

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

Possible language for the COPUOS report

The Chair of Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities held brainstorming sessions on 18 and 19 June 2018 on the margins of the UNISPACE+50 Symposium. Delegations attending the sessions expressed a variety of views on how to conclude the work under the Working Group's current mandate and how to carry forward discussions on topics for future consideration following the end of the sixty-first session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

Delegations attending the brainstorming sessions requested that the Chair of the Working Group develop possible compromise language for the Committee report that Working Group members could use as a basis for further consultations. The text below represents possible paragraphs for inclusion in the Committee report.

1. The Committee noted that the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities had reached consensus on a preambular text and [twenty-...] Guidelines for the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities (document reference).
2. The Committee noted that progress had been made at the current session on a number of guidelines that had not yet reached consensus, and that this progress was reflected in (document reference). The Committee also noted that the Working Group had not been able to conclude its consideration of all guidelines within its current mandate.
3. The Committee encouraged States and international intergovernmental organizations to consider implementing guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities on a voluntary basis.
4. The Committee agreed on the importance of the topic of the long-term sustainability of outer space activities, noting that work on the topic, including consideration of guidelines that had not yet reached consensus (see document reference), would continue at the fifty-sixth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee in 2019 under the agenda item Long-term sustainability of outer space activities.
5. The Committee took note of Section E of document A/AC.105/L.315 and agreed that it was important to develop clear procedures for (a) sharing experiences, practices and lessons learned from implementing the guidelines; (b) reviewing and updating the guidelines; and (c) introducing and considering new candidate guidelines. The Committee requested the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee to develop these procedures at its fifty-sixth session in 2019, under the agenda item long-term sustainability of outer space activities, and to report back to the Committee at its sixty-second session in 2019. In regard to the implementation of such procedures, the Subcommittee could consider the establishment of an ad hoc, time bound or open-ended working group, an expert group, and/or other possible mechanisms, as appropriate, to advance the Committee's work on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities in the most effective manner. In this regard, the Committee agreed that States members of the Committee should be invited to develop written proposals for the procedures referred to above, and requested the Secretariat to circulate such proposals in all the official languages of the United Nations in advance of the fifty-sixth session of the Subcommittee.