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Legal Subcommittee

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Agenda item 12

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

Draft report

Annex III

Report of the Chair of the Working Group on the Review of International Mechanisms for Cooperation in the Peaceful Exploration and Use of Outer Space

1. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 69/85, the Legal Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space reconvened its Working Group on the Review of International Mechanisms for Cooperation in the Peaceful Exploration and Use of Outer Space under the chairmanship of Setsuko Aoki (Japan).
2. The Working Group held five meetings between 17 and 23 April 2015. At the opening meeting, the Chair outlined the mandate of the Working Group under its multi-year workplan (A/AC.105/1003, para. 179).
3. The Working Group had before it the following:
 - (a) Note by the Secretariat on the review of international mechanisms for cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space, containing information received from Japan and Spain (A/AC.105/C.2/107);
 - (b) Conference room paper on the review of international mechanisms for cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space, containing information received from Austria (A/AC.105/C.2/2015/CRP.14);



(c) Conference room paper on the categorization of international mechanisms for cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space (A/AC.105/C.2/2015/CRP.15).

4. The Working Group also took into account in its deliberations the documents made available at the fifty-second and fifty-third sessions of the Subcommittee and presentations made under the present agenda item.

5. The Working Group recalled that the conclusion of its work under the five-year workplan, in 2017, would coincide with the fiftieth anniversary 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, and that the result of that work could serve as an important contribution to that commemoration, as international mechanisms for cooperation had evolved considerably over the past 50 years. In that regard, the Working Group noted that its work could provide a significant contribution to the 2018 “UNISPACE+50” thematic cycle of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and Legal Subcommittee.

6. The Working Group recalled that categorizing mechanisms for international cooperation would lead to a better understanding of the different approaches to cooperation in space activities taken by States and international organizations and that the findings would assist the Working Group in identifying the types of mechanisms being used and their content. An analysis of the findings would allow the Working Group to consider how its work could contribute to the further strengthening of international cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space.

7. In that regard, the Working Group noted with satisfaction conference room paper A/AC.105/C.2/2015/CRP.15, which had been prepared by the Secretariat, in close consultation with the Chair of the Working Group on the basis of contributions made by States members and permanent observers of the Committee to the work of the Working Group and of additional research. The Working Group agreed that the document constituted a sound basis on which to further develop its work.

8. In the course of the work of the Working Group during the present session of the Subcommittee, several examples of international mechanisms for cooperation were observed, ranging from the use of bilateral and multilateral agreements and memorandums of understanding to the use of regional and interregional cooperation and coordination mechanisms and other international cooperation mechanisms for specific space activities. States members of the Committee presented the lessons learned about international cooperative mechanisms, in the form of case studies, reflecting on the reasons for selecting certain cooperative mechanisms for certain cooperative objectives. The Chair of the Working Group and the Secretariat were requested to continue analysing contributions made to the work of the Working Group and to the consideration of the present agenda item of the Subcommittee, with a view to further developing the content of conference room paper A/AC.105/C.2/2015/CRP.15.

9. The Working Group agreed to the following:

(a) States members of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations having

permanent observer status with the Committee should again be invited by the Secretariat to provide examples and information on the mechanisms for international cooperation they utilized for space cooperation, in order to develop an understanding of the range of collaborative mechanisms employed by States and international organizations and the circumstances in which certain classes of mechanisms were favoured by States over other mechanisms;

(b) States members and permanent observers of the Committee were encouraged to include in their responses examples of case studies and lessons learned, as appropriate, so that the Working Group could get an understanding of why certain cooperative mechanisms were selected for certain types of international cooperation, how the choice was made between legally binding and non-legally binding mechanisms and between formal and informal arrangements, and why, for example, bilateral agreements for space cooperation were structured as they were;

(c) States members and permanent observers of the Committee might again refer to the set of questions contained in the report of the Chair of the Working Group included in the report on the fifty-third session of the Legal Subcommittee (A/AC.105/1067, annex III, para. 10).

10. On the basis of responses provided by States members and permanent observers of the Committee, the Secretariat, in close consultation with the Chair of the Working Group, was requested to update conference room paper A/AC.105/C.2/2015/CRP.15, including by adding a new chapter on lessons learned, and to make available a revised version of that conference room paper for consideration and further guidance by the Working Group at the fifty-fifth session of the Subcommittee, to be held in 2016.
