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Agenda Item: Security and Ensuring Space and Fair Use of Resources

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1.Letter From the Secretary General

Dear Delegates of COPUOS,

It is a great honor to welcome you all to MESMUN'26. We, as the MESMUN'26 family, welcome you all with open arms, hoping we can bring you a unique experience.

The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) is an important platform for taking notes of both challenges and opportunities that occur by humanity's increasing attention towards space. As technological advancements accelerate and access to space becomes increasingly widespread, the need for clearer regulations, responsible behavior and international cooperation has never been more important.

This year's agenda item, "Ensuring Space Security and the Equitable Use of Space Resources" is a topic that needs to be addressed under these circumstances. Space debris that continuously increase and the risk of militarization alongside chances of foul play pose significant threats to modern society and the future generations to come.

As delegates, you are expected to approach this topic with motivations for diplomacy, innovation, and cooperation. As you represent your assigned countries' ideas, it is equally important to recognize the shared responsibility of guarding outer space for all.

I encourage all delegates to participate actively while respecting different perspectives and striving to develop practical and sustainable solutions. The success of this committee depends on all the requirements above, and it is up to you all to make sure these requirements are met.

I wish you all the best in your discussions and hope this experience will be unique, as well as help develop you all as a person.

Sincerely,

Toprak PERÇİMLİ
Secretary General

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2.Letter From the Chairboard of UNCOPUOS

Dear delegates of the UNCOPUOS Committee,

We are pleased to welcome you all to the UNCOPUOS Committee. It is a pleasure for us to serve as the Chairboard of this Committee and to engage with delegates who are prepared to address one of the most critical agendas within the United Nations framework. UNCOPUOS provides a unique platform for examining the challenges and opportunities arising from humanity's expanding presence in outer space.

Our agenda item, "Ensuring Space Security and the Fair Use of Space Resources", reflects the growing importance of outer space in global security, technological development and international cooperation. As space activities continue to expand access to space resources becomes increasingly significant, ensuring that outer space remains safe, sustainable and equitable has become a shared international responsibility.

This study guide has been prepared to offer a structured overview of the agenda and to support informed and constructive debate. Delegates are encouraged to approach discussions with analytical thinking, cooperation and an awareness of the long-term implications of decisions taken regarding outer space.

We look forward to a productive Committee and meaningful outcomes throughout the conference,

Sincerely

Adal Duru YILMAZ
Under Secretary General of UNCOPUOS

Ecrin KEÇİCİ
Chair of UNCOPUOS

Ece Naz DURUKAN
Academic Assistant of UNCOPUOS

Should you have any questions regarding the agenda, committee structure or conference procedures please don't hesitate to contact us. We will be happy to assist you throughout your preparation process.

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3. Introduction To The Committee

a. What is COPUOS?

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.

In fulfilling its mandate, COPUOS has played a central role in promoting dialogue among states with differing levels of space capability. By providing an inclusive forum, the Committee enables both spacefaring and non-spacefaring nations to contribute to discussions on emerging space challenges, ensuring that outer space governance reflects a broad range of perspectives and interests.

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.

The Committee has two subsidiary bodies: the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the Legal Subcommittee, both established in 1961. The Committee reports to the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly, which adopts an annual resolution on international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

4. Introduction To The Agenda Item

a. Treaties & Principles By UNCOPUOS

The Outer Space Treaty (1967)

Under this agreement, all countries, regardless of their level of development, may use space for research purposes in pursuit of scientific advancement.
When it comes to the legal dimension, international law remains applicable to activities conducted in space and these legal principles shall be enforced accordingly.
Regulations regarding armaments are explicit: nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction are prohibited from being placed in outer space.

The Rescue Agreement (1968)

Under this agreement, states are required to provide all necessary assistance to astronauts in distress, irrespective of nationality or launching state. Protecting astronauts is an international responsibility. In cases of deorbiting or emergency landings or other unforeseen circumstances, every country must offer aid and support.

