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## Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

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**Review of international mechanisms for cooperation in the  
peaceful exploration and use of outer space**

## Review of international mechanisms for cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space

Note by the Secretariat

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



## **I. Introduction**

1. At its fifty-second session, in 2013, the Legal Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space agreed that the States members of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations having permanent observer status with the Committee should, in accordance with the workplan for 2014 (A/AC.105/1003, para. 179), be invited to provide information on the range of bilateral and multilateral mechanisms they utilized for space cooperation, including existing bilateral and multilateral agreements, non-binding arrangements, principles, technical guidelines and other cooperation mechanisms (A/AC.105/1045, para. 174).
2. The present document has been prepared by the Secretariat on the basis of replies received from Algeria, Germany and Kenya.

## **II. Replies received from Member States**

### **Algeria**

[Original: French]  
[11 November 2013]

Algeria considers international cooperation to be a means of facilitating knowledge transfer and of promoting the development of space technologies and their applications for the purposes of sustainable socioeconomic development.

Algeria takes a flexible and independent approach to bilateral and multilateral cooperation through signing memorandums of understanding and governmental agreements, in compliance with the general principles of the United Nations that govern space activity.

Such cooperation takes the form of the joint implementation of space projects, skills training and projects designed to provide solutions to practical problems.

To that end, Algeria seeks to achieve the aims of its National Space Programme in order to further a policy of multidimensional cooperation, particularly with those States prepared to take part in technology and knowledge transfer for the benefit of Algeria.

### **Germany**

[Original: English]  
[5 November 2013]

Germany is committed to the fundamental principle of cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space. International cooperation mechanisms are essential for space activities and may allow them to overcome the great challenges of the future. Germany is convinced that global problems require global cooperation based on adequate legal structures.

Promoting international cooperation and understanding “in the interest of maintaining international peace and security” is one goal of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space has used the general principles of the Outer Space Treaty to set the legal basis for any form of international cooperation in space activities, from special regimes for application (international space communication services) to disaster management using space assets (e.g. the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER)). In this context, particular importance has been attached to capacity-building for new actors in the space arena. Besides the formal yearly sessions of the Committee, a number of activities and space-related international events, such as the International Heliophysical Year and the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III), action teams have been established. A number of subjects are dealt with on an ongoing basis throughout the year, including working groups for specific topics such as space debris, near-Earth objects and the long-term sustainability of outer space activities, as well as application programmes and outreach initiatives.

In the past, the German delegation has actively participated in the work of the Committee and has initiated resolutions aimed at intensifying peaceful international cooperation in space and making space a sustainable resource for mankind.

The German delegation will therefore actively contribute to the Working Group on the Review of International Mechanisms for Cooperation in the Peaceful Exploration and Use of Outer Space, to be convened in 2014 under the chairmanship of Setsuko Aoki (Japan). The German delegation is especially interested in:

- (a) Discussing the cooperation mechanisms applied by member States of the Committee;
- (b) Reviewing mechanisms and tools of the Committee and its subcommittees, with particular emphasis on the interaction between the Legal Subcommittee and the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee;
- (c) Identifying the multilateral coordination mechanisms of intergovernmental, inter-agency, non-governmental organizations etc., and assessing their working methods;
- (d) Identifying educational institutions dedicated to international space cooperation, including national universities (e.g. University of Cologne, Leiden University), the International Space University and international fellowship programmes.

An excellent example of successful long-standing international cooperation is the European Space Agency (ESA), to which Germany is firmly committed. ESA is an intergovernmental organization with 20 European States members, 18 of which are also States members of the European Union. Canada is an associate member of ESA. ESA has experience in integrating countries of different sizes, countries that make different levels of contributions and countries with highly varying capacities in the space sector, in order to create additional scientific, technical and economic value. This experience can be very valuable with regard to global cooperation in

space activities as the national interests of countries differing in size and space capacities have to be combined for the benefit of all. ESA activities are divided into mandatory and optional programmes. The mandatory programmes include basic activities, technology research and the science programme. All member States have to contribute to these mandatory programmes on a scale based on their gross domestic product. Participation in and the level of contributions to optional programmes, which cover fields such as Earth observation, telecommunications, satellite navigation and space transportation, microgravity research and the International Space Station, are voluntary, so that every member can choose the programme that best fits its interests and industrial priorities. An essential characteristic of ESA is its industrial policy, especially the principle of *juste retour*. This balance between contribution and technological return is one major aspect of investment in space activities.

