



Space Law Update

Legal Subcommittee 4-15 April 2005

The practice of States and international organizations in registering space objects and the examination of a preliminary draft protocol on matters specific to space assets will be key agenda items at the next session of the Legal Subcommittee.

During its consideration of the activities of international organizations relating to space law, the Subcommittee will address the level of participation of the entities having permanent observer status with the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in order to report to the Committee in June 2005 on the means of enhancing their participation in the work of the Subcommittee.

In accordance with the work plan agreed on by the Subcommittee, a new working group will be established under the item "Practice of States and international organizations in registering space objects". The work plan covers the period 2004 to 2007. This year the working group will examine reports submitted by Member States and international organizations on their practice in registering space objects.

Under the preliminary draft protocol on matters specific to space assets the Subcommittee will focus on two issues: the possibility of the United Nations serving as the supervisory authority under the future protocol; and the relationship between the terms of the preliminary draft protocol and the rights and obligations of States under the legal regimes applicable to outer space. With regard to the first issue, the Subcommittee will consider the report of the open-ended ad hoc working group established to continue, between the 2004 and 2005 sessions of the Subcommittee, the consideration of the question of the appropriateness of the United Nations acting as supervisory authority. The working group under this agenda item will be re-convened.

Other topics of discussion will include the status and application of the five United Nations treaties on outer space, the definition and delimitation of outer space and matters relating to the character and use of the geostationary orbit. The Subcommittee will also consider the review and possible revision of the Principles Relevant to the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space. The working groups on the status and application of the treaties and the definition and delimitation of outer space will be re-

convened.

The Subcommittee will also consider new items to be included on its agenda at its forty-fifth session, in 2006.

A symposium, organized by the International Institute of Space Law (IISL) and the European Centre for Space Law (ECSL) on the invitation of the Subcommittee, will be held following the conclusion of the first day of the session. This year the symposium will consider recent developments in remote sensing and the desirability of reviewing the 1986 United Nations Principles Relating to Remote Sensing of the Earth from Outer Space.

General Assembly adopts resolution on the concept of the "launching State"

On 10 December 2004, the United Nations General Assembly adopted, without a vote, a resolution on the application of the concept of the "launching State".

In that resolution, the General Assembly recommends that States conducting space

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activities consider enacting and implementing national laws authorizing and providing for supervision of non-governmental activities in outer space under their jurisdiction. States would do so in fulfilling their international obligations under the United Nations treaties on outer space, in particular 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 Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects; and the Convention on Registration of Objects

Launched into Outer Space.

The Assembly also recommends that States consider the conclusion of agreements in accordance with the Liability Convention with respect to joint launches or cooperation programmes, that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space invite Member States to submit information on their current practices regarding “on-orbit transfer of ownership of space objects” and that States consider the possibility of harmonizing such practices.

United Nations/Brazil Workshop on Space Law Rio de Janeiro, 22 to 25 November 2004

The third United Nations workshop aimed at building capacity in space law was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 22 to 25 November 2004. The workshop, entitled “Disseminating and developing international and national space law: the Latin America and Caribbean perspective” was organized together with the Associação Brasileira de Direito Aeronáutico e Espacial (SBDA) and the Government of Brazil.

The Workshop considered the current and future development of international and national space law as well as a number of issues of specific interest to the Latin American and Caribbean region. In addition, participants from countries in the region presented information on their national institutions conducting space activities and considered ways and means of building capacity and education in space law. The final session was devoted to finalizing the observations, recommendations and conclusions of the Workshop.

Among the observations, recommendations and conclusions of the Workshop was the recommendation that States not yet parties to the United Nations treaties on outer space should take the necessary steps to ratify or accede to them. The Workshop also agreed on the importance of promoting wider understanding of international space law, on the need to disseminate information on existing international space law to professionals in the legal, space science and technology fields, particularly in developing countries, and recommended that the

United Nations continue its efforts to support and promote education and capacity-building in space law to ensure the availability of qualified professionals required for the implementation of space law and policies by States.

A detailed report, including the observations and conclusions agreed upon at the workshop can be found in United Nations document A/AC.105/847. The report and proceedings of the workshop report can be found on the website of the Office for Outer Space Affairs at <http://www.oosa.unvienna.org/SpaceLaw/workshops/index.html>.



Approximately 75 participants from the following 18 countries attended the Workshop: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Guyana, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Peru, Ukraine, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). Participants held positions in governmental departments, space agencies, international organizations, universities, research institutions and private sector. Thirty papers and presentations were delivered by invited speakers from both developing and developed countries.

Online Index of Objects Launched into Outer Space

The Online Index of Objects Launched into Outer Space is a searchable database of information on all satellites and space probes launched into Earth orbit or beyond since 1957. Its function is to provide a quick and efficient means to finding information provided to the United Nations by Member States and international organizations in conformity with the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space and related General Assembly resolutions. The Online Index also assists parties to the Convention in preparing their registration submissions by indicating which space objects have not been registered or have been previously registered by other Member States. It also indicates when a space object is no longer in orbit.

The Online Index can be searched in various ways: from the name of the space object to its status (decayed, in orbit, on a planet, etc.). It also provides users with electronic versions of registration documents relating to space objects issued by the United Nations (UN document series: ST/SG/SER.E/ and A/AC.105/INF). Documents issued from 1995 are available in all official languages of the United Nations.

