



United Nations
**Committee on the Peaceful
Uses of Outer Space**

History, Structure, Agenda, and Current Work

International Institute of Air and Space Law, Leiden University
14 March 2017

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United Nations System

Six principal organs of the United Nations (in no particular order) [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

**Non-permanent SC members: Bolivia (2018), Egypt (2017), Ethiopia (2018), Italy (2018), Japan (2017), Kazakhstan (2018), Senegal (2017), Sweden (2018), Ukraine (2017), Uruguay (2017)*





COPUOS in the United Nations System

Main Committees to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)

The First Committee

Disarmament and International Security

The Second Committee

Economic and Financial

The Third Committee

Social, Cultural, and Humanitarian

The Fourth Committee

Special Political and Decolonization

The Fifth Committee

Administrative and Budgetary

The Sixth Committee

Legal

+ Procedural Committees, and Standing Committees

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).**

Meanwhile, the UN Conference on Disarmament (CD) reports to the **Disarmament and International Security Committee (1st Committee).** However, the CD has been deadlocked for almost 20 years.

UNGA First Committee, October 2014



UNGA First Committee, October 2014



British News Reel on the Outer Space Treaty:

<https://youtu.be/ncphbeoPJ8I>

17 December 1966

Mr. Kurt Waldheim (Austria)
addressing the Committee
on the Draft Treaty on
Exploration and Uses of Outer Space.

UNGA First Committee
United Nations, New York.





17 December 1966 UN General Assembly First Committee.

Mr. E.E. Seaton (United Republic of Tanzania) (right) and Mr. Arthur J. Goldberg (USA) addressing the Committee on the Draft Treaty on Exploration and Uses of Outer Space. United Nations, New York.

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



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).



9 September 1963 Fourth Session of COPUOS
United Nations, New York.

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



History of COPUOS and Space Law

Instrument

1958	UNGA Res. 1348 (XIII) COPUOS <i>ad hoc</i> committee
1959	UNGA Res. 1472 (XIV) COPUOS permanent committee
1961	UNGA Res. 1721 (XVI) <i>International Cooperation Resolution</i>
1963	UNGA Res. 1962 (XVIII) <i>Legal Principles Declaration</i>
1967	Outer Space Treaty
1968	Rescue Agreement
1972	Liability Convention
1975	Registration Convention
1979	Moon Agreement
1982	UNGA Res. 37/92 <i>Direct Broadcasting Principles</i>
1986	UNGA Res. 41/65 <i>Remote Sensing Principles</i>
1992	UNGA Res. 47/68 <i>Nuclear Power Sources Principles</i>
1996	UNGA Res. 51/122 <i>International Cooperation Declaration</i>
2007	UNGA Res. 62/217 <i>Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines</i>
2009	Nuclear Power Sources Safety Framework



COPUOS Members and Observers

1959: 24 Member States

2017: 84 Member States

(Question: Must States be party to the OST before becoming a Member of COPUOS?)

- **There are 37 states which are a party to the Outer Space Treaty** but which do not attend COPUOS: Afghanistan, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North), Denmark, Dominican Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, Guinea-Bissau, Iceland, Ireland, Jamaica, Kuwait, Laos, Lithuania, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritius, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Seychelles, Singapore, Togo, Tonga, Uganda, Yemen, and Zambia.

- **The 16 states which are Member States of COPUOS** but which are not party to the Outer Space Treaty are Albania, Armenia, Bolivia, Cameroon, Chad, Columbia, Costa Rica, Ghana, Iran, Jordan, Malaysia, Nicaragua, Oman, Philippines, Senegal, and Sudan.



COPUOS Members and Observers

Observers

Cote d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Panama, the Holy See, Sovereign Order of Malta.

Intergovernmental Organizations:

The European Union (EU), Economic and Social Order for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization (APSCO), the Association of Remote Sensing Centres in the Arab World, the European Organization for Astronomical Research in the Southern Hemisphere (ESO), the European Space Agency (ESA), the European Telecommunications Satellite Organization (EUTELSAT-IGO), the International Mobile Satellite Organization, the International Organization of Space Communications, the International Telecommunications Satellite Organization and the Regional Centre for Remote Sensing of North African States, and the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT),

+ IATA (2016)



COPUOS Members and Observers

OBSERVERS

Non-Governmental Organizations:

the European Space Policy Institute (ESPI), the International Academy of Astronautics, the International Astronautical Federation (IAF), the International Institute of Space Law (IISL), the International Law Association (ILA), the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing, the National Space Society (NSS), the Prince Sultan bin Abdulaziz International Prize for Water (PSIPW), the Scientific Committee on Solar-Terrestrial Physics (SCOSTEP), the Secure World Foundation (SWF), the Space Generation Advisory Council (SGAC) and the World Space Week Association (WSWA).



2015 COPUOS Schedule

2017 Schedule of work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies

	<i>Date</i>	<i>Location</i>
54 th Scientific and Technical Subcommittee	30 Jan. - 10 Feb. 2017	Vienna
56 th Legal Subcommittee	27 Mar. - 7 Apr. 2017	Vienna
60 th Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space	7 - 16 June 2017	Vienna



2014 Scientific and Technical Subcommittee

2010 COPUOS in the UN Vienna “M” Building,
normally used by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)




2010 COPUOS in the UN Vienna “M” Building,
normally used by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)



2010 COPUOS in the UN Vienna “M” Building,
normally used by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)





Back in the traditional COPUOS room, UNOV “E” building, in 2014



Working Groups of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee

(all at <http://www.oosa.unvienna.org/>)

