



Written Statement by Japanese Delegation
at the Meeting of the Fourth Committee
75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Agenda Item 51:
International Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Outer space
New York, 15 October 2020

Mr. Chairperson,
Distinguished delegates,

Japan reiterates its strong commitment to international cooperation on the peaceful uses of outer space in accordance with international law. We demonstrate this commitment through our contributions to multilateral fora and by utilizing our experience and technology for the benefit of all.

Japan welcomes the achievements of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) and the ongoing discussions at COPUOS toward ensuring the safety, security, sustainability, and stability of outer space. Japan also recognizes the importance of the Office for Outer Space Affairs (OOSA) as a unique institution to enhance international cooperation and capacity-building in this field.

In recent years, there has been an increasing number of players in the space sector, including space agencies, academia, and industry, which calls for effective rule-making. A series of Principles, Declarations and Guidelines for the peaceful uses of outer space were developed at COPUOS and endorsed by the UN General Assembly, and these have played an important role in complementing existing treaties. Recalling the recent adoption of the Guidelines on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities (LTS Guidelines) at COPUOS, Japan is of the view that international cooperation and capacity-building are important to implement the LTS Guidelines. Japan will take solid steps to enhance implementation of the existing norms and rules by developing domestic policy and technical standards and strengthening research and development.

In addition to multilateral efforts in ensuring the rule of law in outer space, Japan has developed its own programs to expand the peaceful uses of outer space with international partners. As one of the leading space-faring nations, Japan continues to promote space cooperation benefiting all humankind.

Japan has been participating in the International Space Station (ISS), a landmark project of multilateral space cooperation, since the beginning of its operation, and has contributed to the ISS program by providing the Japanese Experiment Module “Kibo” and the H-II Transfer Vehicle (HTV), which carries indispensable cargo resupplies. Japanese astronaut NOGUCHI Soichi will soon fly to the ISS aboard a US commercial spacecraft to start a long-duration stay. Japan welcomes such participation of commercial partners in the program, which will expand LEO utilization in the future. Kibo is open to non-ISS partners, and one of the remarkable forms of cooperation is providing emerging space nations with unique opportunities for small satellite deployment.

Japan has been engaged in human space exploration beyond Earth orbit with international partners under the Artemis Program. The expanding scope of space activities requires us to further develop a set of principles and best practices to enhance the governance of civil space exploration and the use of outer space, which inspired us to sign the Artemis Accords on 13 October. We are pleased to join this historic endeavor to the Moon, and look forward to strengthening our fruitful partnership in accordance with international law. Also, the sample return mission called Hayabusa-2 is scheduled to return to the Earth this December, which will bring back samples from an asteroid, “Ryugu.” Japan hopes to contribute to the scientific community by providing knowledge and data gained from this mission.

Japan is also actively engaged in regional space cooperation and capacity-building to expand the peaceful uses of outer space. The Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF), co-hosted by Japan every year, is the largest space-related conference in the Asia-Pacific region, and has played an important role in exchanging information and enhancing regional cooperation. Considering the COVID-19 pandemic, this year’s APRSAF will be held online on 19 November under the theme “Sharing Space Visions Beyond Distance.”

Mr. Chairperson,
Distinguished delegates,

Space activities have brought tremendous benefits to our everyday lives in a variety of areas. Japan would like to work closely with all stakeholders willing to promote international space cooperation and establish the rule of law in outer space.

Thank you.