The agreement further establishes that astronauts who make emergency landings outside the jurisdiction of the launching state must be safely returned.

Additionally, The Rescue Agreement regulates the recovery and return of space objects found by another state.

The Liability Convention (1972)

Under this convention, launching states are held internationally liable for damage caused by their space objects. Liability applies regardless of fault when damage occurs on the surface of the Earth or to aircraft in flight, ensuring strong protection for states and individuals affected by space activities.

In cases where damage occurs in outer space, liability is based on fault, requiring proof of responsibility by the launching state. The convention further establishes procedures for presenting claims and resolving disputes through diplomatic channels.

By clearly defining responsibility and accountability, The Liability Convention strengthens legal certainty and promotes responsible behavior in outer space, keeping international space law stable.

The Registration Convention (1975)

Under this convention, states are required to register space objects they launch into outer space by providing relevant information to the United Nations. This includes details such as the launching state, the date and the location of the launch, basic orbital parameters, ensuring transparency in space activities.

The convention aims to enhance accountability by facilitating the identification of space objects and determining responsibility under international space law. Registration also supports the application of other space treaties, particularly in matters related to liability and jurisdiction.

The Moon Agreement (1979)

Under this agreement, the Moon and other celestial bodies are recognized as the common heritage of humankind and may be used exclusively for peaceful purposes. No state may claim sovereignty, ownership, or exclusive rights over the Moon. Not just the Moon, also over its natural resources such as silicon, aluminium, titanium and iron.

The agreement emphasizes international cooperation and calls for an establishment of an international regime to govern the exploitation of Lunar resources.

In disquiet of the Moon becoming an area of conflict, the agreement desires to keep the space in absolute and persistent peace.

The Agreement highlights that the establishment of military bases, installations and fortifications, the testing of any type of weapons and in the conduct of military maneuvers on the moon shall be forbidden.

No state can place in orbit around or other trajectory to or around the moon objects carrying nuclear weapons or any other kinds of weapons of mass destruction or place or use such weapons on or in the Moon.

The main goal of the agreement is promoting equality, providing peace among countries when using lunar resources and keeping outer space strongly attached to international law.

Declaration of Legal Principles (1963)

Under this declaration, outer space and celestial bodies are to be explored and used for the benefit and in the interests of all humankind. All states, regardless of their economic or scientific development, are entitled to conduct space activities on an equal basis.

The declaration affirms that outer space is not subject to national appropriation and that international law applies to activities carried out beyond Earth. States are responsible for all kind of space activities: governmental or non-governmental (special space companies such as SpaceX, Deep Space, Moon Express)

By establishing the foundational legal principles such as equality, responsibility, and peaceful use, the declaration laid the groundwork for subsequent space treaties and the development of international space law.

The Broadcasting Principles (1982)

Under these principles, the use of artificial Earth satellites for international direct television broadcasting must respect the sovereignty and cultural integrity of all countries.

This principle also gives states the rights to protect their cultural integrity by reviewing the data, but not directly using censorship to media.

The principle emphasizes that such activities should promote the free dissemination and mutual exchange of information and knowledge in cultural and scientific fields, assist in educational, social and economic development, particularly in the developing countries, enhance the qualities of life of all peoples and provide recreation with due respect to the political and cultural integrity of States.

The Remote Sensing Principles (1986)

Under these principles, remote sensing activities conducted from outer space must be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all states, with particular consideration given to the needs of developing countries. States are encouraged to stay transparent while remote sensing.

This principle gives states the rights to remote sense any other state, however the sensed state has the rights to access to those data but not prohibiting the data. The remote sensing rights are on a basis of not being threatening for states.

The Nuclear Power Resources Principles (1992)

Under these principles, the use of nuclear power sources in outer space is permitted only when it is necessary for missions that cannot be reasonably conducted using non-nuclear energy sources. Prioritizing safety and being consistent with international law, nuclear energy may be used.

