



General Assembly

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Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Information furnished in conformity with the Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space

Note verbale dated 21 September 2009 from the Permanent Mission of Australia to the United Nations (Vienna) addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of Australia to the United Nations (Vienna) presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and, in accordance with article 5 of the Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space (General Assembly resolution 2345 (XXII), annex), has the honour to inform him of a space object of unascertained origin that landed in Australian territory.

The man-made object fell on private property in north-eastern Australia on or around 3 November 2007. The geographic coordinates of the impact point are 26° 55' 30" S and 145° 03' 48" E, with an elevation of 237 metres above sea level.

The object came to the attention of the Australian Government in September 2008. The Australian Government has examined the object, and it is believed to be a carbon fibre composite wrapped pressure vessel, which likely formed a component part of a space object.

The recovered object is approximately 0.55 metres in diameter and weighs 17 kilograms. Two holes, approximately 25 millimetres in diameter, are situated on opposing sides of the object. The interior of the object appears to be lined in a metallic material with a welded seam around the inner circumference. The remains of a bevelled metal "nozzle", measuring 12 millimetres in diameter and punctured by a series of small holes around its circumference, were also found inside the sphere.

The Australian Government does not consider the object to be of a significantly hazardous or deleterious nature. The object remains in private custody.

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The Government of Australia has not been able to identify the authority that launched the object. The Australian Government accordingly seeks the assistance of the Secretary-General to identify the launching authority and would be grateful if he could request launching authorities to examine their records and advise the Government of Australia if they believe the object may have been launched by them.

The Australian Government wishes to advise the Secretary-General of its intention to await responses from launching authorities for a period of six months following the date of the present note. At the expiry of this period, should the object remain unclaimed, the Australian Government shall deem the object to have been abandoned by the authority that launched it. The Australian Government considers this course of action sufficient to meet the requirements of article 5 of the Agreement.

The following Australian official may be contacted in relation to this matter:

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In order to expedite possible identification of the launching authority, the Permanent Mission of Australia to the United Nations (Vienna) has copied this note to the Permanent Missions of China, Japan, India, the Russian Federation, the United States of America and the European Commission.
