

UNITED NATIONS & SPACE LAW

Dr. Poorvi Kantroo

Centre for Aerospace & Defence Laws

NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad



STRUCTURE AT UNITED NATIONS

Six Principal organs of the United Nations UN Charter , Article 7.1

- The General Assembly (UNGA)
- The Security Council (The p-5 are USA, UK, France, Russia, China)
- The Economic and Social Council(ECOSOC)
- Trusteeship Council (suspended in 1994)
- The International Court of Justice (ICJ)
- The Secretariat

COPUOS in the United Nations Systems

Main Committees to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)

- **First Committee** (Disarmament & International Security)
- **Second Committee** (Economic & Financial)
- **Third Committee** (Social, Humanitarian & Cultural)
- **Fourth Committee** (Special Political & Decolonization)
- **Fifth Committee** (Administrative & Budgetary)
- **Sixth Committee** (Legal)

-
- **The Special Political and Decolonization Committee** deals with a variety of subjects which include those related to decolonization, Palestinian refugees and human rights, peacekeeping, mine action, outer space, public information, atomic radiation and University for Peace. **COPUOS reports to the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (4th Committee).**



10 September 1962
Second Session of COPUOS

(first row, left to right):
Ambassador T. P. Plimpton (USA), speaking
Miss J.A.C. Gutteridge (UK)
Mr. El Sayed Raouf El Reedy (United Arab Republic)
Ambassador Platon Morozov (USSR).

Source: United Nations Audiovisual Library of International Law. <http://legal.un.org/avl/ha/lawofouterspace.html>

History of COPUOS and Space Law

- 1958 UNGA Res. 1348 (XIII) COPUOS ad hoc committee
- 1959 UNGA Res. 1472 (XIV) COPUOS permanent committee
- 1961 UNGA Res. 1721 (XVI) International Cooperation Resolution
- 1963 UNGA Res. 1962 (XVIII) Legal Principles Declaration
- 1967 Outer Space Treaty
- 1968 Rescue Agreement
- 1972 Liability Convention
- 1975 Registration Convention
- 1979 Moon Agreement

History of COPUOS and Space Law

- 1982 UNGA Res. 37/92 Direct Broadcasting Principles
- 1986 UNGA Res. 41/65 Remote Sensing Principles
- 1992 UNGA Res. 47/68 Nuclear Power Sources Principles
- 1996 UNGA Res. 51/122 International Cooperation Declaration
- 2007 UNGA Res. 62/217 Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines
- 2009 Nuclear Power Sources Safety Framework

MANDATE

- Strengthening the international legal regime governing outer space, resulting in improved conditions for expanding international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space.
- Supports efforts at the national, regional and global levels, including those of entities of the United Nations system and international space-related entities, to maximize the benefits of the use of space science and technology and their applications.
- Increase coherence and synergy in international cooperation in space activities at all levels.

SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL SUBCOMMITTEE

- The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee (STSC) meets every year for two weeks to discuss questions related to the scientific and technical aspects of space activities. Topics for discussion include space weather, near-Earth objects, the use of space technology for socioeconomic development, or for disaster management support, global navigation satellite systems, and the long-term sustainability of outer space activities.

-
- WORKING GROUP ON SPACE AND GLOBAL HEALTH
 - WORKING GROUP OF THE WHOLE
 - WORKING GROUP ON THE USE OF NUCLEAR POWER SOURCES IN OUTER SPACE
 - WORKING GROUP ON THE LONG TERM SUSTAINABILITY OF OUTER SPACE ACTIVITIES

LEGAL SUBCOMMITTEE

- The Legal Subcommittee meets every year for two weeks to discuss legal questions related to the exploration and use of outer space. Topics include the status and application of the five United Nations treaties on outer space, the definition and delimitation of outer space, national space legislation, legal mechanisms relating to space debris mitigation, and international mechanisms for cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space.

-
- WORKING GROUP ON THE STATUS AND APPLICATION OF THE FIVE UNITED NATIONS TREATIES ON OUTER SPACE
 - WORKING GROUP ON THE DEFINITION AND DELIMITATION OF OUTER SPACE
 - WORKING GROUP ON DEBRIS MITIGATION

AGENDAS

- Information on the activities of international intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations relating to space law.
- Status and application of the five United Nations treaties on outer space.
- Matters relating to: (a) The definition and delimitation of outer space; (b) The character and utilization of the geostationary orbit, including consideration of ways and means to ensure the rational and equitable use of the geostationary orbit without prejudice to the role of the International Telecommunication Union.
- National legislation relevant to the peaceful exploration and use of outer space.
- Capacity-building in space law.
- Review and possible revision of the Principles Relevant to the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space.
- General exchange of information and views on legal mechanisms relating to space debris mitigation measures, taking into account the work of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee.

AGENDAS

- General exchange of information on non-legally binding United Nations instruments on outer space.
- General exchange of views on the legal aspects of space traffic management.
- General exchange of views on the application of international law to small satellite activities.
- General exchange of views on potential legal models for activities in exploration, exploitation and utilization of space resources
- Review of international mechanisms for cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space.
- Proposals to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space for new items to be considered by the Subcommittee.

NEW ITEMS FOR UNCOPUOS

- Space and sustainable development.
- Spin-off benefits of space technology: review of current status.
- Space and water.
- Space and climate change.
- Use of space technology in the United Nations system.
- Future role of the Committee.

LEGAL INSTRUMENTS UNDER UNCOPUOS

- Principles Governing the Use by the States of the Artificial Earth Satellites for International Direct Television Broadcasting Principles (Principles on DBS)
- Principles Relating to Remote Sensing of the Earth from Outer Space
- Nuclear Power Sources Principles
- UNDROIT Space Protocol
- The Declaration of Legal Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Uses of Outer Space (1963)

LEGAL INSTRUMENTS UNDER UNCOPUOS

- Declaration on International Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space for the Benefit and in the Interest of All States, Taking into Particular Account the Needs of Developing Countries 1996

Space Debris and UNCOPUOS

- Formation of IADC
- Guidelines : voluntary, non-binding
- Long term sustainability of space
- Why UNCOPUOS needs to gear up?
- ASAT