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English only

**Committee on the Peaceful
Uses of Outer Space**
Legal Subcommittee
Fifty-third session
Vienna, 24 March-4 April 2014
Item 9 of the provisional agenda*
Capacity-building in space law

Building capacity in space law: actions and initiatives

Note by the Secretariat

1. At its fifty-second session, in 2013, the Subcommittee recommended that member States and permanent observers of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space inform the Subcommittee, at its fifty-third session, of any actions taken or planned on a national, regional or international level to build capacity in space law (A/AC.105/1045, para. 133).
2. The present document contains the reply received from Austria.

* A/AC.105/C.2/L.292.



I. Information received from member States

Austria

1. Actions to build capacity in space law

During the past years, a number of Austrian universities have taken concrete steps with the aim to promote space law and draw the students' interest to this particular area of law. At the University of Vienna, courses on space law are offered on a regular, optional basis. For the past two years, Professor Steven Freeland (University of Sydney, University of Copenhagen) was a visiting professor for the course "Special Legal Issues of the Use of Outer Space Technologies".

For more than 10 years, the University of Graz has been offering a seminar on "space law and space policy" (10 ECTS) with an increasing attendance. The seminar is currently co-chaired by Alexander Soucek from the European Space Agency (ESA)/Paris. Additionally, an excursion for students to the Legal Subcommittee of United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space was organized in cooperation with United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs in March 2013. The excursion included an introductory lecture concerning the role of Committee, attendance of meetings of the Legal Subcommittee, a visit to the European Space Policy Institute (ESPI), and a trip to the Kuffner Observatory, one of the most significant observatories of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire, founded in 1883 by Moriz von Kuffner. Thanks to various subsidies, a student of the University of Graz was able to attend the International Space University Space Studies Program 2013 in Strasbourg. Finally, two students were involved in the Austrian contribution to the World Space Week 2013 at the Austrian Space Forum in Innsbruck.

On 12 June 2013, the subpoint for space law of the Vienna University of Economics and Business (WU) organized a one day excursion for students which included the attendance of the 55th session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and of the conference "Celebrating 50 Years of Women in Space".

From 1 to 14 September 2013, the National Point of Contact (NPOC) Space Law Austria co-organized the 22nd European Centre for Space Law (ECSL) Summer Course on Space Law and Space Policy, which took place in Klosterneuburg. Thirty-eight students and 4 tutors from 17 states participated. Twenty-two lecturers from practice and academia familiarized the students with various issues of space law and space policy, with a thematic focus on space debris. Austria was represented by six students, one tutor as well as two lecturers.

On 29 March 2014, at the occasion of the 53rd session of the Legal Subcommittee of Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the NPOC Space Law Austria will organize the conference "Small Satellites: Chances and Challenges" at the Faculty of Law of the University of Vienna. Small satellites have become more and more popular in recent years, and a number of legal issues arose in this context. About 15 speakers will discuss the specificities of small satellites missions from the practical, the legal and the economic perspectives. The conference will follow up the International Institute of Space Law (IISL)/ECSL Symposium on the first day of the Legal Subcommittee's session of 2014.

2. Space Law Curriculum

Austria welcomes the work on the Space Law Curriculum under the auspices of Office for Outer Space Affairs. It will be a helpful tool for professors and lecturers in many different countries. The Space Law Curriculum should be regarded as a continuous task for the Office of Outer Space Affairs which should also facilitate regular updates of it. The focus should be on an interdisciplinary approach ranging from legal, technical and socioeconomic to ethical aspects.
