



OFFICE FOR COMMUNICATIONS
PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN

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of the Legal Subcommittee
of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

**Statement by Dr. Bianca Lins, Office for Communications of the Principality of
Liechtenstein (Head of Delegation)**

Agenda Item 4

General exchange of views

16 April 2024

Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

let me express our delegation's warm appreciation for accepting our application to attend as an ad hoc Observer at the 63rd Session of the COPUOS Legal Subcommittee Meeting and allowing me the floor. I also wish to extend our gratitude to Mrs Aarti Holla Maini, Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs as well as the Secretariat for their continued support.

Chair,

the five UN space treaties have established a legal framework that has facilitated exploration and utilization of outer space, laying the groundwork for international cooperation and peaceful use. Over recent years, the Principality of Liechtenstein has been closely monitoring the developments in the space sector and observed the advancements of space technologies and expansion of the number of actors in space.

Liechtenstein has – so far – ratified two of the five UN space treaties: In 1980, the Registration Convention and in 1999, the Liability Convention. Today, space is no longer reserved for space faring nations, Liechtenstein as well is now notifying administration for a satellite constellation. We recognize the immense potential and significance of space activities for Earth, notably in the context of environmental protection and climate change initiatives. At the same time, we are acutely aware of the emerging challenges, such as the increasing presence of space debris or the complexities surrounding cybersecurity in space operations.

Chair,

these developments have been the most important considerations as to why the Government of the Principality of Liechtenstein decided to set up a legal framework to be able to authorize and supervise non-governmental space activities, in accordance with Liechtensteins international obligations. The Liechtenstein Space Act and the supplementing Ordinance entered into force on January 1 2024.

We acknowledge the importance of information sharing and mutual learning on national space legislation in order to improve space activities in alignment with the UN space treaties and other international norms on space development and utilization. Therefore, we highly value the opportunity to engage in this forum and to inform the Legal Subcommittee on the Liechtenstein Space Act.

Chair,

the core element of the Space Act concerns the introduction of a procedure for the authorization. Operators of space activities that fall within the scope of the law are obliged to obtain an authorization for their planned space activity.

In addition, we have introduced a notification obligation for those cases which, although not subject to authorization, prima vista fall within the scope of the law. This may occur when the space object is a payload carried into space by a registered space object, or if the space activity

is authorized and registered by another administration, particularly in scenarios involving more than one launching state.

With its authorization requirements, the Liechtenstein Space Act aims to understand several key aspects of the operator's capabilities and responsibilities. This includes the verification if the operator's governing bodies and key personnel possess the necessary professional qualifications and personal integrity for conducting space activities.

We consider transparency a priority, which is why we have detailed provisions concerning the operator's ownership structure – an approach, similar to what is found in the financial sector, but which is also informed by our experience in the satellite project.

Financial capability is another important factor. We expect the operator to have a comprehensive cost and financing plan for the space activity. Moreover, the activity must comply with international law, including adherence to the International Telecommunication Union's regulations regarding frequencies and orbital positions.

State-of-the-art technology is expected to be used in all operations, ensuring that activities are up-to-date with current technological standards. Additionally, we have implemented requirements for cybersecurity to safeguard operations in the digital realm.

We consider environmental considerations are paramount. Therefore, the space activity must not result in harmful contamination of outer space, including celestial bodies, or cause detrimental alterations to Earth's environment. The prevention of space debris is a critical aspect of our legal framework, encompassing the entire lifespan of space objects from their standard operational lifecycle to the safe disposal at the conclusion of their mission. The requirements foresee the demonstration of adherence to the latest technological standards and international guidelines. Additionally, operators must describe their approaches to avoiding collisions with other space objects, demonstrating a commitment to maintaining the long-term sustainability and safety of space activities.

Lastly, our requirements encompass compulsory insurance and a strict liability regime, ensuring that all activities are conducted responsibly and with due regard for potential risks and impacts.

Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

beyond the obligations of liability and registration under international law for space objects, it is crucial for us – and arguably for any nation – to be well-informed about space activities for which we may be held accountable.

Our responsibility extends to ensuring that any space activity is conducted sustainably and safely.

Liechtenstein is firmly committed to not being a "flag of convenience", and we believe that our Space Act and Ordinance exemplify a framework for responsible space activity.

Our commitment to responsible space activity is reflected in our dedication to creating a legal environment that balances rigor with fairness, ensuring that space exploration and utilization are carried out in a way that benefits not just our nation but the global community as well.

In this spirit, I thank you for your attention and look forward to a productive and rewarding 63rd Legal Subcommittee Meeting.