time picture of vessel activity to support fisheries authorities. Canada has partnered with Ecuador and Pacific Island countries to deliver the web-based system, which will allow these authorities to respond to issues of concern in their waters. Secondly, Canada supports the work of Global Fishing Watch, an international NGO driving research and innovation from space-based sensor data to bring increased transparency to fishing and human activity at sea. Canada is pleased to invite you to a technical presentation the afternoon of April 26, where we and Global Fishing Watch will share more information on these exciting approaches to using space-based sensor data to support oceans protection.

We have provided further details on our space exploration activities, science and technological development initiatives, and other specific Canadian space activities for 2020, in our annual report to the Subcommittee. We strongly encourage other member States to contribute to this valuable information-sharing mechanism.

Madame Chair, distinguished delegates,

Consensus achieved on 21 guidelines and a preamble for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities remains one of the most important international achievements to promoting the safety and sustainability of the outer space environment. The guidelines clearly outline responsible and sustainable behaviours to ensure future generations will continue to enjoy the benefits of space.

Although an important achievement, much work still remains. Canada continues to encourage all member States to press ahead with the national implementation of the guidelines, and to

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share experiences, lessons learned, and best practices to not only enhance communication, international cooperation, and capacity building, but to identify new challenges associated with emerging uses of space, leading to new guidelines. Canada is excited to update the Committee on our experiences and lessons learned in the implementation of the guidelines, as well as learn best practices from other member States through dynamic and constructive discussions within the future Working Group – LTS 2.0.

Le Canada croit que l'avancement de la mise en œuvre des 21 lignes directrices, et de créer des capacités à cet égard, devraient servir comme fondation aux travaux à venir. Une telle fondation peut garantir que l'étude des missions spatiales émergentes est éclairée par les informations les plus récentes sur les expériences, les pratiques et les leçons apprises par les organisations non gouvernementales, l'industrie, le secteur privé, la communauté universitaire ainsi que les acteurs spatiaux gouvernementaux. Nous pensons qu'une telle approche encourage l'utilisation sûre et responsable de l'espace et légitime davantage les travaux du Comité, tout en augmentant l'engagement actif des États membres auprès de cet organe unique.

Enfin, Madame la Présidente, chers délégués,

Compte tenu des exigences et des défis de l'espace, la coopération et le dialogue internationaux sur les activités spatiales sont essentiels. Depuis 1959, le COPUOS s'est fait le champion de la coopération et du dialogue en matière d'exploration et d'utilisation pacifique de l'espace extra-atmosphérique et je tiens à réitérer l'engagement et le soutien sans réserve de la délégation canadienne à l'égard des travaux du Sous-Comité scientifique et technique.

Alors que nous relevons des défis mondiaux pour les personnes, la Terre et l'espace, il est important de promouvoir l'espace comme moteur du développement durable afin d'atteindre nos objectifs mondiaux, régionaux et nationaux. Nous nous réjouissons de cette session dynamique et constructive.

Merci pour votre attention.