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English only

**Committee on the Peaceful
Uses of Outer Space**

Sixty-fourth session

Vienna, 25 August – 3 September 2021

Item 6 of the provisional agenda*

**Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on
its fifty-eighth session**

**Proposal by Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Italy,
Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand,
Nigeria, and the United States on a terms of reference,
methods of work and workplan for the establishment of
a new Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability
of Outer Space Activities of the Scientific and Technical
Subcommittee**

The present conference room paper was prepared by the Secretariat on the basis of information received from the delegations of Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, and the United States.

* A/AC.105/L.325



Proposal by Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, and the United States on a Terms of Reference, Methods of Work and Workplan for the establishment of a new Working Group on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee

1. Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria and the United States welcome the Committee's adoption of the preamble and 21 guidelines for the long-term sustainability (LTS) of outer space activities at its sixty-second session¹ We also note with appreciation the establishment of the follow-on working group (LTS 2.0) and welcome the election of Mr. R. Umamaheswaran of India as chair of LTS 2.0 working group.²
2. We believe that sharing and reviewing best practices on the practical implementation of LTS guidelines by space faring nations will enhance communication, international cooperation, and capacity building; preserving the outer space environment for future generations. In this regard:
 - a) Sharing and reviewing implementation experiences in the Committee's Scientific and Technical Subcommittee will highlight best practices in implementing the guidelines for current and planned space activities.
 - b) Identifying implementation challenges associated with emerging uses of space can facilitate consideration of possible new LTS guidelines in order to promote the responsible exploration and use of outer space.
3. Advancing implementation of the 21 adopted LTS guidelines, and capacity building in that regard, should therefore serve as the foundation for the new Working Group established under the STSC. Such a foundation can ensure that the Working Group's identification and study of emerging space missions is informed by the most current information on experiences, practices and lessons learned by non-governmental organizations, industry, the private sector, the academic community as well as governmental space actors.

Proposed Terms of Reference

4. Pursuant to the guidance established at the Committee's sixty-second session (A/74/20)³, the objectives of a new working group on long-term sustainability on outer space activities (LTS 2.0 Working Group) should be to:
 - a) Identify, compile, and review relevant practices and procedures to support the practical implementation of the 21 adopted Guidelines for the Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities;

¹ A/74/20, paragraph 163. and Annex II

² A/AC.105/12XX, Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on its fifty-eighth session, held from 19 to 30 April 2021

³ A/74/20, paragraphs 164-168

- b) Study the challenges associated with emerging uses of space, with the aim of using this as the basis for the identification and compilation of possible new guidelines; and,
- c) Strengthen capacity building efforts by assisting nations in their implementation of the specific guidelines and the associated development of national space practices, policies, and legislation to ensure the long-term sustainability and peaceful uses of outer space.

Proposed Methods of Work

5. The LTS 2.0 Working Group will undertake its work in two non-parallel streams, which would be guided by the framework established in A/74/20⁴. The first work stream (policy and regulatory stream) will be responsible for leading the compilation of best practices pertaining to the implementation of the guidelines in policy and national regulatory frameworks for space activities, and a study of the challenges, and potential new guidelines for consideration. The second work stream (operational and technical stream) will be responsible for leading the compilation of best practices pertaining to the implementation of the guidelines regarding the safety and sustainability of space operations, including relevant aspects of scientific and technical research and development, and a study of the challenges, and potential new guidelines for consideration. In order to facilitate the work, specific leads could be appointed to each of the two streams under the supervision of the LTS 2.0 Working Group Chair.
6. International cooperation, raising awareness and building capacity are integral components of this work. These concepts will be carefully considered throughout the discussions of each work stream.
7. It will be important to ensure that work happens sequentially, within each session, with a balanced approach to the division of time during the sessions to allow for maximum participation by all delegations. This will help both facilitate equitable-participation from COPUOS delegations, and also enable the working group to address the objectives in succession so that agreed practices, procedures and the lessons learned from guideline implementation can in turn aid new space actors in implementation and capacity-building efforts.
8. The Working Group will be open to all States' members of the Committee, who will be invited to nominate and provide the details of a point of contact to coordinate national contributions. These designated national points of contact will incorporate input from their respective national governmental and private sector entities. International intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations holding observer status with the Committee will be invited to provide contributions to the Working Group in accordance with the rules of procedure, methods of work and established practices related to the Committee.
9. The LTS 2.0 Working Group will be supported by interpretation services in all six official languages of the United Nations and it will also carry out its work and make decisions through consensus.
10. The Working Group will meet during the sessions of the STSC and the Committee in order to limit undue resource constraints. This will ensure appropriate participation of technical experts within existing resources. Where feasible, the Working Group may make use of internet-based

⁴ A/74/20, paragraph 167

conferencing platforms to review technical presentations and other contributions by technical experts in advance of Working Group deliberations in Vienna.

Proposed Work Plan

2021

- a) Election of the Bureau and establishment of terms of reference, methods of work and dedicated work plan for the LTS 2.0 Working Group;
- b) Invite States' members of the Committee, and international intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations having permanent Observer status to the Committee, to provide information and views on practical implementation of the 21 adopted LTS guidelines, the study of new challenges and possible new guidelines, and capacity building efforts.

2022

- a) Share experiences, and hold a discussion on information and views provided by States' members on implementation of the 21 adopted LTS guidelines, the study of new challenges and possible new guidelines, and capacity building efforts;
- b) The Chair will draft a preliminary report capturing broad findings on implementation, identification of challenges and related review of possible new guidelines, and capacity building.

2023

- d) Review and discuss findings in the preliminary draft report and consolidate any additional information and views presented;
- e) The Chair will refine the findings on implementation with additional information and views presented.

2024

- a) Final review and refinement of the findings;
- b) Develop a final report for consideration at the sixty-first STSC session.

2025

- a) Present a final working group report to the sixty-second STSC session, including recommendations on:
 - i. compilation of national implementation best practices of the 21 adopted LTS guidelines by States' members and international organisations having permanent Observer status;
 - ii. measures to address challenges identified and related study of possible new guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities;
 - iii. experiences and opportunities in capacity building; and,
 - iv. proposed future work recommendations.