IN THE NAME OF GOD

NEEDS AND CURRENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATION IN SPACE LAW IN THE REGION

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INTRODUCTION

It is imperative that space law subjects are studied not only at the international level but in the detailed contexts of different regional, interregional and national legal systems. The increasing commercial use of space both by governmental and non-governmental bodies necessitates that policy and law makers become aware of the need for and ways of regulating such activities. During the last decades international community has tried to find ways and methods to improve peace, security and cooperation in the sphere of outer space. Among these solutions, education in space law plays much more constructive role toward effective peaceful use of outer space for development, peace, security and justice among nations.

NEEDS FOR EDUCATION IN SPACE LAW

Development

The effects of use of outer space on development of nations are obvious. Education in space law will increase academic and public awareness which would result in enhancement of understanding of all nations and entities regarding the right of people for peaceful use of outer space.

Also promoting regional cooperation on educating space law and technologies is necessary for economic growth and sustainable development. The importance of preserving the space environment and protecting outer space from human activities should be emphasized through the education of space law.

However, space law education has not taken its stance in many countries, since space law has not been introduced enough at the university level as result of the lack of experience on space activities in those countries. In fact, space law education would enable nations to exercise their rights in order to plan their future space activities and benefit from the advantages of using the outer space resources. It is necessary that all developed and developing countries cooperate on space law education programs at the elementary, intermediate and advanced levels. The elements of space law should be incorporated into science and technology courses as well as legal and political studies, at undergraduate and post graduate levels, and define specific research programs to provide solutions for activists in related fields.

Provision of space knowledge both in technological and legal contexts would enable nations to meet their national and regional needs and to acquire necessary tools for their sustainable development. Managers and technologists in the specialized fields such as geographic information systems, remote sensing, atmospheric science and global climate need specific legal knowledge to gain the most appropriate economic, human and social benefits for their nations. This can only be achieved through the establishment of space law education in the law faculties to promote space law and to provide the required legal knowledge for educators and students in space technologies and sciences. Training will be indispensible to their education with regard to national, regional and

international regulations. Trainers will learn scope and limitations of states and non-state actors in outer space activities.

Peace and justice

There is a need to educate that outer space is solely to be used and promoted for peaceful purposes. It should be emphasized here that there is a difference between positive and negative concept of peace. Although for many decades peace was generally thought to be the only proper goal of international community, as we have come to learn in the past two decades, peace should not be defined in situations with unspeakable violence and where the silence of the weak is translated as peace.

By achievement of positive peace, negative peace, i.e. nonexistence of war, would also be achieved. Just peace requires that elements threatening peace and tranquility should be demolished and the ways to promote human security and development should be provided.

During the space law courses it should be analyzed that peace without justice would amount to conflicts and interference into political and territorial integrity of states and other international disorders. Just, fair and equitable use of outer space should be promoted to ensure that benefits from those uses can be enjoyed by all. The students and practitioners should learn the importance of easy access to outer space by all states in an equitable manner.

Security

Teaching existing legally binding commitments would be effective against military and non-military threats. It is necessary to study ways to recognize all types of threats against peaceful use of outer space activities which would result in effective security benefits. It should be learned that space as a common heritage of mankind should not be under

the threat of weaponization and arms race which would jeopardize common security. Such dangerous trend would limit the scope of peaceful uses of outer space. Education should be seen as a preventive measure against inequality in the context of collective security.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ASIAN RESEARCH CENTER

The establishment of Western and Central Asian Research Center for Space Science and Technology, affiliated to the United Nations, is a great opportunity for assisting nations in the region to develop their capabilities in outer space activities. In achieving space law educational goals, cooperation between national and regional space law institutions plays an important role. This center was established in 2007 in Tehran to conduct research programs in space technology, including satellite communication, satellite meteorology, remote sensing and atmospheric sciences in the framework of their national and regional programs. These programs relate to disaster management, climate change studies, protection of biological diversity, weather forecasting and early warning for extreme events. To attain these goals, the Center would offer technological and legal programs for engineers, lawyers, researchers and decision makers in the region.

CURRENT OPPORTUNITIES

Iran has made good progress in the application of space law, space sciences and technologies and it continues to make progress in projects and programs in various fields of space. The university of Tehran and Iranian Space Agency are planning to develop space law education and awareness among academic, judicial and legislative bodies. It is planned

to hold short-term workshops and training courses for students, educators, space law practitioners, legislators, policy and decision makers and even for general public. These workshops and seminars have the capacity to be promoted over the Asian continent. Interdisciplinary courses are to be designed by Faculty of Law and Political Science and Faculty of Engineering and other faculties concerned under the umbrella of Institute of Space Law.

At present Faculty of Law and Political Sciences of University of Tehran has devised courses on space law and security in LLM and PhD programs of international law, and students are encouraged to choose subjects on space rules and principles.

Currently the Faculty has six research institutions under the following titles:

Institute for Islamic and Comparative Studies

Institute for Public Law Studies

Institute for International Relations Studies

Institute for Human Rights Studies

Institute for Criminology and Criminal Law Studies

Institute for Eurasia Studies

The Institute for Space Law Studies will be established formally in the near future. There are facilities for video conference classes and presentations offered from around the world and it is a suitable forum for exchange of views among specialists and experts in various disciplines. This institute will work closely with Western and Central Asian Research Center for Space Science and Technology. The institute will also have cooperation and joint programs with APSCO.

FINAL WORD

Education in space law would create an interaction between space law knowledge and behavior of international, regional and national entities which would eventuate in a regulated, progressive and sustained practice of these entities. Using space as a weapon remained a key hindrance to peace, security and justice on Earth. Education and understanding should be in a way that all nations through learning legal rules governing space activities realize that outer space has to benefit mankind.

Today many victims of natural disasters are Asian nations. Early warning system is vital through efficient warning for protection of Asian societies. By understanding the benefits of common use of space, easy transmission of data should be ensured. In fact through the use of information the number of victims would be reduced.

Iran is prepared for continuing work towards identifying the best ways to educate space law to promote international and regional cooperation which is the cornerstone to maintaining the use of outer space solely for peaceful purposes. Priority purposes for Asian countries would be included in education in legal, scientific and technological studies of outer space issues. Teaching international legal rules and ethical principles concerning outer space activities is to be of the outmost importance.