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**Committee on the Peaceful
Uses of Outer Space
Scientific and Technical Subcommittee
Sixty-first session
Vienna, 29 January–9 February 2024**

Draft report

Annex III

Report of the Working Group on the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space

1. In accordance with paragraph 10 of General Assembly resolution 78/72, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, at its 995th meeting, on 29 January 2024, reconvened its Working Group on the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space, with Leopold Summerer (Austria) as Chair.
2. The Working Group recalled the three main objectives under its five-year workplan, as contained in the report of the Subcommittee at its sixtieth session ([A/AC.105/1279](#), annex III, paras. 8 and 9) and endorsed by the Committee at its sixty-sixth session ([A/78/20](#), para. 150).
3. The Working Group had before it the documents listed in paragraph [...] of the present report.
4. The Working Group met both in informal and formal meetings during the sixty-first session of the Subcommittee to discuss the documents before it as referred to in paragraph 3 above, and recalled that during 2023 it had held an intersessional meeting to discuss ways of implementing the five-year workplan.
5. The Working Group recalled that 2024 marked the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the Safety Framework for Nuclear Power Source Applications in Outer Space by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its forty-sixth session, in February 2009. The Working Group further recalled the subsequent agreement to the Safety Framework of the Commission on Safety Standards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) at its twenty-fifth meeting, in April 2009. In that connection, the Working Group recalled that the Safety Framework was widely accepted and had proved valuable to Member States in developing and applying their national systems for ensuring the safe use of nuclear power sources (NPS) in outer space. Other Member States and international intergovernmental organizations that were not currently involved in utilizing nuclear power sources in outer space had acknowledged and accepted the usefulness of the Safety Framework in examining how to ensure the safe use of such applications.



6. The Working Group agreed to implement its five-year workplan by conducting the following work for the period 2024–2028:

2024 Conduct intersessional work by holding teleconferences and meetings, as necessary, in order to prepare for activities to be implemented under the workplan. Invite IAEA to continue to participate in the work of the Working Group.

Define, discuss and plan appropriate activities to collect information about potential future uses of NPS in outer space, including with IAEA.

Request the Secretariat to invite States members of the Committee and international intergovernmental organizations to collect and make technical presentations pursuant to objectives 1 and/or 2 of the workplan.

2025 Conduct intersessional work by holding teleconferences and meetings, as necessary, in order to prepare for activities to be implemented under the workplan. Receive technical presentations pursuant to the invitation extended in 2024. In its report to the Subcommittee, the Working Group will:

- (a) Summarize the technical presentations received on plans, progress to date and any challenges faced or foreseen in implementing the Safety Framework;
- (b) Summarize the technical presentations received on potential future uses of NPS in outer space, particularly those involving nuclear reactors;
- (c) Identify significant challenges as referred to in subparagraph (a) above that should be addressed in the presentations planned for 2026 by member States and international intergovernmental organizations;
- (d) Identify safety implications of the information identified under subparagraph (b) above and discuss approaches to address them.

Request the Secretariat to invite States members of the Committee and international intergovernmental organizations to collect and make technical presentations pursuant to objectives 1 and/or 2 of the workplan.

2026 Conduct intersessional work by holding teleconferences and meetings, as necessary, in order to prepare for activities to be implemented under the workplan. Receive technical presentations under the same arrangements as in 2025. In its report to the Subcommittee, the Working Group will:

- (a) Summarize the technical presentations received on plans, progress to date and any challenges faced or foreseen in implementing the Safety Framework;
- (b) Summarize the technical presentations received on potential future uses of NPS in outer space, particularly those involving nuclear reactors;
- (c) Identify significant challenges as referred to in subparagraph (a) above that should be addressed in the presentations planned for 2027 by member States and international intergovernmental organizations;
- (d) Identify safety implications of the information identified under subparagraph (b) above and discuss approaches to address

them, including options for further work of the Working Group and for recommendations to the Subcommittee.

Request the Secretariat to invite States members of the Committee and international intergovernmental organizations to collect and make technical presentations pursuant to objectives 1 and/or 2 of the workplan.

2027 Conduct intersessional work by holding teleconferences and meetings, as necessary, in order to prepare for activities to be implemented under the workplan. Receive technical presentations under the same arrangements as in 2026. In its report to the Subcommittee, the Working Group will indicate its recommendation as to whether the current workplan should be extended and, if it is not to be extended, prepare a draft report summarizing:

- (a) The technical presentations received and the challenges identified during the course of the workplan;
- (b) The analysis described under objective 2;
- (c) Eventual recommendations for further work of the Working Group and suitable actions.

2028 If the workplan has not been extended, finalize the report.

7. The Working Group agreed that one of the possible methods for collecting information under the objectives of the workplan, and as a way to invite more member States and international intergovernmental organizations to join the Working Group and share their views, plans and experiences, could be the use of a dedicated list of questions in the form of a questionnaire. The Working Group noted that the preliminary set of questions to collect information, as contained in conference room paper A/AC.105/C.1/2024/CRP.31, would be further elaborated during the intersessional meetings of the Working Group, facilitated by the secretariat.

8. The Working Group agreed to hold an intersessional meeting, facilitated by the secretariat, on the margins of the sixty-seventh session of the Committee, preferably on 20 and 21 June 2024, with a view to finalizing the preliminary set of questions, which could eventually form an appendix to the next report of the Working Group to the Subcommittee.

9. The Working Group agreed that another possible method of collecting information under the objectives of its workplan was to hold a dedicated workshop with IAEA.

10. The view was expressed that in furthering the objectives of its workplan and in agreeing on appropriate activities to collect information about potential future uses of NPS in outer space, including from non-governmental and commercial sector entities, the Working Group should take into account that gathering such information from those entities should be done under the auspices and responsibility of States.

11. The Working Group agreed that, should its implementation plan as contained in paragraph 6 above, be endorsed, it would request the secretariat to invite States members of the Committee and international intergovernmental organizations to collect and make technical presentations pursuant to objectives 1 and/or 2 of the workplan at the next session of the Subcommittee.

12. The Working Group agreed that the secretariat should, under the guidance of the Chair of the Working Group, update the content of the website of the Office for Outer Space Affairs dedicated to the work of the Working Group (www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/COPUOS/stsc/wgnps/index.html).

13. The Working Group requested the secretariat to invite States members of the Committee and international intergovernmental organizations to provide the details of focal points of contact for the Working Group.

14. The Working Group noted that in order to encourage informal discussions and enhance exchanges among member States, the secretariat should, when practicable, seek measures to avoid scheduling informal meetings of the Working Group concurrently with plenary meetings and instead utilize designated time slots before the morning meetings and during the lunch break for informal meetings.
 15. At its 4th meeting, on 8 February, the Working Group adopted the present report.
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