



General Assembly

Distr.: General
9 November 2011

Original: English

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Note verbale dated 19 October 2011 from the Permanent Mission of the United States of America to the United Nations (Vienna) addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of the United States of America to the United Nations (Vienna) presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to refer to principle 4 of the Principles Relevant to the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space (General Assembly resolution 47/68) on behalf of the Government of the United States of America.

Principle 4 provides that a State launching a nuclear power source into outer space shall inform the Secretary-General on how States may obtain the results of a safety assessment carried out prior to that launch. Respecting the spirit of principle 4, the United States of America is pleased to provide the information below.

The Mars Science Laboratory (MSL) mission is tentatively scheduled for launch in November 2011 to conduct scientific research on the surface of Mars. The MSL rover is to carry one multission radioisotope thermoelectric generator as its primary source of electrical power to operate and conduct science on the surface of Mars.

The United States of America has conducted a thorough environmental assessment and an extensive safety analysis for the MSL mission. The results of the safety assessment are publicly available and can be obtained on the Internet at <http://science.nasa.gov/missions/msl> or by contacting David Lavery, Program Executive, Science Mission Directorate, United States National Aeronautics and Space Administration, Washington, D.C. Mr. Lavery may be reached by telephone at (+1-202) 358 4684 or by e-mail at david.b.lavery@nasa.gov.