States are required to minimize risks to humans and the environment by implementing strict safety standards throughout all phases of a space mission, including launch and re-entry. If accidentally involving a nuclear powered space object, states must inform interested parties and provide relevant information.

By highlighting safety, responsibility and transparency obligations, the Nuclear Power Sources Principles aim to balance technological necessity and protection of humankind.

The Benefits Declaration Principles (1996)

Under these principles, international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space should be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all states, with particular consideration given to the needs of developing countries. Space activities should be in a shared progress rather than an exclusive advantage.

Emphasizing the voluntary cooperation through information sharing, capacity building and equitable participation in space related activities, states are encouraged to keep their space activities on a basis of mutual benefits.

By promoting equity and cooperation, The Benefits Declaration Principles seek to ensure the space activities and the received information are shared among the states.

b. Preventing The Militarization Of Space

The militarization of space is not a new phenomenon, it has been an open agenda for space interested states. Specifically, the United States of America, China and Russia has been making moves on space militarization. Each of the developed and developing countries creating their own special institutions to do research on space, showed that the use of space is not a primitive condition. Efforts are made to prevent the competition between these states from spilling over into space, but it is clear that should the balance between nations be disrupted, space will become an arena for military competition between the countries.

The competition of power among states began with the first space satellite being launched, The Sputnik-1 by Russia in 1957. The launch caused an inevitable perplexity in the USA and China. Inevitably, the other states began to work in a rush to launch their own satellites and do their own research.

It took a while for the USA and China to show their power to Russia either by launching their own satellites. They were in urgency to not look weak and finally, in 1958, USA launched their own satellite, Explorer-1. China being late to the power show, caused the state to stay behind the other two. So inevitably, it was a race between the USA and Russia, a race to see who was going to dominate outer space.

The developed countries getting in a competition to show their power and want of dominance, also flaming up the disputes among themselves, provoked the need for a prohibition. The UNCOPUOS council banned the militarization of space to defuse the debates. Nevertheless, the ban not being enough threatening and feared still gave space for countries to keep doing their research to figure out how to use space for mining and militarization purposes.

According to the treaties and principles of United Nations committee COPUOS, militarization of space is explicitly illicit. Without hesitation, no state can use the Moon or any other celestial bodies as a military base. The only critical point is placing weapons or any nuclear powered devices in space is only unrestricted when working on a scientific project. That does not make states leisure to place weapons and militarize outer space.

The treaties and principles are clear, forbidding gun placing and claiming ownership over space lands. However, none of the treaties and principles are demonstrably proscriptive. This makes the states half free to make their decisions no matter what the council says. These treaty rules are named as **"**soft laws**"** by law. Meaning not extremely proscriptive and more optional to apply kind of laws.

Soft laws guide states to make their own decisions on space topics such as moon mining**.** For a long while, due to soft laws, the moon mining debates were making a huge impact on relations between developed states. For example, the USA confirmed the decree of moon mining being legal for non-governmental companies such as DeepSpace, Virgin Galactic etc. and caused another problem with Russia among themselves. After the US government confirmed the decree, Russia called them **"**colonists**".** The US government confirmed the decree without hesitation due to the help of soft laws.

Another example, some of the states applying censorship on their national channels by using the authority given them by UN Broadcasting Principles**.** Due to the Broadcasting Principles, states may have control over their TV channels, using the satellites. This caused the "censorship and violation of media freedom" idea, causing another international problem.

