

General exchange of views

Madame Chair,

Allow me to congratulate you on your election as Chair of the Legal Subcommittee and to take this opportunity also to commend Mr. Andrzej Misztal for his excellent work as the previous Chair of the LSC.

Madame Chair,

The period of time since the last LSC session, which was held in 2019, has been a challenging one. However, even in these difficult circumstances, the State of Israel was able to continue promoting various projects and initiatives related to space law.

We are pleased to announce that Israel has begun to promote its own national space legislation. While there is still a significant legislative process ahead, we have initiated discussions on different elements of a space law, in order to conclude an initial draft. The Israeli space legislation is expected to reflect international obligations and standards with respect to space activities.

In this context, it should be noted that the Israeli Space Agency, joined by relevant authorities, are reaching out to the space industry, in order to ensure that the industry is familiar with legal obligations and standards that apply to space activities. This outreach includes also legal presentations for representatives of the space industry and governmental agencies related to space activities. We believe that these interactions offer a valuable opportunity for constructive dialogue, which strengthen the knowledge and understanding among the relevant players.

Madame Chair,

2020 was also a year where Israel signed several peace treaties, normalizing its relations with the UAE, Bahrain and Morocco.

Israel is looking forward to cooperating with these states, as well as others, on matters relating to the peaceful use and exploration of outer space. A bilateral Israeli-Emirati working group has already been established and it is expected to convene in the near future.

As the Senior Deputy Legal Adviser of the Israeli MFA, I have the honor to lead the governmental legal team that provides legal advice to, and designs the international legal envelop of, some exciting Israeli missions to space.

We all remember the first Beresheet mission and its impressive global educational effect, as well as its impact on general interest in space in Israel, including in space law.

I am pleased to share that during the last year Israel has initiated yet another groundbreaking technological and educational mission: Beresheet 2.

With the aim of being even more ambitious than the first Beresheet mission, Beresheet 2 includes a spacecraft combined of one orbiter and two small landers that will reach the Moon's surface in different places. In Beresheet 2 Israel is not only going back to the moon but also setting the bar higher.

Beresheet 2 offers an opportunity for international cooperation. Israel intends to cooperate with other states and organizations on the design and engineering of the mission, as well as on its educational aspects. Israel hopes that the landing event will be a significant event that will unite people from all over the world.

From the legal perspective, the mission will require a well-established legal framework, both on a bilateral level, with other Agencies, and on the private-public level, between governmental and private entities.

Another very exciting project underway is the Rakia/ AX-1 mission, introduced in November 2020 by the Ramon Foundation and the Israel Space Agency. In this mission, an Israeli national,

Eytan Stibbe, will visit the International Space Station. He will dedicate his time onboard the ISS to promote science, technology and education. The Ramon Foundation and the ISA recently examined experiments, from various fields, to be conducted on board the ISS, pending approval from NASA and its international partners.

In the process of establishing the international legal framework for this mission, we are studying unique legal aspects of sending a private citizen to space. In this context, we also examine to what extent legal aspects of private space tourism should be developed. We would like to express our appreciation to NASA, and especially its legal team, for the ongoing discussion on this matter.

Madame Chair,

Israel continues to promote space law education. Space law is taught in different academic institutes, both in specific space law courses, as well as part of general international law courses.

My delegation would like to wish you, Madame Chair, the Secretariat and all Member States, a fruitful and productive LSC session, with a hope to meet everyone again soon in Vienna.

Thank you.