

31 May 2023

English only

**Committee on the Peaceful
Uses of Outer Space**
Sixty-sixth session
Vienna, 31 May–9 June 2023
Item 7 of the provisional agenda*
**Report of the Legal Subcommittee on its
sixty-second session**

Working Group on Legal Aspects of Space Resource Activities

Joint proposal for an international conference to take place in 2024 in accordance with the Five-year workplan and methods of work for the Working Group

Paper submitted by Belgium and Luxembourg

I. Introduction

1. The mandate, terms of reference, and workplan and methods of work of the Working Group (A/76/20, annex III) state that the working group may avail itself of work on the issue of activities in the exploration, exploitation and utilization of space resources, including but not limited to study reports, academic research and papers submitted by any means as may be determined by the working group, which may include through one or more dedicated international conferences convened under the auspices of the United Nations, and open to Governments, invited academic and other stakeholders, subject to the availability of budgetary resources.
2. In accordance with the five-year workplan and methods of work of the Working Group on Legal Aspects of Space Resource Activities (A/AC.105/1260, annex II, appendix), in 2024 the working group shall, among other tasks, convene the international conference, as mentioned above, preferably in conjunction with the sixty-third session of the Legal Subcommittee, and open to Governments, invited academic and other stakeholders, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources. The report on the conference is to be prepared by the Chair of the Working Group, supported by the Secretariat, and submitted to the working group for further consideration.
3. By submitting this paper, Luxembourg and Belgium responds to the invitation of the Chair and Vice-Chair of 1 July 2022 to provide relevant information on the

* A/AC.105/L.333.



format, agenda, topics and other details of the dedicated conference (currently) scheduled for 2024 as well as any other views stakeholders may wish to share.

4. This paper has been slightly revised in order to take into account proposals and remarks made during the informal discussion, as well as the formal meetings, of the sixty-second session of the Legal Subcommittee.

II. Objectives and rationale

5. As the objective of a dedicated international conference scheduled in 2024 under the auspices of the United Nations is to provide a platform for both economic, technical and scientific perspectives and to gather knowledge and contributions from the various actors, including among different forms of industrial or scientific potential use scenarios, the international conference shall be open and inclusive. The international conference shall invite actors, not being State members of the Committee nor observer, with expertise in the most relevant fields which the working group might decide to include in the agenda of the international conference.

6. A dedicated open and inclusive international conference scheduled in 2024 is expected to lead to the following results:¹

(a) Strengthen the important multilateral dialogue on the pressing issue of space resource activities;

(b) Collect relevant information as contributions to the working group meetings in the subsequent Legal Subcommittee sessions;

(c) Provide a better understanding of the needs of the scientific community, academia, governments, private companies and other relevant stakeholders, which shall be equally taken into account; and

(d) Foster a common understanding of the framework conditions for space resource activities.

III. Proposal

7. The “Space Resources Week” (SRW)² is organized in Luxembourg annually by the European Space Resources Innovation Centre, in collaboration with the European Space Agency, the Luxembourg Space Agency and the Luxembourg Institute of Science and Technology over three days. The SRW gathered close to 1,000 participants in the 2022 edition. The event connects leaders from the research institutes and academia, as well as terrestrial and aerospace industries. The SRW is an important event to exchange with the international community and to raise awareness as well as share knowledge on newest developments related to space resources activities.

8. It can be noted that the date of the international conference has not yet been agreed upon at the working group. The SRW and the international conference could take place before the sixty-third session of the Legal Subcommittee in order to provide valuable contributions to the working group discussions. However, the States members submitting the Paper are also open to organize the SRW and host the international conference right after the sixty-third session of the Legal Subcommittee in April 2024.

¹ Working paper on the endorsement of the workplan for the working group established under the Legal Subcommittee agenda entitled “General exchange of views on potential legal models for activities in the exploration, exploitation, and utilization of space resources” and proposals for a dedicated international conference on space resources under the auspices of the United Nations, A/AC.105/C.2/2022/CRP.21*.

² www.spaceresourcesweek.lu/.

9. The international conference is to be organized and held in accordance with the mandate and the methods of work of the working group. Both events should remain separate and independent.

10. Therefore, Luxembourg and Belgium wish to highlight the potential synergies in terms of substantial discussions, of participation and representation of delegations, experts and relevant stakeholders, as well as in terms of logistics, to have the international conference, as scheduled in 2024 under the workplan of the working group, organized in close connection with the Space Resources Week, in Luxembourg-City, in the first half of that year.

11. On this basis, Luxembourg and Belgium submit their proposal to:

- Have the international conference in the framework of the working group hosted in Luxembourg-City in the margin of the Space Resources Week, on one single day within the period of 24 March to 30 March 2024;
- Co-fund the costs of hosting the conference in a hybrid format, as it has been entrusted to the working group; and
- Welcome additional co-funding proposal by Member States or Observers, which could be allocated to interpretation services in support of the international conference, or to allowing in-person participation of speakers or participants from developing countries.

12. Luxembourg and Belgium wish to express their support to the proposal to organize the international conference in two parts as long as both parts could equally contribute to the five-year workplan of the Working Group. The first part of the international conference, as proposed in this paper, should be held in Luxembourg in order to achieve the objectives expressed in this paper. The second part of the international conference could be held in Vienna in order to allow for a larger participation of delegations and for interpretation into official United Nations languages.