

Finland's Statement in the 61st session of the Technical and Scientific Subcommittee of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Agenda Item 4 – General exchange of views

Thank you Madam Chair, good afternoon.

Finland fully aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union, and would like to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

My congratulations to Ms. Aarti Holla-Maini for her appointment as the Director of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs. We look forward to continuing our successful cooperation with the Office under your leadership.

Madam Chair, distinguished delegates,

International cooperation in the UN system, including in the space sector continues to be severely hurt by Russia's illegal, unprovoked and brutal war of aggression against Ukraine. Finland stands in full solidarity with Ukraine and firmly supports Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

We recognize the importance of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee as an indispensable forum for the exchange of views on scientific and technical aspects of outer space activities and for fostering international cooperation in this regard.

International cooperation is a cornerstone of Finnish space activities. Finland is a member of the European Space Agency (ESA) since 1995. The Finnish industry and research organisations participate actively in various ESA programmes. In this framework, the EU Space Programme and other multilateral and bilateral collaborations continue to have an important role in the Finnish space policy.

Small satellite activities are a topic of particular interest to Finland. The Finnish national registry of space objects currently contains 26 satellites that are still in orbit. All of them have been launched since 2017 when Finland became a space-faring nation. These satellites include both scientific and commercial missions. Finland has recognized the increasingly important role of space-based services in everyday life. Finland is updating our space strategy to help develop national capacity and strengthen the Finnish space industry.

Our national climate targets are ambitious, and Finland promotes the role of space solutions in combatting climate change. Space data is important for monitoring the environmental changes and key variables such as greenhouse gases, as well as reacting to natural disasters.

The issue concerning safety and sustainability of space activities is a growing concern to all. Finland considers development of a global Space Traffic Management regime timely and essential, with the aim of creating common international rules that take into consideration rapid changes in the space sector. Also, effective space situational awareness capacity is vital in supporting Space Traffic Management. Finland is establishing a national Space Situational Awareness Center in order to further develop our capacity in this area.

Finland is fully committed to the implementation of the 21 guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities, and is furthering this by taking action at national and international levels. We take note of the continued contributions made by the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities.

Finland considers that COPUOS is the right multilateral forum to address topics relevant to safe and sustainable space activities. In this context, we support the initiative to continue discussing the issue relating to Dark and Quiet Skies for Science and Society.

Finally Madam Chair,

We would like to thank the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, as well as all participants of the workshop on the applications of global navigation satellite systems held in Helsinki from 23 to 26 October 2023 for a very successful event. The event provided the latest news from satellite navigation systems as well as some highlights to the future navigation with low-earth-orbit satellites. We encourage everyone to look into the report of the workshop found on the STSC website for more information about the contents of the workshop.

I wish everyone an interesting and fruitful session. Thank you Madam Chair.