However, after the explanation of soft laws, back on the militarization issue, the soft laws tend to cause critical disagreements among states. Nevertheless, the Moon Agreement highlights the weaponizing as forbidden. The agreement emphasizes the placing weapons in outer space being forbidden, building military bases being prohibited and keeping the space away from becoming a conflict zone. All members of UNCOPUOS have to apply and stay loyal to the specifications of the agreement.

c. Role of Private Actors in Outer Spaces Activities

Space initially began as a realm shaped by scientific exploration and interstate competition. Over time, the scope of space activities has expanded, with communication, observation, navigation, and commercial services becoming key uses of space. This transformation has led to space evolving from an environment solely controlled by states into a more complex structure involving various actors. In line with these developments, the participation of

private actors in space activities has rapidly increased. Today, private companies are active in many areas such as commercial launch services, satellite operations, space tourism, earth observation services, and future exploration projects. le simultaneously increasing the intensity of space usage, consequently releasing a significant amount of matter and unnecessary space into the environment. Companies like SpaceX, Blue Origin, Virgin Galactic, Deep Space, Moon Express, OneWeb and Astrobotic are prominent in areas aiming to leverage the economic and technological potential of space. These actors are diversifying their space activities while simultaneously increasing the intensity of space environment usage.

i. SpaceX

SpaceX is one of the leading private space companies providing satellite launch services, human space transportation, and major space projects. The company has launched communication, observation, and research satellites for government and commercial organizations in many countries, primarily the United States. These services provided by SpaceX have enabled countries with limited space launch capabilities to access space and have contributed to making international space activities more inclusive.

One of SpaceX's most notable projects, Starlink, aims to provide global internet access by creating a vast satellite constellation consisting of thousands of satellites. Starlink services have been primarily used in countries and regions with inadequate infrastructure or limited internet access due to geographical conditions. This demonstrates that space-based technologies have not only technical but also economic and social impacts. However, the intensive satellite deployment activities carried out under the Starlink program have created significant congestion in Low Earth Orbit, bringing space traffic and sustainability issues to the forefront.

Overall, the examples of SpaceX and Starlink demonstrate how private actors can become influential on a global scale by establishing direct or indirect partnerships with governments through space activities. While these activities contribute to the widespread availability of space-based services worldwide, they also create new dynamics that need to be considered internationally in terms of the security and long-term use of the space environment.

ii.Virgin Galactic

Virgin Galactic is a leading private actor operating in the field of space tourism. The company aims to make space accessible for individual experiences and journeys by conducting commercial manned spaceflights. Virgin Galactic's work expands the uses of space, and the increase in manned activities leads to greater emphasis on safety and planning issues**.**

iii.OneWeb

OneWeb is a large-scale satellite constellation project aimed at providing a global internet and communications infrastructure. The company specifically targets increasing internet access in rural and underserved areas. Networks operated by OneWeb contribute to the global expansion of services delivered from space, while also increasing congestion in orbits.

iiii.Astrobotic

Astrobotic is a private company that develops commercial exploration and transportation services to the Moon. The company's projects aim to deliver scientific equipment and technologies to the lunar surface. Astrobotic's activities demonstrate that private actors are increasingly taking a role in exploration processes to the Moon and other celestial bodies.

iiiii.Blue Orgin

Blue Origin is a significant private sector player in space transportation and the development of advanced space technologies. The company aims to make access to space more sustainable and less prone to waste generation by working on reusable rocket systems. Blue Origin's projects focus particularly on human spaceflight and future missions to the Moon. These activities demonstrate the private sector's desire to expand beyond orbit and pursue deep space goals.

iiiiii.Deep Space

Deep Space Industries is one of the leading private actors focusing on the exploration of asteroids in deep space and the potential utilization of natural resources found on these celestial bodies. The company has conducted research into the composition and orbital characteristics of asteroids, examining how these bodies could be exploited for future scientific and technological activities. Deep Space Industries' work has brought to the forefront discussions about whether economic and strategic activities are possible in deep space, extending beyond Earth orbit. This approach is noteworthy for demonstrating how the idea of making space resources available for human use in the long term is being addressed by the private sector.

iiiiiii.Moon Express

Moon Express is a private space company that develops commercial exploration missions to the lunar surface. The company aims to collect data from the lunar surface through robotic landing vehicles, analyze surface conditions, and build infrastructure for future exploration of lunar resources. Moon Express's projects demonstrate that the Moon has become a significant target not only for scientific research but also for technological testing and commercial activities. Such initiatives show that with the increasing interest of private actors in the Moon, the scope of space activities is expanding, and the Moon could play a central role in future space exploration.

