

**Committee on the Peaceful
Uses of Outer Space
Legal Subcommittee
Sixty-second session
Vienna, 20–31 March 2023
Item 5 of the provisional agenda*
Status and Application of the five
United Nations treaties on Outer Space**

NON-PAPER

Dedicated Tools and Practices for Enhanced Information Sharing

*DRAFT Non-Paper submitted by Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg,
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**[States are invited to join submission for issuance of a Conference
Room Paper during the present session]**

I. Introduction

1. In light of the critical role of information sharing for safe and sustainable space activities, this paper emphasizes the need for dedicated tools and practices to enhance implementation of the existing legal framework, especially in connection with the increase of space activities in particular on the Moon and other celestial bodies.
2. Submitting States support an open discussion and, when and where possible, the development of dedicated tools and practices to enhance transparency and information sharing based on international space law. The paper aims to facilitate an exchange of views on these topics at the 62nd session of the Legal Subcommittee.
3. At the 60th Session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee Luxembourg and Germany submitted a Conference Room Paper A/AC.105/C.1/2023/CRP.30 “Dedicated tools and practices for enhanced information sharing” inviting the Member States to share their views on dedicated tools and current practices for enhanced information sharing, particularly under Article XI of the Outer Space Treaty.

II. Current Legal Mechanisms for Information Sharing

4. Transparency is firmly rooted in international space law and is primarily addressed by Article VIII and Article XI of the Outer Space Treaty and the Registration Convention. While Article VIII of the Outer Space Treaty and the Registration Convention address information sharing about space objects and launches, Article XI of the Outer Space Treaty governs information sharing related to space activities.
5. Information on objects launched into outer space are furnished by the relevant launching State under either the Registration Convention or Resolution 1721 XVI B. Such information is included by the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs in the UN Registry of Objects Launched into Outer Space. The implementation of these obligations is notably

* A/AC.105/C.2/L.323.



addressed in UNGA Resolution 59/115 of 10 December 2004 and UNGA Resolution 62/101 of 17 December 2007.

6. Under Article XI of the Outer Space Treaty, States Parties to the Outer Space Treaty conducting activities in outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, agree to share information about the nature, conduct, locations and results of their space activities with the UN Secretary-General, as well as the public and the international scientific community. Upon receiving said information, it shall be disseminated immediately and effectively. At present, this is done by the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs on behalf of the Secretary-General by publishing received submissions in the *Index of Submissions by States under Article XI of the Outer Space Treaty* on the Office's website.

III. The Importance of Information Sharing for Safety and Sustainability

7. The provision of Article XI of the Outer Space Treaty to share and disseminate information about space activities with the international community, complements the registration of space objects. It promotes international cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space.

8. The increased number of activities planned in outer space, including on the Moon and other celestial bodies, provides a case in point. Sharing information on the nature, conduct, locations and results of activities in outer space will help to mitigate risks of accidents, foster coordination and enable cooperation, thereby ensuring the peaceful, safe and sustainable use of outer space for the benefit of all.

9. In particular, the availability of information about space activities would increase transparency and enhance safety of space operations as well as strengthen coordination and enable cooperation. In addition, it may assist States in implementing the Guidelines for the Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities, such as Guideline C.2 and the provisions of the Outer Space Treaty providing for due regard and appropriate international consultations as per the tenets of Article IX of the Outer Space Treaty.

IV. Dedicated Tools and Practices for Enhanced Information Sharing

10. At present there are no standardized ways, tools or practices for submitting information under Article XI of the Outer Space Treaty. Considering the highlighted importance of information sharing for peaceful, safe and sustainable exploration and use of outer space, there is a need to reflect and exchange within the COPUOS about current practices and the need for dedicated tools to enhance and streamline current processes.

11. The existing Working Group on the Status and Application of the Five United Nations Treaties on Outer Space could offer an appropriate place for the Member States to exchange views and develop the practices and tools for the information sharing, including the implementation of the Article XI.

12. A useful example of such tools might be a template for information sharing under Article XI, for uniform, streamlined and easily comparable submissions. It could follow a similar structural approach as the UNOOSA registration information submission form.

13. As increasingly more information might be shared following Article XI of the Outer Space Treaty, the States might consider the added value of having an easily accessible and searchable repository of such information, displayed in a uniform and easily comparable manner, which could be useful and could serve as a tool for building transparency, confidence and capacity.

V. Conclusion

14. All Member States submitting this paper propose to start exchanging views on the way forward and to develop dedicated tools and practices for enhanced information sharing, particularly under Article XI of the Outer Space Treaty.