



The International Governance Framework for Outer Space Activities: A Model for International Cooperation

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COPUOS and International Cooperation

- COPUOS: A standing committee of the UN, founded in 1959 by 24 Member States.
 - Currently 83 Member States and a large number of observers
- Promotes the peaceful exploration and use of outer space through a variety of international cooperation mechanisms.
- Primary international forum for the development of laws and principles governing activities in outer space.

Outer Space Treaties

- 1960s-1970s: COPOUS LSC drafted four core outer space treaties
 - Outer Space Treaty (1967)
 - Cornerstone of international legal framework for outer space
 - Establishes the foundational elements for the use and exploration of space
 - Rescue and Return Agreement (1968)
 - Liability Convention (1972)
 - Registration Convention (1976)

Principles and Guidelines

- Since 1979, COPUOS LSC has addressed evolving uses and applications of outer space through legally non-binding mechanisms
- Consensus Principles adopted by the GA
 - Declaration of Legal Principles
 - Declaration on International Cooperation
 - Remote Sensing Principles
 - Nuclear Power sources Principles
- Guidelines
 - UN Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines
 - Working to develop LTS guidelines

LSC: Taking Stock of International Cooperation Mechanisms

- Established in 2014: the Working Group, chaired by Setsuko Aoki of Japan, is taking stock of the range of international cooperative mechanisms employed by Member States
- Objective: to develop an understanding of the range of collaborative mechanisms employed by States and international organizations and when and why different mechanisms are favored by States.
- This information will be helpful to Member States as they consider relevant mechanisms to facilitate future cooperative endeavors in the peaceful uses of outer space.

ICG as a Model for International Cooperation

- 1999: UNISPACE III endorsed “Vienna Declaration: Space Millennium for Human Development.”
- Vienna Declaration called for action to promote universal access to, and compatibility of, space-based navigation and positioning systems.
- 2001: COPUOS established the Action Team on GNSS
 - Recommended that an International Committee on GNSS (ICG) should be established to promote the use of GNSS.
- 2005: ICG established under umbrella of the UN
 - Brings together GNSS providers and users to promote compatibility and interoperability

Lessons Learned

- Lessons to be drawn from the history of identifying optimal mechanisms for cooperation
- ICG as a model:
 - GPS originally acquired by U.S. Department of Defense for military purposes.
 - Over time, GPS and other GNSS provided for multi-use services integral not only for national security, but also for civil purposes.
 - U.S. changed its national policy to accommodate this change.
 - Worked with other States to shape the international GNSS framework in the same manner, which led to the development of the ICG as an optimal cooperation mechanism.

Lessons Learned Cont.

- ICG as an optimal cooperation mechanism
 - Opening current legal framework has risks.
 - The ICG mechanism offers the benefit of providing a flexible forum where space-based PNT providers and users can come together to work towards achieving **compatibility, interoperability and transparency**, without the potential constraints of a new legally-binding mechanism.
 - A legally **non-binding multilateral coordination mechanism** has allowed GNSS technology to evolve over time, while still providing the structure necessary to achieve its objectives.
- The governance framework for space activities: a model for facilitating emerging space transportation and suborbital activities
 - We have an existing governance framework in place.
 - Legally non-binding cooperation mechanisms could be optimal to compliment the existing framework.