

3 April 2017

English only

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**Committee on the Peaceful  
Uses of Outer Space  
Legal Subcommittee  
Fifty-sixth session  
Vienna, 27 March-7 April 2017  
Item 13 of the provisional agenda\*  
General exchange of views on the application of  
international law to small satellite activities**

**Updated draft questionnaire on the application of  
international law to small satellite activities**

**Note by the Secretariat**

The Legal Subcommittee at its fifty-fifth session (A/AC.105/1113, para. 231), requested the Secretariat to prepare a questionnaire, to be addressed to member States and permanent observers of the Committee, containing a set of questions addressing the practice of the development and use of small satellites, as well as policy and legal aspects of their use.

The first draft questionnaire was made available by the Secretariat in a conference room paper A/AC.105/C.2/2017/CRP.11, and was considered at the present session by the Subcommittee, and its Working Group on the Status and Application of the Five United Nations Treaties on Outer Space.

The present, updated draft questionnaire, has been prepared by the Secretariat on the basis of consideration by the Subcommittee and the Working Group.

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\* A/AC.105/C.2/L.299.



## Annex

### **Updated draft questionnaire on the application of international law to small satellite activities**

#### **1. Overview of Activities on Small Satellites**

1.1 Are small satellites serving the needs of your society? Has your country determined whether small satellites could serve an identified technological or development need?

1.2 Is your country involved in small satellites activities such as designing, manufacturing, launching and operating? If so, please list projects, as appropriate. If not, are there future plans?

1.3 Is there a focal point in your country responsible for coordinating small satellites activities as part of your national space activities?

#### **2. Licensing**

2.1 Do you have a legal or regulatory framework to supervise any aspect of small satellite activities in your country? If so, are they general acts or specific rules?

#### **3. Responsibility and Liability**

3.1 How are liability and insurance requirements enforced on an operator in your country, for a small satellite under your country's responsibility in the event that "damage" occurs on the surface of Earth, to aircraft in flight, or to another space object in orbit?

#### **4. Launching State and Liability**

4.1 Since small satellites are not always deployed into orbit with dedicated rockets as in the case of larger satellites, there is the need for clarification in the understanding of the definition of "launch". When a launch of a small satellites requires two steps, first, launching from a site to an orbit and, second, deploying the small satellite to another orbit, in your view would the first step be regarded as the "launch" within the meaning of the United Nations treaties on outer space?

4.2 Do you think that the current international regulatory regime is sufficient to regulate operators of small satellites or that there should be a new, or different, international regulatory approach to address operations of small satellites?

#### **5. Registration**

5.1 Does your country have a practice of registering small satellites? If so, does your country have a practice of updating the status of small satellites? Is there any legislation or regulation in your country that requires non-governmental entities to submit to the government information for the purpose of registration, including updating of the status of small satellites they operate?

#### **6. Space Debris**

6.1 Are there unique liability questions regarding small satellites?