d. Fair and Equable Use of Space Resources

Developed countries' access to space is significantly faster and more advanced than that of developing countries. Their superior technological capacity, financial resources, and access to advanced space infrastructure allow them to conduct space missions more frequently and effectively. In contrast, many developing countries face structural and economic limitations that restrict their participation in space activities. This disparity is primarily shaped by differences in technological development, launch capacity, and research infrastructure. Developed countries possess advanced satellite systems, launch vehicles, and ground-based facilities that enable independent and sustained space operations. Developing countries, however, often lack domestic launch capabilities and remain reliant on international partnerships or external service providers to access space. As a consequence, access to space-based services such as satellite communications, navigation systems, and Earth observation technologies remains uneven. This imbalance directly influences national development, disaster management, environmental monitoring, and economic planning. While developed countries are able to fully integrate space-derived data into their public and private sectors, developing countries may face financial and technical barriers that limit effective use of such technologies. The increasing interest in space resources further amplifies existing inequalities. Activities related to resource exploration and potential resource extraction are largely driven by technologically advanced states and private actors. Without inclusive international frameworks, there is a risk that the benefits derived from

space resources will remain concentrated among a limited number of actors, undermining the principle of fairness in outer space. Within the framework of COPUOS, addressing these challenges requires enhanced international cooperation, capacity-building efforts, and sustained support for developing countries. Promoting broader participation in space activities is essential to ensuring that outer space continues to serve the interests of the international community as a whole.

e. Debates on the Extraction and Ownership of Space Resources

Diverging perspectives on the extraction and ownership of space resources have become increasingly prominent as outer space gains economic and strategic significance. The transition from purely scientific exploration toward commercially driven space activities has raised fundamental questions regarding how resources located on celestial bodies should be governed and distributed. Current space law frameworks prohibit sovereignty claims over outer space while remaining largely silent on the distinction between resource utilization and ownership. This lack of clarity has contributed to differing interpretations of whether resource extraction constitutes lawful use or an indirect form of appropriation. As a result, states and private actors hold contrasting views on the legitimacy and scope of resource-related activities.National level initiatives permitting the extraction and commercial use of space resources have further fragmented the international discourse. While some actors argue that such measures promote innovation and investment, others caution that they risk undermining equitable access and reinforcing existing global inequalities. These concerns are particularly pronounced among developing countries with limited capacity to participate in space resource activities. Within COPUOS, these discussions highlight the need for coherent multilateral approaches that address legal uncertainty, promote fairness, and prevent the emergence of competing claims in outer space. Establishing shared understandings and cooperative mechanisms remains essential to ensuring that space resources are managed responsibly and in accordance with the peaceful use of outer space.

f. Access to Space for Developing Countries

Despite increasing global space activities, the participation of developing countries in space programs remains limited. The infrastructure, funding, and knowledge required for access to space pose significant barriers for most developing countries. This prevents these countries from fully benefiting from the economic, scientific, and social advantages of space, perpetuating global inequalities in the space sector. Nevertheless, some countries are taking significant steps through international cooperation, regional partnerships, and capacity-building programs. Turkey, South Africa, and Indonesia aim to participate more actively in space activities by developing national satellite programs and using space technologies in line with their development goals. Rwanda, on the other hand, is trying to strengthen its access to space technologies, particularly through projects focused on education, human resource development, and technical capacity building. These examples demonstrate that developing countries can achieve progress in space not only through technical capacity, but also through the right policy choices, long-term national strategies, and multilateral cooperation. The democratization of access to space should be considered a shared responsibility not only of individual states, but of the international community. In this context, COPUOS plays a role in developing policies that support the participation of developing countries in space activities. The work carried out by the Committee aims to increase

equality in access to space, encourage knowledge sharing, and ensure that space is used for the benefit of all humanity.

g. Balancing National Interests with the Common Heritage of Humankind

Balancing national interests with the principle of the Common Heritage of Humankind constitutes one of the most complex debates in international space law. As outer space becomes increasingly accessible due to technological advancement and commercialization, states are confronted with a structural problem: how to pursue national strategic, economic, and security objectives without violating collective obligations under international law.