ESA has developed the Plan for European Cooperating States with the goal of familiarizing interested European countries with ESA cooperation mechanisms. ESA, having permanent observer status with the Committee, is in charge of bringing together the positions of its member States.

A new player in application-oriented space programmes (Galileo, Copernicus/GMES) is the European Union. Its coordination with ESA is formulated under a framework agreement.

Besides European space cooperation, there is a second pillar of international cooperation. All European programmes — at the national level as well as at the European level — have led to international cooperation outside Europe, namely with Canada, China, India, Japan, the Russian Federation and the United States of America, as well as other African, Asian-Pacific, Latin American and Mediterranean countries.

Outside Europe, Germany has concluded more than 80 cooperation agreements (framework and project agreements), at the governmental and space agency level, with over 20 countries. The first of such agreements was signed with the United States in 1964. The latest examples of international cooperation by Germany are the signing of a framework agreement on space and technology between the Canadian Space Agency and the German Space Agency (DLR) in September 2013, an agreement between the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and Germany for a Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment (GRACE) follow-on mission, and a framework agreement between DLR with the University of Tohoku, Japan. One example of widespread international cooperation is the International Space Exploration Coordination Group.

Cooperation is implemented by different institutions, research centres and universities. Common ventures are implemented through different legal instruments such as framework agreements, specific cooperation agreements and memorandums of understanding. Framework agreements may include the planning and executing of a joint space mission with shared hardware responsibility, the carrying out of scientific exchange programmes related to a commonly defined mission, the development of industrial and commercial projects and of launch services, the exchange of equipment, documentation, data, results of experiments and scientific information, and the organization of symposiums and scientific workshops.

Examples of international cooperation that may be highlighted are the active participation of Germany in UN-SPIDER and the contribution of DLR to the diverse fields of work of the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites and the Group on Earth Observations, in which it is an active member in different working areas such as climate change, global forest observation, disaster management and biodiversity.

In line with its space strategy, Germany intends to further expand international cooperation through coordination with its partners as a means of avoiding unnecessary duplication of effort and overcapacity while also improving space sector efficiency.

Last but not least, it has to be underlined that international space law forums, such as the International Institute of Space Law, the European Centre for Space Law, the Space Law Committee of the International Law Association and the European Space Policy Institute, make a valuable contribution to a common understanding of the cooperation mechanisms in space and of the relevant legal framework.

## Kenya

[Original: English]  
[22 November 2013]

Kenya is a signatory 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, and the Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects.

It is also a party to five other agreements relating to space law, namely:

- (a) The Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water;
- (b) The Convention relating to the Distribution of Programme-carrying Signals Transmitted by Satellite;
- (c) The Agreement Relating to the International Telecommunications Satellite Organization "INTELSAT";
- (d) The Convention on the International Maritime Satellite Organization (INMARSAT);
- (e) The Convention of the International Telecommunication Union.

Other activities undertaken by Kenya that relate to the peaceful uses of outer space are listed below.

- (a) Kenya has entered into a collaboration with Algeria, Nigeria and South Africa for the African Resources and Environmental Management Satellite Constellation Initiative, which is aimed at launching microsatellites into low-Earth orbit to ensure that Africa collects Earth observation data on a continuous basis for various applications;

(b) The Square Kilometre Array is an international initiative to design and build the world's most advanced radio telescope that is vastly more sensitive and many times faster than existing radio telescopes. Kenya is partnering with South Africa and seven other countries in an international bid to host the world's largest radio telescope;

(c) The San Marco Satellite Launching and Tracking Project was implemented through a bilateral agreement between the Governments of Italy and Kenya. The renewal of the agreement is currently under negotiation.

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