

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
60th Session of
Legal Subcommittee
31 May to 11 June 2021



Agenda Item 4
General Exchange of Views

Madam Chair and Distinguished Delegates,

I am very honored to make my appearance at the Legal Subcommittee for the first time since UNISEC-Global obtained permanent observer status with the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in 2017. In addition, I must express my sincere appreciation to Madam Chair of this Subcommittee, Ms. Setsuko Aoki for securing my statement, as well as to the Secretariat staff for the hybrid meeting arrangements.

UNISEC is an acronym of the University Space Engineering Consortium which started in Japan in 2002 as a non-profit organization for the purpose of supporting Japanese university students' practical space engineering activities, such as micro/nano/pico satellites and hybrid rocket development. Since 2010, UNISEC has expanded its activities to the international arena and UNISEC-Global was established in 2013 as an umbrella organization. Thanks to the efforts of several like-minded international professors, UNISEC local chapters have been established in their respective regions. As of 2021, there are 21 UNISEC local chapters, 187 university members, and 54 member countries/regions acting as the window to regional activities, through our Points of Contact. Our major goal is "VISION 2030-All" which was launched three

years ago with an aim to make space more inclusive for all people, particularly those from non-spacefaring countries/regions, by improving their capacity building.

Madam Chair and Distinguished Delegates,

Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic, our activities have been limited. For example, we have postponed an annual UNISEC-Global meeting of 2020 to be held in Istanbul, Turkey to sometime next year. Instead, we have been holding a monthly virtual meeting with limited capacity since last September 2020. However, we are fortunate that some of our programs have already restarted or been adapted. For example, the Mission Idea Contest (MIC-7), our annual competition for micro/nano satellites, started last October with a “Call for Abstracts” under the theme of “Deep Space Science and Exploration with Nano/Micro Satellites”. In the spirit of encouraging applicants from non-spacefaring countries, we took advantage of in-person restrictions and organized a free online lecture series comprised of 5 lectures across February and March this year. This is indicative of our goal for “VISION 2030-ALL” and deepens our connections. Teams are now working on submission with the deadline for the abstract being July 7th and the final presentation to take place on Nov 13th this year at the University of Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan.

As far as the legal aspects of our activities are concerned, we established self-imposed Guiding Principles in 2018, acting as a code of conduct for UNISEC-Global activities. It consists of 12 items, stipulating how to deal with research projects and how to consider others. In this Guiding Principle, we

particularly mention in Item 4 the importance of the rules to be respected, acknowledging the importance of legal policies from the UN Outer Space Treaty to internal rules in individual projects. Based on our desire to make more people around the world know these Principles, we have been translating them into 17 local languages, such as Amharic, Arabic, Korean, Turkish, Vietnamese, and others, in addition to the major European languages. This is also reflective of our slogan of involving all in space.

One more example I would like to refer to here is in the mitigation of the growing issue of space debris. UNISEC-Global, in collaboration with the International Academy of Astronautics (IAA), formed a study group to investigate debris issues caused by nano/micro satellites and to indicate future directions. The group published “A Handbook for Post-Mission Disposal of Satellites Less Than 100kg” in May 2019. Since its publication, we have been taking every opportunity to disseminate this accomplishment to our international community members, including universities at our annual meetings, as well as through our network.

Madam Chair and Distinguished Delegates,

I would like to close my statement with the following two points:

Firstly, as an international NGO for promoting university-level space education with particular attention to non-spacefaring countries, UNISEC-Global will continue to cooperate with UN COPUOS and its Legal Subcommittee in our activities.

Secondly, with our Guiding Principles and “A Handbook for Post-Mission

Disposal of Satellites Less Than 100kg” in mind, we would like to see how the Subcommittee’s discussions will proceed, particularly about legal mechanisms towards space debris mitigation and remediation measures, the application of international law to micro/nano satellite activities, and potential legal models for activities in exploration, exploitation, and utilization of space resources, among others.

Thank you very much for your attention.

(End)