The Online Index is maintained by the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs and is available through the WWW at www.unoosa.org/oosa/osoindex.html.

Information provided by States under the Outer Space Treaties and GA resolution 1721 B (XVI)

Since May 2004, the following States have registered space objects in accordance with the Registration Convention:

- Russian Federation (ST/SG/SER.E/450, 454, 457, 460 & 464)
- United States of America (ST/SG/SER.E/451, 452, 453, 458, 465 & 467)
- United Arab Emirates (ST/SG/SER.E/455)
- Germany (ST/SG/SER.E/456 & 462)
- India (ST/SG/SER.E/459)
- France (ST/SG/SER.E/461)
- Japan (ST/SG/SER.E/463)
- Ukraine (ST/SG/SER.E/466)

The following State provided voluntary information on a space object launched into outer space in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1721 B (XVI):

- Nigeria (A/AC.105/INF.411, to be issued)

Nigeria to host 2005 Space Law Workshop

The Government of Nigeria will host the next space law workshop, to be held in Abuja, Nigeria, from 14 to 17 November 2005. The principle objectives of the workshop will be to build capacity in space law in Africa. Emphasis will be placed on the following: enhancing understanding of the existing international legal regime on outer space, development of national space legislation and policy and promoting space law education in national institutions. The workshop may also address other issues that may be of specific interest to the region. More information on the venue and programme of the workshop will be made available on the website of the Office for Outer Space Affairs.

Status of the United Nations Treaties on Outer Space

With the accession of Belgium to the Moon Agreement on 29 June 2004, the status of the United Nations Treaties on Outer Space is as follows:

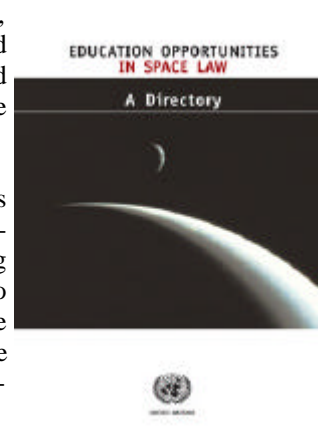
	<i>Ratifications/ Signatures</i>
Outer Space Treaty	98/27
Rescue Agreement	88/25
Liability Convention	82/25
Registration Convention	45/4
Moon Agreement	11/5

Education Opportunities in Space Law

The directory of institutions offering courses in space law has been updated and will soon be made available on the website of the Office.

The directory contains information on education programmes and courses offered by 40 universities and institutions in Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Finland, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, The Netherlands, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, South Africa, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

Educators and Institutions interested in submitting information or updating existing information are requested to consult the website for the necessary forms or contact the Office for Outer Space Affairs.



Coming to the Web

The following will be made available on the website of the Office for Outer Space Affairs in the coming weeks:

- Unedited transcripts of the 2004 session of the Legal Subcommittee
- 2005 update of the Directory of Education Opportunities in Space Law
- Proceedings of the United Nations/Brazil Workshop on Space Law (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 20-25 November 2004)

Other information on the Web

The full texts of the following documents are available on the website of the Office for Outer Space Affairs:

- General Assembly resolutions (1958 to present)
- United Nations Treaties and Principles on Outer Space
- Unedited transcripts of the Legal Subcommittee (2000-2003)
- Notifications from States and organizations of objects launched into outer space (from 1976 to present)

UN Reference Documents

Reports of the Legal Subcommittee

<i>Year</i>	<i>Session</i>	<i>Document Symbol Number</i>
2004	43rd session	A/AC.105/826
2003	42nd session	A/AC.105/805
2002	41st session	A/AC.105/787
2001	40th session	A/AC.105/763

Reports of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

<i>Year</i>	<i>Session</i>	<i>Document Symbol Number</i>
2004	48th session	A/59/20

2003	46th session	A/58/20
2002	45th session	A/57/20
2001	44th session	A/56/20

UNISPACE III

	<i>Document Symbol Number</i>
UNISPACE III+5 Review Report	A/59/174
UNISPACE III Report (including the Vienna Declaration)	A/CONF.184/6
Report of the Chairman of the Legal Subcommittee to UNISPACE III	A/CONF.184/4

Reports of the United Nations Workshops on Space Law

	<i>Document Symbol Number</i>
United Nations/International Institute of Air and Space Law Workshop on Capacity-Building in Space Law (The Hague, The Netherlands November 2002)	A/AC.105/802

United Nations/Republic of Korea Workshop on Space Law (Daejeon, Republic of Korea November 2003)	A/AC.105/814
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United Nations/Brazil Workshop on Space Law (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil November 2004)	A/AC.105/847
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Annual Publications

	<i>Document Symbol Number</i>
Highlights in Space 2004	ST/SPACE/25
United Nations Treaties and Principles on Outer Space	ST/SPACE/11 and Add.1/Rev.2



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The United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (OOSA) implements the decisions of the General Assembly and of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its two Subcommittees, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the Legal Subcommittee. The Office is responsible for promoting international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space, and assisting developing countries in using space science and technology. Located in Vienna, Austria, OOSA maintains a website at <http://www.unoosa.org>.