

UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
Scientific and Technical Subcommittee Fifty-seventh Session
Vienna, 03 - 14 February 2020

Statement of the Delegation of Romania

Agenda item 4: General exchange of views

Distinguished delegates,

Madam chairperson Nathalia Archinard (dear Nathalia), let me express on behalf of the Delegation of Romania our satisfaction for your election in the main chair of this Subcommittee and to transmit to you and to the delegation of Switzerland the support of my delegation for a successful accomplishment of your mandate.

Let me express warm congratulations for Mme Pontsho Maruping, the past chairman of the Subcommittee, for the successful accomplishment of her mandate.

I would also like to address congratulations to the delegations of the Dominican Republic, Rwanda and Singapore for their new membership in the Committee.

We would also express our appreciation to the staff of the secretariat, in particular to the director of the Office, Simonetta Di Pippo, for her very active role in the achievements of the Subcommittee since the beginning of her mandate. We were glad to note the positive evolution of the position of the Office for Outer Space Affairs in the UN Organization. My delegation will give all possible support for the de facto implementation of this new position, clearly demanded by the actual extension of global space activities.

Romania as a European Union (EU) country and a European Space Agency (ESA) member state is participating to their programmes and applications. Romania is also a country having its own space agency - ROSA - and is developing its own space programme according to the national strategy and in concordance and complementarity with other international programs.

Presently, the national strategy of Romania is built around the concept of 3S (Three S's): the first S means Science and technology (including exploration), the second S is represented by Services (including access to space) and the third S comes from Security.

Space activities are carried by a variety of organisations, public and private, as institutes, universities, industry, SME's, other organisations, a number of 170 contractors being recorded by the national space program. I would like to mention the concentration of some activities in Centres of competence, in areas like: micro-spacecrafts integration and testing, space robotics, artificial intelligence and quantum communications, radiative environments and radiation hardening by power lasers, space-assisted agriculture, human spaceflight training, small launchers.

Madam Chair, I will mention a few activities developed by Romania since the last session of the Sub-Committee, including some of them which supported the present agenda.

During the first semester of 2019, Romania chaired the Council of the European Union having Space as an important item on the agenda. In this capacity, my country started the negotiations on the European Union Space Program for 2012-2027, having as major content the Satellite navigation (Galileo and EGNOS), Earth Observation (Copernicus), Space Situational Awareness and secure Space communications (GOVSATCOM).

In this position, Romania also conducted and finalised, together with the European Space Agency, the revival process of the formal EU-ESA Space Council which met for the last time in 2011. The EU and ESA ministers have met on the 28th May under the theme "Space as an Enabler" and discussed European Space Policy, strengthening Europe's role as a global actor in the field of space, and highlighted how research and innovation are a driving force for a more competitive European Union.

I would also like to mention that Romania committed substantially to the European Space Agency program Space19+, participating to all major programs on Science and Exploration, Human Spaceflight, Safety and Security, Earth Observation, Telecommunications and Integrated Applications, Navigation, Space transportation.

Romania continued the participation to space science missions as Euclid and Juice. Romanian scientists are involved in the important LISA collaboration on gravitational waves in preparation of a large space gravitational observatory.

I would like to mention the extending participation of Romania to space exploration, in particular to the programmes of the International Space Station. Since 2019 Romania - by the Romanian Space Agency - became member of the International Space Exploration Coordination Group (ISECG).

Romania continued support in developing tools for the monitoring and protection of our planet. I will mention the participation to the ESA mission ALTIUS which will measure both stratospheric ozone and other atmospheric trace gases such as nitrogen dioxide and aerosols that affect air quality. Another important participation is the ESA - UK mission TRUTHS which will improve the capability to estimate radiative imbalance underlying climate change. The ground and airborne lidar instruments operational in Bucharest are measuring the aerosols content in the atmosphere. Since the last year Romania became part of the Space Climate Observatory agreement.

Contributions to space weather monitoring are given by geo-magnetic data from a sensitive observatory near Surlari, Bucharest, coupled with satellite data to monitor space weather events. Periodic Solar Weather Bulletins are released by the Bucharest group in the last two years. Romania announced the participation to the ESA L5 space-weather mission.

As concerning Space debris, I would like to mention the continuing participation of Romanian entities in the development of collision avoidance tools and the commitment to the ESA programme developing In-orbit servicing and active debris removal missions.

Romania is an active participant in the ESA safety and security programme. The Romanian Space Agency is participating in the European SST consortium, offering operational optical information and soon radar capacity necessary for space traffic management and space debris measurements.

In the area of Near-Earth Objects, I would also mention the relevant participation of Romanian scientists and engineers in the definition and development phase of the ESA mission called HERA devoted to asteroids survey. I can also mention the technical progress in building the Solar coronagraph for the PROBA-3 ESA mission. My delegation is participating with experts in the SMPAG.

I would like to mention that the United Nations/Romania International Conference on Space Solutions for Sustainable Agriculture and Precision Farming has been organized by OOSA and the Government of Romania through the Romanian Space Agency (ROSA) from 6 to 10 May 2019 in Cluj, Romania. The main goal was to promote the use of space technology and solutions for sustainable agriculture and precision farming, to address key issues related to global food security.

During 26-27 June 2019 the International Academy of Astronautics in cooperation with the Romanian Space Agency organized in Mamaia the 8th Conference on Space Systems as Critical Infrastructures with the topics 'From kilograms to kilobytes'. The advancements of this topics and the skills developed in Romania conducted to the establishment of a ROSA Centre on Space Critical Infrastructures and Security, which is also supporting the SPIDER regional support centre in Bucharest.

I would like to remind that the continuation of the activities Romanian ESERO - Space Education Resource Office co-organized with the European Space Agency . I can mention the collaboration with the UN SPIDER regional support office in Bucharest for disaster management and also courses and astronomical observations of Near-Earth Objects.

Madame Chairperson, my country supported the development of the Space2030 Agenda within the United Nations system and we could see its development as a necessity due to the major contributions of space to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. I hope that this successful Space2030 Agenda might, inter alia, create a framework for taking into account the planned substantial activities of countries and space agencies.

Madame Chairperson, my delegation welcomes the establishment of the working group under the agenda item on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities and we offer to participate with expertise and management as needed in the definition of its ToR, methods of work and workplan.

Regarding the future role of the Committee, as my delegations mentioned in most of

its statements, the role of the Committee should be compliant with the global space developments in all areas including security. In particular, the resources for the Office for Outer Space Affairs should adapt with the current rapid increasing space activities and needs of regulations and global coordination. Again, we also appreciate the recent evolution in re-positioning the Office within the UN organisational system and I ensure you of all support from my delegation in this development.

Thank you, distinguished delegates, for your attention.