1. *Working Group of the Whole*
2. *Working Group on the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space*
3. *Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities*
Chair: Peter Martinez (South Africa). 2014 completed the preliminary draft guidelines on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities. 33 non-binding guidelines for actors in space. Will be brought to COPUOS in June 2014 for further discussion prior to the 2015 STSC, where he hopes to achieve consensus on the draft guidelines. If successful, the final report could be presented to COPUOS in 2015 and possibly the UNGA thereafter.
A/AC.105/C.1/L.339 at <http://www.oosa.unvienna.org/>

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C-88 D
15:00-18:00
**OOSA: COPUOS
53RD SESSION
LEGAL
SUBCOMMITTEE**
Thursday, 27 Apr 2016
15:00

UNODC
VIC ONLINE
CONFERENCES
PUBLIC TRANSPORT
QR CODE



26 May 1959 First Session of the Legal Subcommittee. United Nations, New York.





Agenda of the 2017 Legal Subcommittee

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Statement by the Chair.
3. General exchange of views.
4. Information on the activities of international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations relating to space law.
5. Status and application of the five United Nations treaties on outer space.
6. 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.
7. National legislation relevant to the peaceful exploration and use of outer space.
8. Capacity-building in space law.



Agenda of the 2017 Legal Subcommittee

9. Review and possible revision of the Principles Relevant to the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space.
10. 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.
11. General exchange of information on non-legally binding United Nations instruments on outer space.
12. General exchange of views on the legal aspects of space traffic management.
13. General exchange of views on the application of international law to small satellite activities.
14. General exchange of views on potential legal models for activities in exploration, exploitation and utilization of space resources
15. Review of international mechanisms for cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space.
16. Proposals to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space for new items to be considered by the Subcommittee.



Working Groups of the Legal Subcommittee

1. *Working Group on the Status and Application of the Five United Nations Treaties on Outer Space.* Established 2010
Chair: Jean-Françoise Mayence (Belgium) - Bernhard Schmidt-Tedd (Germany)
2. *Working Group on the Definition and Delimitation of Outer Space.*
Chair: Prof. José-Monserrat Filho (Brazil)
3. *Working Group on Review of International Mechanisms for Cooperation in the Peaceful Exploration and Use of Outer Space.*
Established 2013, workplan to 2017. Chair: Prof. Setsuko Aoki (Japan)

Symposium organized by the International Institute of Space Law and the European Centre for Space Law on the theme “*Legal models for exploration, exploitation and utilization of space resources 50 years after the adoption of the Outer Space Treaty*”



2017 COPUOS Agenda

(all at <http://www.oosa.unvienna.org/>)

Draft Provisional agenda for the sixtieth session of the Committee

The Committee recommended that the following items be considered at its 60th session, in 2017:

1. General exchange of views.
2. Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes.
3. Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on its fifty-fourth session.
4. Report of the Legal Subcommittee on its fifty-sixth session.
5. Space and sustainable development.
6. Spin-off benefits of space technology: review of current status.
7. Space and water.
8. Space and climate change.
9. Use of space technology in the United Nations system.
10. Future role of the Committee.
11. Other matters.



UNISPACE+50

(<http://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/unispaceplus50/index.html>)

2017

STSC Session (30 Jan to 10 Feb)	LSC Session (27 Mar to 7 Apr)	COPUOS Session (7-16 June)	UN-Space	2nd HLF: Space as a driver for socioeconomic sustainable development	Outreach activities	Other UNOOSA Activities/ Anniversary years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start of preparatory work for UNISPACE+50 outcomes in line with the Thematic Priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start of preparatory work for UNISPACE+50 outcomes in line with the Thematic Priorities • Marking the 50th anniversary of Outer Space Treaty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start of preparatory work for UNISPACE+50 outcomes in line with the Thematic Priorities • Marking the 50th anniversary of Outer Space Treaty 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venue, dates TBD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paris Space Week (dates TBD) • 33rd Space Symposium (3-6 April) • International Human Space Flight Day (12 April) • IAC, Adelaide, Australia (25-29 Sept.) • 72nd GA session • ISEF • World Space Week (4-10 October) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50th anniversary of Outer Space Treaty: • LSC and COPUOS to mark the anniversary • 72nd GA Session: 1st GA Committee and 4th GA Committee joint meeting / A special event in the presence of SG and other dignitaries/A dedicated GA declaration/outreach for UNISPACE in 2018 • International Day of Human Space Flight/ World Space Week: dedicated to OST anniversary events

**United Nations/United Arab Emirates - High Level Forum: Space as a Driver for Socio-Economic Sustainable Development
DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, 06 - 09 NOVEMBER 2017**

Organized jointly by
the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs and the United Arab Emirates Space Agency
Hosted by
Mohammed Bin Rashid Space Centre

<http://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/hlf/2017/HLF2017.html>



UNISPACE+50

(<http://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/unispaceplus50/index.html>)

2018						
STSC Session	LSC Session	COPUOS Session (18 - 29 June)	UN-Space	3rd HLF: Space as a driver for socioeconomic sustainable development	Outreach activities	Other UNOOSA Activities/ Anniversary years
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNISPACE+50 outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNISPACE+50 outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18-19 June: Dedicated events, seminar and symposia, involving civil society, commercial sector, media. • 20 June: Opening of COPUOS session and UNISPACE+50 • Adoption of the UNISPACE+50 declaration and Plan of Action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNISPACE+50 outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venue, dates TBD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN HQ, NY, January: Special Briefing on UNISPACE+50 • International Day of Human Space Flight (12 April) • World Space Week (4-10 October) (on outcomes of UNISPACE+50) • 73rd GA session: special event to present outcomes of UNISPACE+50 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNISPACE+50 YEAR: 73rd GA session: Special event to present outcomes of UNISPACE+50



United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs

<http://www.oosa.unvienna.org/>

Questions / Comments?

Thank You!

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FOR SPACE SUSTAINABILITY*

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