

Non-paper by the Chair of the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities

(as of 30 August 2021 AM)

The following non-paper was created based on preliminary feedback received to the proposal put forth in A/AC.105/2021/CRP.18. The track changes show a best faith attempt to capture ideas and proposed edits to the Terms of reference, methods of work and workplan of the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. The non-paper is meant to facilitate further discussion and does not attempt to replace the Working Group's paragraph-by-paragraph review of text and the related drafting exercise.

Delegations are invited to reach out to the Chair of the Working Group using the following dedicated e-mail address:

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Terms of reference, methods of work and workplan of the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee

~~Proposal by the Chair of the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities~~

~~I.— Introduction~~

~~1.— At the sixty second session in 2019, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space adopted the preamble and 21 guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities (A/74/20, Annex II). The Committee encouraged States and international intergovernmental organizations to voluntarily take measures for the implementation of guidelines to the greatest extent feasible and practicable (A/74/20, para. 163).~~

~~2.— The Committee noted that it should serve as the principal forum for continued institutionalized dialogue on issues related to the implementation and review of the guidelines (A/74/20, para. 164).~~

~~3.— In the same session, the Committee decided to establish, under a five-year workplan, a working group under the agenda item on the long term sustainability of outer space activities of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee (A/74/20, para. 165).~~

~~4.— The Committee also decided that the Working Group would agree on its own terms of reference, methods of work and dedicated workplan, and that the working group would be guided by the following framework: (a) Identifying and studying challenges and considering possible new guidelines for the long term sustainability of outer space activities; This could be done by taking into consideration existing documents including, inter alia, documents A/AC.105/C.1/L.367 and A/AC.105/2019/CRP.16; (b) Sharing experiences, practices and lessons learned from voluntary national implementation of the adopted guidelines; (c) Raising awareness and building capacity, in particular among emerging space nations and developing countries (A/74/20, para.167).~~

~~5.— At its fifty eighth session in 2021, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee elected Umamaheswaran R (India) as Chair of the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities and convened the Working Group (A/AC.105/1240, para.195). The Subcommittee recommended that the Committee make arrangements that would afford the Working Group the opportunity to meet at the sixty fourth session of the Committee, with the benefit of interpretation services (A/74/20, para.168).~~

~~6.— The following is the proposal by the Chair taking into consideration conference room papers and non papers as well as views expressed in the first informal meeting held during the sixty fourth session of the Committee.~~

II.1. Terms of reference

~~7.1.~~ The Working Group will be guided by the following framework:

(a) Identifying and studying challenges and considering possible new guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities; This could be done by taking into consideration existing documents including, inter alia, documents A/AC.105/C.1/L.367 and A/AC.105/2019/CRP.16;

(b) Sharing experiences, practices and lessons learned from voluntary national implementation of the adopted guidelines;

(c) Raising awareness and building capacity, in particular among emerging space nations and developing countries.

~~8.2.~~ The Working Group will attach equal importance to each of the three elements of the guiding framework, defined in document A/74/20, para.167.

~~9.3.~~ The Working Group will take as its legal framework the existing United Nations treaties and principles governing the activities of States in the exploration and use of outer space.

~~10.4.~~ The output of the Working Group will be solutions for enhancing the long-term sustainability of outer space activities. Such solutions could include, inter alia, new guidelines, recommendations, enhanced cooperation and enhanced information exchange.

~~11.5.~~ The Working Group will produce a report on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities, containing: a) information on experiences, practices and lessons learnt from voluntary implementation of the adopted Guidelines; b) a consolidated set of new and/or updated guidelines, as possible; and c) compiled information on the awareness-raising and capacity-building activities and further recommendations on capacity-building, taking into particular consideration the requirements of emerging space nations and developing countries; and d) any other solutions for enhancing the long-term sustainability of outer space activities.

III.II. Method of work

~~12-6.~~ The Working Group will meet during the annual sessions of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, with the benefit of interpretation services.

~~13-7.~~ The Working Group may decide to meet during intersessional periods to advance its work. Any such meetings will include opportunities to participate virtually.

~~14-8.~~ The Working Group will structure its discussions in a sequential and non-parallel manner under the leadership of the Chair, giving equal importance to each of the three elements of the guiding framework, in accordance with the rules of procedure, methods of work and established practices of the Committee. [A detailed outline and plan of the work for each meeting, giving equal importance to each of the three elements of the guiding framework, will be developed by the Chair and shared with Working Group members well in advance of the respective meeting.]

~~9.~~ While the Working Group is intergovernmental in nature, it ~~The Working Group will~~ will invite contributions of information from international organizations and non-governmental entities including, academia, industry and the private sector.~~.~~

~~15.~~

~~16-10.~~ The Working Group will establish and maintain a list of Points of Contact for each member State and permanent observer to facilitate faster and effective dissemination of information, in addition to continuing to use formal means of communication.

~~17-11.~~ The formal documents of the Working Group will be made available in all the official languages of the United Nations.

IV.III. Multi-year workplan

The five-year workplan of the Working Group for the period 2021-2025, which attaches equal importance to each of the three elements of the guiding framework, is as follows:

2021 – Adoption of the terms of reference, methods of work and dedicated work plan for the new Working Group.

Identify Points of Contact for each member State and permanent observer.

Invite States members of the Committee, and international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations having permanent observer status to the Committee, to provide information and views on: a) practical implementation of the 21 adopted Guidelines; b) new challenges to the long-term sustainability of outer space activities being faced and possible new guidelines, ~~and~~; c) capacity-building efforts; and d) any other solutions for enhancing the long-term sustainability of outer space activities. [To support this, a questionnaire is to be circulated, via the Secretariat, requesting information, to be provided on a voluntarily basis, on implementation experiences, including challenges and lessons learned, and current and future initiatives to help foster implementation of the Guidelines, and opportunities, needs and gaps in capacity-building.]

2022 – Continue to invite States members of the Committee, and international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations having permanent observer status to the Committee, to provide information and views on: a) practical implementation of the 21 adopted Guidelines; b) ~~new~~ challenges to the

long-term sustainability of outer space activities and possible new guidelines; c) capacity-building efforts; and d) any other solutions for enhancing the long-term sustainability of outer space activities

Ongoing cCompilation of information received, including responses to the questionnaire, to take place throughout the year. A draft report to be developed. ~~and initial~~ further exchanges to take place thereon.

Consultations to take place on a possible international cooperation mechanism for capacity-building.

2023 – A workshop is to be organized, within existing resources, [on the margins of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee] to gather information on: a) practical implementation of the 21 adopted Guidelines; b) challenges being faced; and c) awareness-raising and capacity-building efforts.

Continued discussion to take place on the implementation of adopted Guidelines; the identification of challenges and possible new ~~updated~~ guidelines; and capacity-building discussions.

Possible agreement on an international cooperation mechanism for capacity-building.

A preliminary compilation of findings will be produced for consideration at the main Committee.

2024 – [The Chair to] Ddevelop a draft report for consideration ~~at~~ of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. A revised version of the draft report will be prepared for consideration ~~at~~ of the Committee.

2025 - A final Working Group report to be presented to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, including: a) information on experiences, practices and lessons learned from voluntary implementation of the adopted Guidelines; b) a consolidated set of new ~~and/or updated~~ guidelines, as possible; ~~and~~ c) compiled information on the awareness-raising and capacity-building activities and further recommendations on capacity-building, taking into consideration in particular the requirements of emerging space nations and developing countries; and d) any other solutions for enhancing the long-term sustainability of outer space activities.

The output will also include proposed future work recommendations.
