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Information on the activities of international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations relating to space law

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Note by the Secretariat

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I. Introduction

1. The present document was prepared by the Secretariat on the basis of information received from international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

II. Replies received from international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations

International Organization of Space Communications (Intersputnik)

[Original: English]

[14 January 2022]

Established on 15 November 1971 under the Agreement on the Establishment of the Intersputnik International System and Organization of Space Communications, the International Organization of Space Communications (Intersputnik) is an international intergovernmental satellite telecommunications organization. Its mission is to ensure cooperation and coordination of efforts in the design, establishment, operation and development of the international communications system by means of satellites.

As of January 2022, Intersputnik united 26 member countries¹ and 25 signatories.² Procedures are about to be completed to appoint two more signatories for the existing member countries,³ increasing the number of Intersputnik's signatories to 27.

With the status of permanent observer of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Intersputnik took part in the fifty-eighth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, the sixtieth session of the Legal Subcommittee and the sixty-fourth session of the main Committee.

Considering that in 2021, Intersputnik celebrated its fiftieth anniversary, major milestones relating to space law were addressed within the framework of the Legal Subcommittee's agenda item entitled "Information on the activities of international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations relating to space law." They included the acceptance of the rights and obligations under the United Nations treaties on outer space, specifically, the Rescue Agreement, the Registration Convention, and

¹ Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Cuba, Czechia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Somalia, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Viet Nam and Yemen.

² AzerCosmos Open Joint Stock Company (Azerbaijan), Ministry of Communications and Information Technology of Afghanistan, The Precise Electromechanics Factory Republican Production Unitary Enterprise (Belarus), Ministry of Transport and Communications of Bulgaria, Bulgarian Telecommunications Company EAD (Bulgaria), National Media and Infocommunications Authority (Hungary), Vietnam Posts and Telecommunications Group (Viet Nam), FidusCrypt-USG GmbH and Romantis GmbH (Germany), Department of Space of the Government of India, Department of Telecommunications of the Government of India, Ministry of Digital Development, Innovations and Aerospace Industry of Kazakhstan, Ministry of Digital Development of Kyrgyzstan, Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Telecommunications Company of Cuba S.A. (ETECSA) (Cuba), Ministry of Technology and Communications of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Communications and Information Technology Authority of the Government of Mongolia, Orange Polska (Poland), Russian Satellite Communications Company (Russian Federation), National Radiocommunications Company S.A. (Romania), Syrian Telecommunications Establishment (Syrian Arab Republic), DalKom Somalia (Somalia), Communication Service under the Government of Tajikistan, Ukrkosmos State Company (Ukraine) and Ministry of Industry and Trade of Czechia.

³ The Nicaraguan Institute of Telecommunications and Postal Services (TELCOR) (Nicaragua) and the Joint Stock Company "Gazprom Space Systems" (Russian Federation).

the Liability Convention, as well as unilateral acceptance of the obligation to comply with the Outer Space Treaty and the responsibility for compliance with that treaty. By means of the above-mentioned declaration, Intersputnik adhered to the highest standards of conducting space activities and accepted the same responsibility for its activities as its member countries.

The contribution of Intersputnik to the development of space law and telecommunications law was described in more detail at the Colloquium on the law of outer space organized in October 2021 by the International Institute of Space Law during the 72nd International Astronautical Congress.

As set forth in its constituent documents, Intersputnik operates its international communication system. As a responsible satellite operator, Intersputnik was one of the first organizations to join the Space Industry Debris Statement, which was an international initiative developed within the framework of the World Economic Forum aimed at preventing the generation of new space debris in Earth orbit.⁴ According to the statement, space debris endangers satellite services and other benefits of multiple space activities and applications, along with human space flight and missions to and beyond Earth orbits. In this regard, members of the initiative committed themselves to working with Governments, civil society, commercial partners and competitors to substantially reduce any new debris creation and ensure that Earth orbits are used in a sustainable and safe manner now and for future generations.

Within the framework of this initiative, Intersputnik intends to contribute to tackling new space debris in orbit, inter alia, by promoting projects to build satellites on the basis of a cooperative model. This means that instead of building separate satellites, operators jointly develop and then use one common satellite which meets the needs for space segment resources of all those involved in the project. That cooperative model not only lowers the costs associated with the construction, launch and operation of a satellite but also helps to reduce the number of satellites in orbit and therefore mitigate the generation of new space debris.

