

Germany, Item 15

UNCOPUOS Legal Subcommittee
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Statement by Germany

Agenda Item 15 – General exchange of views on potential legal models for activities in the exploration, exploitation and utilization of space resources

Honorable Madam Chair/Mr. Chairmen, distinguished delegates,

in the near future, we are expecting to see humanity's return to the surface of the moon. This is exciting – the exploration and utilization of the moon and other celestial bodies, including the use of their resources, bear not only great potential to increase our knowledge about our home planet and our solar system, but can also benefit our life here on earth in multiple ways.

In this context, we must acknowledge that activities on the lunar surface and other celestial bodies bring with them legal questions and **require increased international efforts** to safeguard the free exploration and use by all States without discrimination, on a basis of equality and **in accordance with international law**, to prevent conflicts and to ensure that due account is given to the long-term sustainability and environmental compatibility of such activities. This requires a further development of the legal regime for activities on the moon and other celestial bodies as well as improved global space governance.

Therefore, we welcome that COPUOS and this Legal Subcommittee recognized the importance of a sound legal framework for space resource activities and established a working group under this agenda item. We congratulate ambassador Misztal and Professor Freeland on their election as chair and vice-chair and wish to assure them of our delegation's full support. We are confident that the work plan discussed during the intersessional meeting provides an excellent basis for the working group to fulfill its mandate in an efficient and timely manner. In that spirit, we developed together with other European States a **joint working paper to endorse the results-oriented work plan of the WG** and to **provide input to the first dedicated International Space Resources Conference** under the auspices of the United Nations in 2022.

As expressed already in previous contributions to this Subcommittee, Germany is convinced that – as the moon and other celestial bodies are global commons beyond national jurisdiction – all activities related to the exploration, exploitation and utilization of space resources must be governed by international law..

Germany therefore supports the development of a **specific international regime for the exploration, exploitation and utilization of space resources on the basis of internationally agreed rules and standards**. Such regime shall facilitate the orderly and safe development, rational management and expansion of opportunities in the use of space resources. It shall appropriately take into account the efforts of countries contributing to the exploration, exploitation and utilization of celestial bodies and ensure that all countries irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development benefit from these activities, without taking away the investment incentives for public and private space flight. Last but not least, due account must be given to the long-term sustainability and environmental compatibility of such activities.

We are looking forward to continue engaging in an active and constructive manner in the working group as well as the respective dedicated Space Resource Conference later this year on all the factual and legal questions involved with space resources activities, and to fostering international consensus on the way forward.

Thank you for your attention.