

**AGENDA ITEM 7(a)**  
**DEFINITION AND DELIMITATION OF OUTER SPACE**

**STATEMENT BY CAITLIN POLING, U.S. REPRESENTATIVE TO THE LEGAL  
SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE UN COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER  
SPACE**

**April 17, 2024**

Thank you, Chair. The United States appreciates the opportunity to present its views on matters relating to the definition and delimitation of outer space.

The United States continues to hold the view that there is no need to seek a legal definition or delimitation for outer space. The current framework has presented no practical difficulties and activities in outer space are flourishing as we have heard already this session. Given this situation, an attempt to define or delimit outer space would be an unnecessary theoretical exercise that could unintentionally complicate existing activities and prove inadaptable or even irrelevant to future technological developments. The current framework has served everyone well, and we should continue to operate under it until there is a demonstrated need and a practical basis for developing a definition or delimitation.

It is worth noting that some individual U.S. states within the United States, as well as U.S. Government Departments and Agencies, have adopted or proposed definitions of “outer space” or related concepts for their own purposes, such as regulatory compliance, administrative clarity, or tax laws. These actions do not relate to, and are not evidence of, the existence of a definition of outer space under international law.

Thank you, Chair.