

Agenda Item 9: General exchange of views on potential legal models for activities in the exploration, exploitation and utilization of space resources

Republic of Korea

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Thank you, Chair.

Distinguished chair and delegates,

In consideration of humanity's efforts to expand its reach beyond the Moon to Mars and even further into deep space, it is evident that space resources will likely become a crucial aspect of various space activities in the future. Therefore, Korea is also diligently exploring the boundless potential of space resources.

As a nation operating its independent lunar orbiter "Danuri," launched in 2022, Korea is actively engaged in space resource-related activities. Utilizing NASA's Shadowcam onboard, we are currently contributing to the observation of areas of ice accumulation within the Permanently Shadowed Regions (PSRs) on the Moon. Additionally, research institutes and private enterprises in Korea have embarked on the research and development of ISRU technologies, with Korea's lunar lander, scheduled for 2032, anticipated to demonstrate implementations of ISRU technology.

This practical contribution underscores Korea's commitment to space resource activities and its intention to engage even more actively in the future. As evidenced by the guidelines outlined in the "4th Master Plan for Promoting Space Development" through 2045,

there is a clear emphasis on expanding substantial investment in space resources and ISRU technologies. Furthermore, among the key statutory and mandated functions of the Korea Aerospace Administration (KASA), space resources have been designated as a focal area.

Chair,

The Republic of Korea stands as a compelling example, showcasing that the potential of space exploration is now accessible to emerging nations. With an increasing number of countries participating in space resource activities, it is imperative that these endeavors are conducted for peaceful purposes, in a safe, sustainable, and transparent manner. Therefore, internationally agreed guidelines and principles governing space resource activities should be established, based on existing international legal frameworks, including outer space treaties. However, due to the lack of international consensus on space resource activities within current international legal frameworks, further discussions are necessary to develop universally acceptable principles for space resource activities.

In this regard, Korea supports the endeavors of the Working Group on Legal Aspects of Space Resource Activities. Prior to this legal subcommittee, we have submitted our perspectives on the mandate and purpose of the Working Group. Additionally, to further enhance our engagement in these discussions, we have established a domestic research group.

With respect to the recent undertakings of the Working Group on Space Resource Activities, we would like to express our gratitude

to Luxembourg, Belgium, UNOOSA, and other Member States for hosting the expert meeting and international conference, which have provided us with important insights. These insights will undoubtedly serve as pivotal contributions to the future deliberations of the Working Group on Space Resource Activities.

Meanwhile, Korea signed the Artemis Accords as a political commitment to establish a practical set of principles, guidelines, and best practices to enhance the governance of civil exploration and use of outer space. We believe that the Artemis Accords could inform the work of the Working Group on Legal Aspects of Space Resource Activities in developing a set of principles for the related activities.

Chair,

As space resource activities remain a relatively new topic for the international community, we believe that proactive interaction with the expert community is paramount. Particularly, emerging countries, relatively newer to the topic of space resource activities, can benefit significantly from such efforts. To support the connection between newly participating countries in space resource activities and expert communities, Korea, in collaboration with the Secure World Foundation (SWF), convened an international workshop on space resources last November. The workshop featured participation from international experts in the scientific, technical, commercial, and legal aspects, who deliberated on various models of cooperation among stakeholders.

The event was significant because it looked at space resource activities from the perspective of countries starting out in space exploration. We are pleased that the Brazil Space Agency (AEB) and

SWF are taking over the event this year, and we hope the effort will continue going forward.

Thank you, Chair.

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