The foundation of space governance lies in the Outer Space Treaty. This treaty clearly establishes that outer space shall be used for peaceful purposes and that it is not subject to national appropriation by claim of sovereignty, use, occupation, or any other means. However, the treaty does not explicitly prohibit the extraction and ownership of space resources once removed from their natural location. This uncertainty has led to the creation of ownership thoughts. Some states argue that while territory cannot be appropriated, extracted materials can be owned. Others contend that such ownership indirectly amounts to appropriation and contradicts the spirit of the treaty.

The principle of the Common Heritage of Humankind is most clearly articulated in the Moon Agreement. The agreement declares that the Moon and its natural resources are the common heritage of humankind and envisions the establishment of an international regime to govern resource exploitation. Under this treaty, unilateral national exploitation is incompatible with collective ownership principles. National interests that prioritize exclusive economic benefit without international regulation can therefore be considered inconsistent with the Moon Agreement. However, the limitedness of this treaty, particularly by major space exploring nations, significantly weakens its practical authority.

National interests in space are multidimensional. Economically, states seek access to rare minerals, and strategic materials that may be extracted from the Moon or asteroids. Strategically, satellite constellations are essential for communication, navigation, intelligence gathering, and military coordination. Politically, leadership in space enhances global prestige and geopolitical leverage. These interests are not inherently unlawful, but their pursuit must comply with international legal principles.

Some states have accepted laws that recognize private property rights over extracted space resources. For instance, the United States has enacted domestic laws allowing companies to own resources they extract from celestial bodies, arguing that this does not violate the non-appropriation principle of the Outer Space Treaty. Similarly, Luxembourg has established a legal framework encouraging commercial space mining. These approaches prioritize economic development and innovation but raise concerns among developing countries about inequality and exclusion.

In contrast, other states such as Russia and China emphasize multilateral governance through the United Nations framework. They argue that resource exploitation should not

proceed without a collectively negotiated international regime. From this perspective, national interests must be subordinated to global regulatory consensus.

The debate intensified with the introduction of the Artemis Accords, which promotes transparency, interoperability, and the creation of safety zones around lunar operations. Supporters argue that safety zones are technical measures designed to prevent harmful interference. This shows how national security and operational interests can clash with collective governance norms.

The tension between national interests and the Common Heritage of Humankind is also deeply connected to global inequality. Developing countries often lack launch capabilities, advanced space infrastructure, and private investment capacity. If resource exploitation proceeds under purely national or market-driven frameworks, technological leaders may monopolize benefits. This outcome would contradict the principle that space activities should be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all countries, irrespective of their level of development.

Ultimately, national interests are not inherently prohibited under international space law. However, they are constrained by non-appropriation, peaceful use, and benefit-sharing obligations. The central challenge is ensuring that national ambitions do not evolve into exclusionary control over global commons. The future of space governance will depend on whether states prioritize unilateral advantage or cooperative stewardship.

All developed countries may want to explore space areas, collect minerals or materials. The issue of use of space materials has become a power race amongst the strong nations. Especially the strongest nations such as G20 nations.

The question is not whether national interests exist in outer space; they undeniably do. The critical issue is whether these interests can be harmonized with a legal and ethical framework that recognizes outer space as a domain belonging to all humankind, including future generations.

h. International Cooperation For The Peaceful Use Of Outer Space

The increasing number of space activities in recent years highlights the need for the safe and fair use of outer space. International cooperation plays a key role in maintaining space security, supporting fair use among all states, and making sure these activities are carried out peacefully and responsibly.