In November and December 2021, during a meeting of the Operations Committee – one of the organization's governing bodies – Intersputnik drew the attention of its signatories, many of which are satellite operators of Intersputnik member countries with satellites in orbit, to the problem of the continuing spreading of space debris, which poses a significant threat to the sustainability and safety of space activities, and suggested adopting a cooperative model to build satellites, including those using the orbit and spectrum resources of Intersputnik, as a way of fighting this problem.

Intersputnik believes that the shared use of the orbit and spectrum resource by means of projects based on the cooperative model can slow the generation of space debris and preserve the sustainability and safety of space activities, and in that regard invites interested parties to join Intersputnik in implementing such projects.

Intersputnik intends to continue working in the field of space law in 2022, specifically, to contribute to its application and further development at the international, regional, and national levels. Furthermore, in 2022, Intersputnik is planning to organize for the first time a series of educational courses for experts from member countries, which will be dedicated to the regulation of satellite communications and will touch upon related aspects of space law.

⁴ The full text of the Space Industry Debris Statement is available on the website of the World Economic Forum at www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Space_Industry_Debris_Statement_2021.pdf.

Space Generation Advisory Council

[Original: English]
[20 January 2022]

The Space Generation Advisory Council (SGAC) Space Law and Policy Project Group is proactively building space law capacities worldwide by drafting, reporting and sharing space law knowledge with the SGAC national points of contact. The Space Law and Policy Project Group is, moreover, committed to supporting the development of space law and policy infrastructure on the African continent, where the Group's draft space policy for Uganda is under governmental review. The Group has also organized capacity-building seminars in Singapore on practical aspects of licencing, authorization and supervision in lieu of domestic space legislation. Similar initiatives are taking place in Trinidad and Tobago and Canada.

In January 2021, the Space Law and Policy Project Group established the SGAC Task Force on United States Space Policy. The United States Task Force is now under the supervision of the newly established Space Generation Advocacy and Policy Platform, and it aims to educate members of the United States Congress and staffers on key contemporary space policy items.

The Space Law and Policy Project Group strongly believes that all capacity-holding nations must enable use of remote sensing to monitor and provide evidence of fundamental human rights violations. The Project Group is surveying stakeholders globally to understand and advance the use of remote sensing data for justice processes in the interests and for the benefit of all humankind.

The Space Law and Policy Project Group is also conducting research on the national implementation of the Guidelines for the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The final report, a detailed survey of the measures implemented by a broad geographic and economic range of countries, to encourage best practices and identify implementation gaps or deficiencies, is near completion.

The Space Law and Policy Project Group is investigating, through relevant stakeholder interviews, the history and current status of space security mechanisms, to identify existing gaps and best practices. The final report for this project is also near completion.

In June 2021, on the occasion of the sixtieth session of the Legal Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, SGAC officially presented the Lunar Governance Report outlining the position and proposals of the young generation in the regulation of lunar activities. In the light of the increased number of missions planned for the present decade, the report, entitled "Effective and adaptive governance for a lunar ecosystem (EAGLE)", urged delegations to begin the necessary discussions for the development of appropriate governance mechanisms for activities in the exploration and use of the Moon.

The Lunar Governance Report was developed by a specialized division of SGAC on effective and adaptive governance for a lunar ecosystem: the EAGLE Action Team. The EAGLE Team was invited to present the Lunar Governance Report to other prestigious international institutions and forums such as the International Space Exploration Coordination Group and the 72nd International Astronautical Congress in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Following the positive international recognition of the report, the EAGLE Team is now working with like-minded entities and partners for the implementation of the proposals set out in the report.

In November 2021, SGAC established the Space Generation Advocacy and Policy Platform. Through that new platform, SGAC will survey the ideas and activities of the young generations in the field of space policy and advocacy in order to convey them with a united voice within the global space community. In particular, the Space Generation Advocacy and Policy Platform will:

- (a) Develop, advocate and implement united space policy positions on behalf of the youth;
- (b) Coordinate, consolidate and disseminate space policy activities of SGAC.

The Platform is composed of a central policy and advocacy team and various specialized divisions focusing on selected topics and/or geographic areas, and is directed by two policy and advocacy coordinators. The establishment of the Space Generation Advocacy and Policy Platform allows SGAC to enhance the effectiveness of its existing policy and advocacy activities, as well as elaborate strategies for the development and implementation of new initiatives in these areas. Through the platform, SGAC aims to increase the relevance and impact of the young generations in global policy and advocacy processes for the peaceful, prosperous and sustainable uses of space.
