



## **Statement by the Delegation of Ukraine to the UN at the UNGA Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) on Agenda item 53 “International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space” (November 2021)**

**Mr. Chairperson,**

The review process of existing mechanisms for international cooperation, including in the field of outer space exploration, continues under exceptional circumstances due to COVID-19 pandemic.

While the external environment is constantly changing due to lockdowns and logistical restrictions, the space activities continue to evolve. Therefore, there remains a need for an all-inclusive dialogue and meaningful cooperation process among Member States within the framework of UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS).

Ukraine strongly believes that COPUOS has always been a unique platform for triggering international cooperation in space explorations at the global scale. In the times of COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent organizational barriers, it becomes even more vital for international community to ensure continuity in the shaping of international standards for space activities. We believe that the Committee should play a central role in the relevant decision-making process.

Against this backdrop, we commend the Committee for finding a way to hold its 64th session in Vienna in August 2021, as it was earlier planned.

Let me use this moment to reiterate Ukrainian position that despite whatever barriers the Committee has been facing throughout these years, there should never be a room for legitimating of dialogue with individuals, businesses and officials from state-aggressors or those states that violate the international law, and against whom the international sanctions were imposed.

In this regard, I would like to recall that 2021 marked the sad seventh anniversary of the beginning of Russia’s armed aggression against my country. The Russian occupation forces seized administrative buildings and key infrastructure facilities, Ukrainian military, police and border guard compounds and bases.

As a consequence of the Russian aggression, the competent state authorities of Ukraine lost control of the space facilities located in the Crimean Peninsula, among which is the NIP-16 facility.

NIP-16 was built in the 1960s for tracking space probes bound for Venus and Mars, and before the Russian aggression, it had been controlled by the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. It is now illegally controlled by the Russian Ministry of Defence, the same government branch that controlled ground communications in the former Soviet Union's network.

This fact, along with the temporary occupation of an integral part of Ukraine – the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the Sevastopol city, flagrantly violates the norms and principles of international law.

Notwithstanding the Russian aggression, Ukraine anticipates optimistic developments in space sector on a national level. Restoring capabilities of the rocket-and-space complex is one of the main priorities for Ukraine.

As of today, Ukraine has the optical means to monitor space debris in all major orbits. Radar means will reinforce these observations in the near future. At the same time, we recognise that this problem can be addressed only through the joint efforts of all space powers.

In this regard, let me underline that Ukraine supports the idea of further enhancing the role of COPUOS in the process of the regulation of space activities with the view to ensure principles of sustainable and safe use of outer space in accordance with the norms of international space law.

I also use this opportunity to shed more light on main areas of space activities of Ukraine. At the beginning of 2021, the Government of Ukraine approved the Concept of the National Target Scientific and Technical Space Programme of Ukraine for 2021-2025. Adoption of the Space Programme on legislative level is expected by the end of this year.

The priority vectors of international cooperation in the field of space activities of Ukraine are the European Union and the countries of North America. Also, Ukraine is taking measures to expand the geography of cooperation with countries of South America, the Middle East and the Asia-Pacific region.

In particular, cooperation between Ukraine and the EU is concentrated in the areas of Earth remote sensing (within the European Copernicus programme), satellite navigation (within the EGNOS programme), as well as Ukraine's participation in the Horizon-Europe Research and Innovation Framework Program.

Ukrainian enterprises continue their successful participation in the American "Antares" project and the European "Vega" project. Preparations are underway for the implementation of the Ukrainian-Canadian Cyclone-4M space rocket complex project.

Against this background, Ukraine notes the importance of international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space with the view to ensure the development of technologies and their further application for the benefit of humanity.

At the same time, we deem it necessary for the international community to start working on a new comprehensive legally binding document, which could combine existing five outer space

treaties and include additional provisions that will regulate the modern trends of outer space activities.

**I thank you, Mr.Chairperson.**