Some issues, such as growing space traffic and potential collision risks, highlight how critical collaboration is for ensuring the safety of outer space. Cooperation among states can help address these challenges and promote responsible behavior in space.

International cooperation in space activities can take multiple forms, including joint research missions, shared satellite projects, coordinated launch initiatives, and multilateral scientific partnerships. Collaborative efforts let countries share resources, expertise, and experience, while reducing duplicated work and improving efficiency and sustainability in space activities. Such cooperation can also support developing countries in gaining access to space

technologies and scientific knowledge. This helps create a more inclusive and balanced global space environment.

Furthermore, transparency and information-sharing mechanisms are essential for building mutual trust among states. Voluntary reporting of space activities, exchange of technical data, and collaborative dialogue platforms help ensure effective communication among states. The transparency measures also help prevent misunderstandings and reduce potential tensions between states. In an environment where many countries operate satellites and other space technologies, clear communication becomes increasingly important.

The principle that outer space should be used for peaceful purposes is supported through cooperative governance, for example through international treaties like the Outer Space Treaty, joint space missions, and shared monitoring systems. These agreements encourage states to conduct their space activities in a responsible manner. They also aim to prevent actions that could create instability or conflict in outer space.

Within this framework, the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space serves as a central platform for dialogue, policy development, and consensus-building. Additionally, UNCOPUOS allows states to discuss emerging challenges related to space governance through its meetings and working groups.

i. Unresolved Questions Regarding the Commercial Use of Celestial Bodies

The commercial use of celestial bodies, such as asteroid mining or lunar resource exploitation, raises some unresolved questions that may have significant implications. First issue that discussed the commercial use of celestial bodies is ownership. The Outer Space Treaty stops countries from claiming the Moon or other celestial bodies, but it does not clearly say if resources taken from them can be privately owned. As commercial space activities grow, people interpret this in different ways, creating legal uncertainty.

Another concern is fairness and benefit-sharing. Space law says outer space should benefit everyone, but most commercial activities are led by a few advanced states and private companies. This raises worries that developing countries may miss out on economic and scientific benefits.

A third question is whether the current legal rules are enough. Most space treaties were written before commercial space use became possible. New agreements like the Artemis Accords try to address this, but they are not binding and not accepted by all countries.

Finally, environmental protection is becoming more important. Mining or taking resources could harm celestial bodies, and current international law gives only limited guidance on environmental standards.

All of these issues show why COPUOS discussions are still crucial to understand how commercial space activities can be done fairly, safely, and without harming space.

j. Opinions on Moon Mining

In this article, we're reminding you that the power race we highlighted is mostly about mining. The developed countries and some developing countries are wanting to use the space sources under the name of exploration. The main goal of this mining is to collect minerals and other resources from space areas such as the surface of the Moon, and process the materials for economic purposes. When the materials are gathered and stored, ready to process, of course it requires laws to follow that way, the country or its private companies process the material. Once it becomes a product, it's ready to get sold and create a development process on economic grounds. As we understand, moon mining is a very important thought of some nations to get stronger in terms.

Some of the biggest challenges facing the countries are the soft laws of COPUOS. The treaties and principles are not strictly enforced, they're leaving a place to breathe and to build their own laws on moon mining. This causes the complex between world power countries: Whether it is fine to do moon mining or not.

Now opinions on moon mining,

The United States Of America: The US strongly supports the usage of moon minerals. It interprets the Outer Space Treaty as allowing ownership of extracted resources, provided there is no claim of territory. Through the Artemis Accords**,** it promotes transparency and accountability in safety zones. The US government suggests marketing when it comes to gathering materials and processing them.

China: China has an expanding lunar export program and supports resource utilization but emphasizes state led development and multilateral governance. They're more in favor of the UN framework than the US.

Russia: Russia highlights the importance of the moon sources being the common heritage of humanity and its importance to stay as untouchable until it's in favor for all nations. Russia is against moon mining and calls whoever is in favor "colonists".

