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English only

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

Sixty-fourth session

Vienna, 25 August – 3 September 2021

Item 6 of the provisional agenda*

**Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on
its fifty-eighth session**

**Terms of reference, methods of work and workplan of
the Working Group on the Long-Term Sustainability of
Outer Space Activities of the Scientific and Technical
Subcommittee**

**Proposal by the Chair of the Working Group on the Long-term
Sustainability of Outer Space Activities**

The present conference room paper was prepared by the Secretariat on the basis of information received from the Chair of the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities.

* A/AC.105/L.325



Terms of reference, methods of work and workplan of the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee

Proposal by the Chair of the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities

I. Introduction

1. At the sixty-second session in 2019, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space adopted the preamble and 21 guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities (A/74/20, Annex II). The Committee encouraged States and international intergovernmental organizations to voluntarily take measures for the implementation of guidelines to the greatest extent feasible and practicable (A/74/20, para. 163).

2. The Committee noted that it should serve as the principal forum for continued institutionalized dialogue on issues related to the implementation and review of the guidelines (A/70/20, para. 164).

3. In the same session, the Committee decided to establish, under a five-year workplan, a working group under the agenda item on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee (A/70/20, para. 165).

4. The Committee also decided that the Working Group would agree on its own terms of reference, methods of work and dedicated workplan, and that the working group would be guided by the following framework: (a) Identifying and studying challenges and considering possible new guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities; This could be done by taking into consideration existing documents including, inter alia, documents A/AC.105/C.1/L.367 and A/AC.105/2019/CRP.16; (b) Sharing experiences, practices and lessons learned from voluntary national implementation of the adopted guidelines; (c) Raising awareness and building capacity, in particular among emerging space nations and developing countries (A/74/20, para.167).

5. At its fifty-eighth session in 2021, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee elected Umamaheswaran R (India) as Chair of the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities and convened the Working Group (A/AC.105/1240, para.195). The Subcommittee recommended that the Committee make arrangements that would afford the Working Group the opportunity to meet at the sixty-fourth session of the Committee, with the benefit of interpretation services (A/74/20, para.168).

6. The following is the proposal by the Chair taking into consideration conference room papers and non-papers as well as views expressed in the first informal meeting held during the sixty-fourth session of the Committee.

II. Terms of reference

7. The Working Group will be guided by the following framework:
 - (a) Identifying and studying challenges and considering possible new guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities;
 - (b) Sharing experiences, practices and lessons learned from voluntary national implementation of the adopted guidelines;
 - (c) Raising awareness and building capacity, in particular among emerging space nations and developing countries.
8. The Working Group will attach equal importance to each of the three elements of the guiding framework defined in document A/74/20, para.167.
9. The Working Group will take as its legal framework the existing United Nations treaties and principles governing the activities of States in the exploration and use of outer space.
10. The output of the Working Group will be a report on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities, containing: a) information on experiences, practices and lessons learnt from voluntary implementation of the adopted Guidelines; b) a consolidated set of new and/or updated guidelines; and c) recommendations on capacity-building, taking into particular consideration the requirements of emerging and developing countries.

III. Method of work

11. The Working Group will meet during the annual sessions of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, with the benefit of interpretation services.
12. The Working Group may decide to meet during intersessional periods to advance its work. Any such meetings will include opportunities to participate virtually.
13. The Working Group will structure its discussions in a sequential manner under the leadership of the Chair, giving equal importance to each of the three elements of the guiding framework.
14. The Working Group will invite contributions of information from international organizations and non-governmental entities including, academia, industry and the private sector.
15. The Working Group will establish and maintain a list of Points of Contact for each member State and Permanent Observer to facilitate faster and effective dissemination of information, in addition to continuing to use formal means of communication.
16. The formal documents of the Working Group will be made available in all the official languages of the United Nations.

IV. Multi-year workplan

The five-year workplan of the Working Group for the period 2021-2025 is as follows:

2021 – Adoption of the terms of reference, methods of work and dedicated work plan for the new Working Group.

Identify Points of Contact for each member State and Permanent Observer.

Invite States members of the Committee, and international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations having permanent observer status to the Committee, to provide information and views on: a) practical implementation of the 21 adopted Guidelines; b) new challenges being faced and possible new guidelines, and; c) capacity-building efforts. To support this, a questionnaire is to be circulated, via the Secretariat, requesting information, to be provide on a voluntarily basis, on implementation experiences, including challenges and lessons learned, and current and future initiatives to help foster implementation of the Guidelines.

2022 – Compilation of information received and further exchanges thereon.

Consultations to take place on a possible international cooperation mechanism for capacity-building.

2023 – A workshop is to be organized, within existing resources, on the margins of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee to gather information on: a) practical implementation of the 21 adopted Guidelines; b) challenges being faced; and c) capacity-building efforts.

Continued discussion to take place on the implementation of adopted Guidelines; the identification of challenges and possible new/updated guidelines; and capacity-building discussions. Possible agreement on an international cooperation mechanism for capacity-building.

A preliminary compilation of findings will be produced.

2024 – The Chair to develop a draft report for consideration of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. A revised version of the draft report will be prepared for consideration of the Committee.

2025 - A final Working Group report to be presented to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, including: a) information on experiences, practices and lessons learnt from voluntary implementation of the adopted Guidelines; b) a consolidated set of new and/or updated guidelines; and c) recommendations on capacity-building, taking into consideration in particular the requirements of emerging and developing countries.

The output will also include proposed future work recommendations.
