

**Finland's Statement in the 60th session of the Technical and Scientific Subcommittee of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
Hybrid meeting, 6-17 February 2023**

Agenda Item 3 – General exchange of views

Thank you Mr. Chair, good afternoon.

First, I would like to thank you, Mr. Chair, for chairing this 60th session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. I would also like to thank Acting Director Niklas Hedman and the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs for the continuous work and excellent organization of this meeting.

We welcome Guatemala and Uzbekistan as the new States members of the Committee.

For almost a year now, international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space has been severely hurt by Russian Federation's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine. Finland condemns Russia's unlawful military aggression and firmly supports Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, self-determination and territorial integrity. The attack is a grave breach of international law and a violation of the Charter of the United Nations. Russia must cease military operations immediately.

Mr. Chair, distinguished delegates,

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

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.

We would like to note, that issues concerning the use of outer space for military purposes are more appropriately discussed in forums whose mandates are focused on those issues.

International cooperation is a fundamental cornerstone of Finnish space activities. Finland is a member of the European Space Agency (ESA) since 1995, and 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 also continue to have an important role in the Finnish space programme.

Small satellite activities are a topic of particular interest to Finland. The Finnish national registry of space objects currently contains 21 satellites, all of which have been launched since 2017 when Finland became a space-faring nation. These satellites include both scientific and commercial missions.

Finland's 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 space actors and the society. Finland considers that the development of a global Space Traffic Management regime is timely and essential, as it could contribute towards creation, development and implementation of common international rules that take into consideration the rapid changes in the

space sector. An effective space situational awareness capacity, including space weather, space surveillance and tracking and near earth objects capabilities, is vital in supporting these aims. Finland joined the EU Space Surveillance and Tracking Consortium in 2022 and is investigating the establishment of a national Space Situational Awareness Center in order to further develop our capacity in this area.

Finally Mr. Chair,

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 wish that the working group on long-term sustainability of outer space activities is able to continue with its substantive work, to which we are looking into contributing actively.

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

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