



Secure World Foundation General Exchange of Views Statement Legal Sub-Committee, UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Presented by Ben Baseley-Walker, 4th April 2011

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates,

Over the last year, Secure World Foundation has continued to be involved in the promulgation and development of international space law. Our 2010 Space Law and Policy Conference, held in Washington, DC, brought together legal experts from the civil, military and commercial communities to discuss key issues in the development of international space law and policy. The 2011 Space Law and Policy Conference will take place in May of this year again in Washington, DC.

In other space law work, Secure World Foundation supported the winner of the North American Regional Round of the Manfred Lachs Space Law Moot Court Competition, who attended the finals of the competition in Prague in September 2010, and will be supporting the North American winner of the 2011 Regional Rounds to attend the finals in Cape Town later this year.

Secure World Foundation also attended the United Nations/Thailand Workshop on Space Law “Activities of States in Outer Space in Light of New Developments: Meeting International Responsibilities and Establishing National Legal and Policy Frameworks” in November 2010. We support the continuance of similar initiatives, which aid the development of national competence in space law in emerging space States and emerging space regions. In this vein, Secure World Foundation, in partnership with the China Academy of Science’s Institute for Policy and Management, will be holding a small workshop in Beijing on Space Policies and Law in May of this year.

Currently Secure World Foundation is working on, or closely following, various international initiatives on space law at the national level. Several of these should be mentioned as particularly of note:

1. The progress on the soft law space initiatives which focus on all aspects of space security such as the proposal for an international code of conduct for space activities. In the realm of this committee, we will commend the initiative of the University of Vienna’s conference on soft law in outer space this Saturday;
2. An increased emphasis on the need for international engagement on space activities in order to ensure continued utility for all space actors as laid out in the 2010 United States National Space Policy;
3. Steps forward on key foundational space security initiatives, that will clearly impact the civil sector, such as the work of the Russian Federation on promoting a Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence Building Measures (TCBMs) for space activities;

4. The work of the commercial space sector in improving space safety through data-sharing under the auspices of the Space Data Association (SDA)

Times are changing in the space arena; the reliance on space services of so many global citizens in both developing and developed countries has grown dramatically. From weather to GPS, credit cards to tele-education, space applications now touch the lives of a large part of the world's population. This committee, and its Member States, must continue to move with the times and engage with the ever-growing commercial space sector and with cross-cutting initiatives that aim to establish norms of behavior for space.

Secure World Foundation would like to stress that such initiatives, wherever they originate, be it in the military, commercial or civil sectors, can help to build predictability and deliver increased levels of space safety and sustainability for all space actors.

Over the coming year, Secure World Foundation plans to continue to promote space law knowledge and development of soft and hard law instruments. These are essential keystones in the long-term sustainability of outer space. We stand ready to assist the work of the Sub-Committee in any way we can on these matters.

Mr. Chairman, many thanks.