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COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES
OF OUTER SPACE
Legal Sub-Committee

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: PROPOSAL

Convention on the Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space

The States Parties to this Convention,

Recognizing the common interest of all mankind in furthering the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes,

Recalling that the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, affirms that States shall bear international responsibility for their activities in outer space and refers to the registration of objects launched into outer space,

Recalling also that the Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space provides that a launching authority shall, upon request, furnish identifying data prior to the return of an object it has launched into outer space which has come into the possession of another State Party,

Recalling further that the Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects elaborates international rules and procedures concerning the liability of launching States for damage caused by space objects,

Seeking in particular to promote the objectives of the Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects,

Desiring to provide for States Parties means and procedures to assist in the identification of the launching State of a space object which has caused damage,

Believing that a mandatory international system of registration of objects launched into outer space could contribute to the identification of the launching State of a space object which has caused damage,

Intending to strengthen the present registry system maintained by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in conformance with General Assembly resolution 1721 B (XVI) and thereby to ensure the maintenance of a comprehensive inventory of objects launched into outer space,

Have agreed as follows:

Article I

For the purposes of this Convention,

- (a) The term "space object" includes component parts of a space object as well as its launch vehicle and parts thereof.
- (b) The term "launching State" means
 - (i) A State which launches or procures the launching of a space object;
 - (ii) A State from whose territory or facility a space object is launched.

Article II

1. Each launching State shall maintain either individually or jointly with other launching States an appropriate register of space objects which it has launched into earth orbit or beyond. Each such space object shall be so registered only once. Each launching State shall inform the Secretary-General of the establishment or termination of all such registers.

2. Each launching State shall inform the Secretary-General in accordance with article IV of each space object which it has launched into earth orbit or beyond. In the event of joint launches, the launching States participating may designate from among themselves one or more States which shall notify the Secretary-General on their behalf. Notification of joint launches shall include the names of all participating launching States.

Article III

1. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall maintain a central register in which the information furnished in accordance with article IV shall be recorded.

2. There shall be free and unlimited access to the information in the central register.

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Article IV

1. Each launching State shall furnish to the Secretary-General the following information concerning each space object it has launched into earth orbit or beyond as soon as practicable after launch:

- (a) Name of launching State or States;
- (b) International designator, which shall consist of
 - (i) The year of launch, followed by a dash,
 - (ii) A two-letter launching State designator assigned by the Secretary-General, followed by a dash, and
 - (iii) An appropriate sequential number;
- (c) Conventional designation of the main launching vehicle;
- (d) Date, time and place of launch;
- (e) Basic orbital parameters, including
 - (i) Nodal period,
 - (ii) Inclination,
 - (iii) Apogee, and
 - (iv) Perigee;
- (f) General function of the space object, indicated by letter reference to the following categories:
 - (i) A - Development of space flight techniques and technology
 - (ii) B - Space research and exploration
 - (iii) C - Practical applications of space based on technology
 - (iv) D - Non-functional objects;
- (g) Such other information as the launching State may wish to submit from time to time.

2. Each launching State shall notify the Secretary-General as soon as practicable of space objects which it has launched which are no longer in orbit.

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Article V

States Parties to this Convention, including in particular States possessing space monitoring and tracking facilities, shall respond to the greatest extent feasible to requests by any other State Party to this Convention or to the Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects, or by the Secretary-General on their behalf, for assistance in addition to the information supplied pursuant to article IV in the identification of a particular space object which has caused damage for the purpose of facilitating the settlement of claims for such damage. State Parties making such requests shall, to the extent practicable, submit information as to the time, nature and circumstances of the events giving rise to the damage.

Article VI

1. With the exception of articles VII through X of this Convention, references to States shall be deemed to apply to any international intergovernmental organization which conducts space activities if the organization declares its acceptance of the rights and obligations provided for in this Convention and if a majority of the States members of the organization are States Parties to this Convention and to the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies.

2. States members of any such organization which are States Parties to this Convention shall take all appropriate steps to ensure that the organization makes a declaration in accordance with the preceding paragraph.

Article VII

1. This Convention shall be open to all States for signature. Any State which does not sign this Convention before its entry into force in accordance with paragraph 3 of this article may accede to it at any time.

2. This Convention shall be subject to ratification by signatory States. Instruments of ratification and instruments of accession shall be deposited with _____, which are hereby designated the Depositary Governments.

3. This Convention shall enter into force on the deposit of the fifth instrument of ratification.

4. For States whose instruments of ratification or accession are deposited subsequent to the entry into force of this Convention, it shall enter into force on the date of the deposit of their instruments of ratification or accession.

5. The Depositary Governments shall promptly inform all signatory and acceding States of the date of each signature, the date of deposit of each instrument of ratification of and accession to this Convention, the date of its entry into force and other notices.

6. This Convention shall be registered by the Depositary Governments pursuant to Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations.

Article VIII

Any State Party to this Convention may propose amendments to this Convention. Amendments shall enter into force for each State Party to the Convention accepting the amendments upon their acceptance by a majority of the States Parties to the Convention and thereafter for each remaining State Party to the Convention on the date of acceptance by it.

Article IX

Any State Party to this Convention may give notice of its withdrawal from the Convention one year after its entry into force by written notification to the Depositary Governments. Such withdrawal shall take effect one year from the date of receipt of this notification.

Article X

This Convention, of which the Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts are equally authentic, shall be deposited in the archives of the Depositary Governments. Duly certified copies of this Convention shall be transmitted by the Depositary Governments to the Governments of the signatory and acceding States.

In witness whereof the undersigned, duly authorized, have signed this Convention.

Done in _____, at the cities of _____,
this ____ day of _____, one thousand nine hundred and seventy-____.
