

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS)

Topic: Setting Regulatory Provisions for Ensuring Safe Access into, Operation in and Return from Outer Space to Earth

1. Personal introduction

Hi, my name is Julie, I am 20 years old and I am from the Netherlands. I am a law student at the university of Groningen which I really enjoy. Just like last year I decided that I would really like to chair an MUN. While I've taken part in several MUN's and even organized my own, I had never chaired one before. I am very excited to attend OLMUN 2021 as a chair and hope to see lots of interesting debates. I wish you all the best of luck during this year's conference and I expect loads of strong resolutions forming.

Hi, my name is Keara, I am 18 years old and I am from Oldenburg. I am a student at the Cäcilien-schule Oldenburg and am currently in twelfth grade. My MUN journey started at the OLMUN 2019 as a delegate. I then participated in several MUNs all over Germany. For me gaining new experiences and getting to know other people from around the world is one of the main aspects of a MUN, besides having fun. I am very excited to be participating as a Chair for the first time at OLMUN 2021 and I look forward to many interesting debates. I wish you all the best for your preparation for the conference and I'm looking forward to see you in June.

2. How to Use this Guide

This Committee Guide will serve as an introduction to the topic. Accordingly, it is not meant to be used as an all-inclusive analysis for research, but rather the groundwork for your own analysis and research. Try to find other information about your country's past, present, cultural factors, political structure, you name it... Another important thing to remember is that your opinion might not be similar to your country's opinion. For the sake of the debates it is necessary that you stick to your country's policy. Each delegate is requested to submit a policy statement and a draft resolution prior to the conference (**6th of June 2021**), which reflect your research on the topic. Please take note of the rules or procedure. If you have problems formulating one of these, you will be able to find more detailed information about either one in the official hand book.

3. committee introduction

The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) was set up by the General Assembly in 1959 to govern the exploration and use of space for the benefit of all humanity: for peace, security and development. The Committee was tasked with reviewing international cooperation in peaceful uses of outer space, studying space-related activities that could be undertaken by the United Nations, encouraging space research programmes, and studying legal problems arising from the exploration of outer space.

The Committee was instrumental in the creation of the five treaties and five principles of outer space. International cooperation in space exploration and the use of space technology applications to meet global development goals are discussed in the Committee every year. Owing to rapid advances in space technology, the space agenda is constantly evolving. The Committee therefore provides a unique platform at the global level to monitor and discuss these developments.

4. Setting Regulatory Provisions for Ensuring Safe Access into, Operation in and Return from Outer Space to Earth

This part of the committee guide ought to give you a general overview of the topic and past actions by the international community.

4.1 Important Definitions

Space law

Space law can be described as the body of law governing space-related activities. Space law, much like general international law, comprises a variety of international agreements, treaties, conventions, and United Nations General Assembly resolutions as well as rules and regulations of international organizations.

The term "space law" is most often associated with the rules, principles and standards of international law appearing in the five international treaties and five sets of principles governing outer space which have been developed under the auspices of the United Nations. In addition to these international instruments, many states have national legislation governing space-related activities.

Space law addresses a variety of matters, such as, for example, the preservation of the space and Earth environment, liability for damages caused by space objects, the settlement of disputes, the

rescue of astronauts, the sharing of information about potential dangers in outer space, the use of space-related technologies, and international cooperation. A number of fundamental principles guide the conduct of space activities, including the notion of space as the province of all humankind, the freedom of exploration and use of outer space by all states without discrimination, and the principle of non-appropriation of outer space.

Space traffic management

Space traffic management is a set of technical and regulatory provisions ensuring safe access into, operations in and return from outer space to Earth. Due to the rising number of actors in outer space and the continuous increase in outer space activities this topic is currently attracting more and more attention. The increase in space actors and activities leads to a deterioration of safety in outer space and threatens the long-term sustainability of outer space activities. Therefore, comprehensive regulations, including effective implementation and control mechanisms, are needed to enhance the safety and security of space activities in the long term.

Space Traffic Management

Existing Space Traffic Management is linked to existing space law, primarily the Outer Space Treaty, the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) legal regime, and the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee (IADC) space debris guidelines. Currently, there are no “rules of the road” in outer space. Even if one country adopts unilateral space traffic rules of the road, it cannot thereby control the traffic from other countries. Only international traffic rules can establish effective rules of the road for space objects.

4.2 Status of the guidelines

The existing United Nations treaties and principles on outer space provide the fundamental legal framework for the guidelines.

The guidelines are voluntary and not legally binding under international law.

4.3 Pre-conditions

- Large increase of transfer into outer space, activities in outer space and return from outer space to Earth.
- Accidents (involving active objects as well as space debris) when launching into outer space, when operating in outer space and when re-entering to Earth (also involving humans in outer space or airplanes in flight).
- Larger variety of activities, which are otherwise uncoordinated (platforms in between airspace and outer space, space tourism, assembly in outer space for example for energy).

- Large increase in active manoeuvring in orbit.

4.4 Mechanisms for implementation and control

- Harmonized national licensing mechanisms.
- Enforcement and arbitration mechanisms (i.a. policing in outer space; e.g. renouncement of access to information or frequencies).
- Operative oversight.
- Clearly defined civilian-military coordination and cooperation.
- co-existence of regulatory instruments of different nature and purpose may constitute the building-blocks of Space Traffic Management emerging from single fields of regulation
- allows individual solutions at domestic level
- flexibility to tackle key issues in a comparatively timely manner, but at the risk of fragmentation

5. Final words

We are still quite sad that OMUN 2021, for us, is not happening in person. Nevertheless we will see you online and are looking forward to some interesting debates and good resolutions. The committee guid should help you to familiarise yourself with the topic and get motivated to learn more about provisions for ensuring safe access into, operation in, and return from outer space.

If you have any questions regarding your preparation for the committee and the conference itself, please feel free to contact us. (copuos@olmun.org)

Tips!

- Do not start too late
- Your opinion does not matter, you should speak from your countries point of view
- Stay in your role
- Be ready and do not be afraid to read out your policy statement
- Use a variety of sources for your research
- Stay realistic
- Elaborate a comprehensible, realistic resolution considering the position of your country

Please keep in mind that the deadline for handing in your policy statement and draft resolutions is the 6th of June 2021!

Good luck and see you soon!

Yours sincerely,

Julie Hunze and Keara Hartschuh

6. Further research

We have collected a few links that can help you to start off your research. However, keep in mind that they are just meant as extra information. Your research can and should go further than these links and does not necessarily have to include any of them. It is your job to find a way of doing research that yields the results you are looking for and, just as important, lets you enjoy this process and allows you to follow your curiosity and interests.

https://aerospace.csis.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Johnson_GovernanceInSpace_WEB_FIN_AL-1.pdf

https://www.unoosa.org/res/oosadoc/data/documents/2018/aac_1052018crp/aac_1052018crp_20_0_html/AC105_2018_CRP20E.pdf

<https://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/spacelaw/treaties.html>

<https://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/copuos/index.html>

<https://www.unoosa.org/oosa/documents-and-resolutions/search.jsp>

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