



# General Assembly

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## Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Legal Subcommittee

Fifty-fifth session

Vienna, 4-15 April 2016

Agenda item 15

**Review of international mechanisms for cooperation in the  
peaceful exploration and use of outer space**

### Draft report

### Annex III

## Report of the Chair of the Working Group on the Review of International Mechanisms for Cooperation in the Peaceful Exploration and Use of Outer Space

1. At its 917th meeting, on 4 April 2016, the Legal Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space reconvened its Working Group on the Review of International Mechanisms for Cooperation in the Peaceful Exploration and Use of Outer Space under the chairmanship of Setsuko Aoki (Japan).
2. The Working Group held four meetings between 8 and 14 April 2016. At the opening meeting, the Chair outlined the mandate of the Working Group under its five-year workplan (A/AC.105/1003, para. 179).
3. The Working Group had before it the following:
  - (a) Note by the Secretariat on the review of international mechanisms for cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space, containing information received from Belgium, Poland, Thailand, Turkey and the World Meteorological Organization (A/AC.105/C.2/109);
  - (b) Conference room paper containing the draft report of the Working Group on the Review of International Mechanisms for Cooperation in the Peaceful Exploration and Use of Outer Space (A/AC.105/C.2/2016/CRP.14);



(c) Conference room paper on responses by Member States to the set of questions provided by the Chair of the Working Group on International Mechanisms for Cooperation in the Peaceful Exploration and Use of Outer Space, containing information received from Japan and France (A/AC.105/C.2/2016/CRP.18).

4. The Working Group also took into account in its deliberations the documents made available at the fifty-second, fifty-third and fifty-fourth sessions of the Subcommittee.

5. The Working Group emphasized that the conclusion of its work under the five-year workplan, in 2017, would coincide with the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies. The result of the work done under the five-year workplan could serve as an important contribution to that commemoration, as international mechanisms for cooperation had evolved considerably over the past 50 years. In that regard, the Working Group recalled that its work could provide a significant contribution to the 2018 UNISPACE+50 thematic cycle of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and its Legal Subcommittee.

6. The Working Group considered its draft report as contained in A/AC.105/C.2/2016/CRP.14, which had been prepared by the Secretariat in close consultation with the Chair of the Working Group on the basis of contributions made by States members and permanent observers of the Committee to the work of the Working Group and of additional research. The Working Group noted that the document provided a thorough update to the conference room paper on the categorization of international mechanisms for cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space presented to the fifty-fourth session of the Subcommittee in 2015 (A/AC.105/C.2/2015/CRP.15). The Working Group agreed that the updated document constituted a sound basis on which to finalize its report in 2017.

7. In the course of its work during the present session of the Subcommittee, the Working Group again observed several examples of international mechanisms for cooperation, ranging from bilateral and multilateral agreements and memorandums of understanding to regional and interregional cooperation and coordination mechanisms and other international cooperation mechanisms for specific space activities. States members of the Committee presented case studies offering detailed perspectives on the lessons learned about international cooperative mechanisms, and reflected on the reasons for selecting certain cooperative mechanisms for certain cooperative objectives. The Working Group also reviewed the detailed comments to its draft report as contained in A/AC.105/C.2/2016/CRP.14.

8. The Working Group observed that its findings as contained in the final report that was under preparation, would lead to a better understanding of the different approaches taken by States and international organizations to cooperation in space activities. The final report would therefore constitute a basis for further strengthening international cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space.

9. The Working Group agreed to the following:

(a) States members of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, together with international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations having permanent observer status with the Committee, should again be invited by the Secretariat to provide examples of and information on the mechanisms they utilized for international cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space, so that the Working Group could develop an understanding of the range of collaborative mechanisms employed and the circumstances in which States and international organizations favoured certain classes of mechanisms over others;

(b) States members and permanent observers of the Committee were encouraged to include in their responses examples of case studies and lessons learned, as appropriate, so that the Working Group could get an understanding of why certain cooperative mechanisms were selected for certain types of international cooperation, how the choice was made between legally binding and non-legally binding mechanisms and between formal and informal arrangements, and why, for example, bilateral agreements for space cooperation were structured as they were;

(c) States members and permanent observers of the Committee might again refer to the set of questions contained in the report of the Chair of the Working Group included in the report on the fifty-third session of the Legal Subcommittee (A/AC.105/1067, annex III, para. 10).

10. On the basis of responses provided by States members and permanent observers of the Committee, the Secretariat was requested to update conference room paper A/AC.105/C.2/2016/CRP.14 in close consultation with the Chair of the Working Group, and to make available a revised version of that conference room paper for consideration and finalization by the Working Group at the fifty-sixth session of the Subcommittee, to be held in 2017. The Working Group agreed that the final report of the Working Group would thereafter be issued in all official languages of the United Nations for the sixtieth session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, in 2017.

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