



## SECURE WORLD FOUNDATION

Statement under Agenda Item 13. *Future role and method of work of the Committee*

Sixty-Sixth Session of the United Nations  
Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

*May–June 2023*

Mister Chair, distinguished delegates and observers, international institutions matter. The United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space is the most important and central multilateral forum for fostering and promoting international cooperation in the continued exploration and peaceful uses of outer space. Established as a standing committee of the United Nations with just 24 members, COPUOS has grown to become one of the largest standing Committees in the United Nations, reaching the 100-member mark in 2021. The steady growth in COPUOS membership mirrors the growth and globalization of the international space arena.

With the dramatic growth of global space activities, some of the largest challenges confronting the space arena today are of an intrinsically multilateral nature. If the world did not have a body like COPUOS, it would have to create one. COPUOS will continue to play a central role in multilateral space diplomacy, in the development of norms to ensure the safety and sustainability of outer space activities, and in preserving the space environment for future generations.

For COPUOS to continue to function effectively in fostering and promoting the continued exploration and peaceful uses of outer space, it requires that delegates who engage with the Committee continue to do so in a well-informed manner. However, for those who are new to COPUOS, and also often new to space issues in general, getting up to speed with the Committee, its agenda, and work, can be a daunting task.

Consequently, the Secure World Foundation is proud to present our latest publication: the *COPUOS Briefing Book*. The *COPUOS Briefing Book* is meant to support delegates and other interested parties who are new to the Committee and its important work. It is our hope that this document will foster and facilitate constructive participation at COPUOS, and thereby further solidify and reaffirm this Committee as the central multilateral forum for space diplomacy in the years and decades ahead.

The *COPUOS Briefing Book* is meant to be a practical guide to understanding what happens here. The first chapter covers this Committee, including its history, placement in the UN System, membership, leadership, agenda development, major deliverables and outcomes, schedule of work, important concepts such as consensus, the rules of procedure, documentation, structure of reports, and the support from the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs. Subsequent chapters detail the work of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, the Legal Subcommittee, and the role of Working Groups within COPUOS. The publication is scholarly, but is intended as a practical resource with useful information on COPUOS.

The *COPUOS Briefing Book* is a publication of the Secure World Foundation, and was expertly researched and drafted by Mr. Michael Friedl, who served as a visiting scholar with us on this project at our Washington, DC office in the summer of 2022.

On Wednesday, June 7, we will be distributing copies of the *COPUOS Briefing Book* to delegations and all in attendance here at the 66th Session of this Committee, from 1 to 3pm, outside Boardroom D, and just beyond the Coffee Corner and the elevators. We should have sufficient copies for all delegations to receive multiple copies.

For those not in attendance here in Vienna, the *COPUOS Briefing Book* is free to download on our website, at [www.swfound.org](http://www.swfound.org)

Mister Chair, distinguished delegates, the Secure World Foundation looks forward to continuing to support this Committee's efforts to achieve and sustain the continued peaceful uses of outer space.

Thank you for your kind attention.



Download the *COPUOS Briefing Book* directly at

