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Committee on the Peaceful**Uses of Outer Space**

Legal Subcommittee

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Item 11 of the provisional agenda*

**Practice of States and international organizations in
registering space objects****Practice of States and international organizations in
registering space objects: benefits of becoming a party to the
Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer
Space****Note by the Secretariat**

At the forty-fourth session of the Legal Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, held in Vienna from 4 to 15 April 2005, the Working Group on the Practice of States and International Organizations in Registering Space Objects requested the Secretariat to prepare a paper on the benefits of becoming party to the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space (General Assembly resolution 3235 (XXIX), annex) for its consideration at the forty-fifth session of the Subcommittee. The annex to the present document was prepared in response to that request.

* A/AC.105/C.2/L.260.



Annex

Benefits of becoming a party to the convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space

I. Background

1. In 2004, the Legal Subcommittee and its Working Group on the Status and Application of the Five United Nations Treaties on Outer Space agreed on an indicative list of benefits to, and rights and obligations of, parties to the United Nations treaties on outer space. The indicative list was transmitted, together with a letter from the Secretary-General, to the ministers for foreign affairs of States that had not yet become parties to the United Nations treaties on outer space, with a view to encouraging States to become parties to the United Nations treaties on outer space.

2. In response to the call by the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III)¹ for action to promote the development of space law and given the emphasis placed by the Conference on the importance of the United Nations treaties on outer space, the Office for Outer Space Affairs of the Secretariat began in 2002 to organize a series of workshops to build capacity in space law. The workshops were held in The Hague in November 2002, in Daejeon, Republic of Korea, in November 2003, in Rio de Janeiro in November 2004 and in Abuja in November 2005. All the workshops held in the series were dedicated to promoting understanding, acceptance and implementation of the United Nations treaties and principles on outer space, promoting development of national space laws and policies and improving the availability of education opportunities in space law.

3. The list of benefits of becoming a party to the United Nations treaties on outer space and the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space (General Assembly resolution 3235 (XXIX), annex), contained in the present document have been drawn from the indicative list² agreed upon by the Legal Subcommittee and the recommendations, observations and conclusions³ and proceedings⁴ of the space law workshops held to date.

II. Benefits of becoming a party to the United Nations treaties on outer space

4. The United Nations treaties on outer space work for the benefit and in the interests of all States parties to those treaties. All States, irrespective of the degree of their economic or scientific development, would benefit from adhering to the treaties.

5. By ratifying, implementing and observing the provisions of the outer space treaties, States would demonstrate their support for:

- (a) The orderly use of outer space;

(b) Broad international cooperation in the conduct of space activities for the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes, including fostering the development of space capacities;

(c) Providing international rules and procedures for the peaceful settlement of disputes and for claiming compensation; and guaranteeing the protection of the interests of States and their nationals who fall victim to damage caused by space objects.

6. By ratifying, implementing and observing the provisions of the outer space treaties, States would:

(a) Participate in a more stable and predictable global regime and fulfil their responsibilities as members of the international community;

(b) Ensure the strengthening of rule of law and increase the development of customary behaviour;

(c) Increase their attractiveness to potential foreign partners seeking international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space;

(d) Increase their involvement in international cooperation and, as a consequence, improve their access to scientific, meteorological and other space-related data;

(e) Increase confidence in the safety of space activities as the treaties require States to bear international responsibility for national activities in outer space and to provide the necessary authorization and supervision of such activities in line with the principles set forth in the treaties.

7. Universal acceptance, implementation and observance of the provisions of the outer space treaties would lead:

(a) To increased development of national space laws, regulations and other legal instruments that establish a regime for, among other things, ensuring that non-State actors comply with provisions of the treaties, for licensing, registration of space objects launched into outer space, liability and safety, and a system for financial responsibility, including indemnification and insurance;

(b) To setting up of mechanisms for cooperative efforts with other States;

(c) To transparency with regard to States' rights and obligations in conducting space activities.

III. Benefits of becoming a party to the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space

8. In addition to the benefits already identified above, by acceding to, implementing and observing the provisions of the Registration Convention, States would:

(a) Enhance the usefulness and maintenance of the United Nations Register of Objects Launched into Outer Space, in which information furnished by States and international intergovernmental organizations that have declared their acceptance of the rights and obligations under the Registration Convention is recorded;

(b) Benefit from additional means and procedures that assist with the identification of space objects;

(c) Have the right to request assistance from other States, including States possessing monitoring and tracking facilities, to identify a space object that has caused damage or that may be of a hazardous or deleterious nature.

9. Universal acceptance, implementation and observance of the provisions of the Registration Convention would:

(a) Lead to increased establishment of national registries;

(b) Contribute to the development of national procedures and mechanisms for the maintenance of national registries and consequently provision of information to the United Nations Register;

(c) Result in standardized procedures, both national and internationally, for registering space objects with the United Nations Register;

(d) Lead to uniformity with regard to the information to be furnished and recorded in the United Nations Register concerning each space object carried in the national registries;

(e) Enable the receipt of and recording in the United Nations Register of additional information concerning space objects on the national registries and/or information on objects that are no longer in Earth orbit.

10. Only States that have become parties to the Registration Convention will be able:

(a) To propose amendments to the Convention;

(b) To participate in any review of the Convention that may be requested by parties in accordance with the Convention.

Notes

¹ See *Report of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Vienna, 19-30 July 1999* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.00.I.3).

² A/AC.105/826, annex I, appendix I.

³ A/AC.105/802 and Corr.1, A/AC.105/814, A/AC.105/847 and A/AC.105/866.

⁴ ST/SPACE/14 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.I.24), ST/SPACE/22, ST/SPACE/28 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.I.76) and ST/SPACE/32 (to be subsequently issued).