

Open Lunar Foundation

Observer Statement

Agenda item 5, Information on the activities of international intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations relating to space law

COPUOS Legal Subcommittee, 2024

Presented by Prof. Tanja Masson-Zwaan

Dear Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

First may I begin by congratulating the Chair of the Legal Subcommittee on their election. We look forward to supporting you and the work of this Subcommittee.

Open Lunar Foundation is an independent, non-profit organisation dedicated to fostering a peaceful and sustainable Lunar future. Today I am delighted to deliver Open Lunar's statement as one of its Directors.

Distinguished Delegates, Open Lunar devotes deep consideration to technical and legal challenges relevant to our Lunar future.

We understand the importance of inclusive dialogue, coupled with practical capacity-building to enable and support real-world solutions to these challenges.

We are therefore pleased to share some highlights of our ongoing work with you today, in the hope of informing your deliberations.

Collaboration is a common thread across our 2024 work, especially where opportunities exist for shared infrastructure and resources.

First, the Lunar Policy Platform, an independent initiative supported by Open Lunar, continues to invest in understanding priorities for safe and sustainable Lunar development as highlighted by civil society, corporate, and government stakeholders. Their 2023 report is available at lunarpolicyplatform.org.

Second, in March of this year, we released an updated proposal and prototype for a Lunar Registry of Objects and Activities. This report includes operational design specifications, and governance models, that could help realise an independent, neutral, framework for Lunar transparency.

Third, our 2024 research program is actively developing five priorities, including Operational considerations for collaborative Lunar Landing Pads, Ethics review panel design for Lunar payloads, Lunar Power Standards, A Registry of Information on Mishaps and Accidents for Lunar Missions, and pinpointing the optimal payload for sustainable Lunar development. The results of this research will be released in September 2024.

Our work acknowledges that not all nations possess the capabilities to engage in lunar exploration. We must be cognizant of the importance of equity and capacity-building to reduce these disparities. We must ensure that we preserve and promote opportunities for all nations to participate in and benefit from Lunar activities.

Later this year we will start selecting our research focuses for 2025, dedicated to advancing peaceful and equitable lunar development. We warmly invite interested parties and delegations to share their ideas, challenges, and recommendations with us.

Open Lunar is committed to working in partnership with other centres of excellence on these issues. We particularly welcome opportunities to engage with academic institutions from around the world on these topics, including exploring joint fellowships and research.

We further look forward to supporting the work of the Committee on important questions concerning the application of space treaties on the Lunar environment and the potential legal models for utilisation of space resources, in addition to working towards a peaceful, safe and sustainable development of the moon.

Dear Chair, Distinguished Delegates, thank you for your attention and the continuing efforts of this Subcommittee.