



## SECURE WORLD FOUNDATION

Statement by Mr. Ian Christensen under  
Agenda Item 15. *Space Exploration and Innovation*

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

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Thank you, Chair, for giving us the floor. Mister Chair, distinguished delegates, on behalf of the Secure World Foundation, I take this opportunity to relate some views on the topic of space exploration and innovation.

Exploration related activities include not just the exploration of outer space, the Moon and other celestial bodies, but also their industrial and economic development, which both drives exploration, and benefits from it.

Any purposeful and long-term presence in space and on celestial bodies will entail civil, scientific, and industrial development. In fact, these activities will likely go hand-in-hand more often than any of them will be done alone. As governments pursue space exploration activities and programs, those activities will be carried out in tandem with the private sector - through contracts, public-private partnerships, and other forms of cooperation. Today's space sector is one of a growing and increasingly capable suite of stakeholders including governments, academia, and industry.

Government and industry alike are looking to a future where space exploration initiatives result in sustained activities delivering tangible benefits to society. Space exploration also contributes to objectives for developing economic activity in space. Beneficial technological innovation can arise both through government space exploration initiatives, and from private sector activities motivated by economic factors.

As such, the 'innovation' in 'space exploration and innovation' will entail economically-viable activities in space, including the critical role of *in situ* resource utilization, or ISRU. The ability to access and utilize in-situ resources in space is a key component to enable long-term sustained human

presence in space. At the same time, space resources utilization could lead to new and better space applications that provide benefits on Earth.

In this regard, SWF congratulates this Committee on the agreement of the mandate and workplan for the Working Group on Legal Aspects of Space Resources Activities at this year's meeting of the Legal Subcommittee. As we noted in our statement to the Sixty-first Session of the Legal Subcommittee, adaptive governance frameworks for space resources utilization must consider and balance a wide range of interests, stakeholders, and activities – including environmental impact, heritage and cultural considerations, non-interference, and safety of operations.

As activities related to space exploration become increasingly common, there will be a need to consider the long-term sustainability of those activities. In the near to medium term, the Moon is likely to be a focus for human and robotic space exploration activities, by both government and private sector actors. This trend will increase the importance of developing principles, norms, and practices for coordination of lunar activities to ensure that those activities proceed in beneficial ways.

The lunar environment poses unique operational and sustainability challenges which require consideration of scientific, economic, legal, cultural, and other factors in developing governance frameworks. Discussion at COPOUS under this agenda item on space exploration and innovation will provide an important framework for that consideration. To be sure, however, encouraging innovation to flourish in support of space exploration activities requires a governance philosophy that takes into account the multi-stakeholder nature of space exploration activities in today's context.

Thank you for your kind attention.

