

**Secure World Foundation**  
**Statement on a Proposed Handbook for New Actors in Space**  
**Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the**  
**United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space**  
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Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, on behalf of Secure World Foundation (SWF) I would like to once again commend the efforts of this Committee in addressing the issue of the long-term sustainability of outer space activities. We strongly support the agenda item and the excellent work of the Committee over the last few years in developing guidelines for voluntary best practices that can be applied by States, international organizations, and national non-governmental organizations. We look forward to seeing those efforts reach consensus in the near future, and pledge to support the effort in any way we can.

I would like to take this opportunity today to introduce a new initiative SWF began this year that we believe will be a significant complement to the work of this Subcommittee and its Working Group on the Long-Term Sustainability of Space Activities. The space domain is currently experiencing a rapid diversification and increase in the number of actors involved in space activities. More than 70 States, commercial companies, and international organizations currently operate more than 1,200 satellites in Earth orbit, which together provide a wide range of socioeconomic benefits. The number of space actors is accelerating, driven largely by the commoditization of space technology and the lowering of barriers to participate in space activities.

The increased availability of space technology and capabilities has both advantages and disadvantages. On the positive side, it is leading to greatly increased innovation, lowering of costs, and greater access to beneficial capabilities and services available from satellites for all countries. However, the growth in space activities and the influx of new actors also has the potential to exacerbate many of the current threats to the long-term sustainable use of space, such as on-orbit crowding, radio-frequency interference, the proliferation of space debris, and the chances of an incident in space sparking or escalating geopolitical tensions on Earth.

It is vital that the space community find ways to maximize the potential positive benefits and minimize the negative consequences of this trend. The Committee's current effort to develop a set of best practice guidelines to promote the long-term sustainability of space activities is an important step towards achieving this goal.

Today, I would like to announce that SWF has initiated a new project to develop a Handbook for New Actors in Space as a complementary effort to help achieve the goal of sustainable space activities. We have identified two categories of new actors that are the primary audience for the Handbook: States developing national space policies and regulations; and start-up companies, universities, and other non-governmental entities beginning their first forays into space activities.

The goal of the handbook is to provide both of these groups of new actors with a broad overview of the fundamental principles, laws, norms, and best practices for peaceful, safe, and responsible activities in space. The handbook will be interdisciplinary in nature, linking information and perspectives across technical, legal, and policy disciplines. Where possible, it will provide selected, concrete examples of

how existing actors have approached various issues, and highlight differences between existing practices and solutions.

Over the next year, SWF will be working with governments, satellite operators, academia, and civil society to develop the content of the handbook. Our goal is to make it a clear, concise, and useful resource that is understandable to new actors and reflects the knowledge the space community has already developed over the last six decades of activities in space. We envision it will begin as a publication that will be available in both printed and electronic forms, and eventually a website that will have many more details and links to other resources.

As part of the process of developing the handbook, we will be soliciting feedback from the space community on the topics and content at various stages throughout the year. Today, every delegation to this Committee received in their pigeonhole a printed copy of a detailed outline of the handbook, which includes the overall structure and topics that we currently plan to include in the handbook. An electronic copy is also available on our website at [www.swfound.org/handbook](http://www.swfound.org/handbook).

We welcome any and all feedback on the detailed outline. Feedback can be provided to me in person over the course of this week, or it can be submitted electronically through a form on our website at the previous link. Your feedback is essential to ensure that no important perspective or issues are overlooked as we prepare a document that we hope will be a fundamental resource for new entrants into the realm of space activity.

We hope to engage in a continuing dialogue with this Committee and other stakeholders over the course of the year as we refine the handbook outline and develop the content. We are open to

suggestions for enhancing the usefulness of the handbook, as well as opportunities to partner with other organizations and experts to help make it a useful tool for promoting space sustainability.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, thank you for your time, and we look forward to hearing your feedback and engaging with you further on this important issue.

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