Luxembourg: Luxembourg is one of the first European countries to create their own laws about moon exploration. It also supports private companies by giving them rights to claim territory.

United Arab Emirates: The UAE is one of the developing space actors and has their own technology on spacecraft. It's one of the parts of their economic variance projects. They want to become more efficient on space zones, and they're racing with other world powers.

India: India keeps a balanced policy on space exploration and moon mining opinions. They're not claiming a certain decision on whether to moon mine or keep it under UN control. They're one of the developing countries and they want to make their economy bigger by increasing their investment in space such as others.

South Africa: South Africa emphasizes the importance of fair use of space sources. If the exploration of space or the use of space materials are going to be divided equally between nations, they're supporting.

European Bloc: The ESA (European Space Agency) members are supporting multilateral approaches. They're being collective against other individual deciding countries and keeping their bloc together. They do not have a certain decision on moon mining other than staying loyal to multi-sided projects.

Turkey: Turkey supports the peaceful use of outer space and emphasizes that moon mining should be regulated through international law. Turkey takes a cautious approach and does not yet have the technological capacity to carry out such activities.

As we highlighted once again, the main goal is to build stronger economies and make reliable investments in space areas due to space explorations increasing. The major power countries are at different sides when it's both about their powers and the humankind heritage. Because of the soft laws guided by COPUOS, the complex usage of space materials is becoming a serious threat.

k. Maintaining Space Security and Risks of Military Activities

The increasing number of space missions has made maintaining space security more important than ever. As more countries and private companies plan outer space missions, questions arise, which are about how to stop competition from turning into conflict. This creates one of the main risks, the potential militarization of space. Although international law, Outer Space Treaty and UNCOPUOS provide important principles for peaceful activities, not all military related activities are totally banned. Because of this situation, states sometimes interpret these rules differently, which may create uncertainty about what kind of actions are acceptable in space.

On the one hand, modern societies mostly use space based systems for critical functions, including GPS, communication networks, banking, and weather forecasting. Any disruption caused by militarization or conflict in outer space could have wide ranging effects, not only on individual states but on global infrastructure as a whole. Satellite systems are also essential for aviation safety, maritime navigation, disaster response coordination and many economic activities. This dependence emphasizes why maintaining security and stability in space is a shared concern among all spacefaring nations. If space infrastructure becomes unstable, the consequences could affect daily life, economic systems and global communication networks.

On the other hand, the development of anti-satellite ASAT technologies has increased concerns about strategic competition in outer space. Such capabilities may use as tools of deterrence or defense. However, they can also be seen as offensive threats by other states. This misunderstanding may increase competition among nations that conduct space activities and create tensions in outer space. Tests of such technologies may also generate large amounts of debris in orbit, which can threaten both civilian and military satellites.

Ensuring space security is essential to reduce misunderstandings and strategic competition among spacefaring nations. International legal frameworks, such as the Outer Space Treaty 1967, which prohibits weapons of mass destruction in space and ensures that outer space is used for peaceful purposes, and the Moon Agreement 1984, which regulates lunar resource

use and promotes international cooperation, provide a basis for these efforts. However, as technology develops and more actors enter the space sector, these frameworks sometimes face challenges in addressing new realities and emerging risks.

UNCOPUOS acts as a platform for dialogue, transparency, confidence building measures, and coordination among states, supporting the peaceful and stable use of outer space. Through discussions and cooperation, the committee encourages responsible behavior in space activities and aims to prevent conflict before it escalates. Strengthening cooperation and mutual trust between states remains one of the most important steps for ensuring long term security and sustainability in the outer space environment.

I. The Transformation Of Space As A Strategic Area

Outer space has undergone a profound transformation over the past decades, evolving from a domain primarily dedicated to scientific exploration into a critical strategic area with political, economic, and security dimensions. In the beginning of the space exploration decade, the space area was only dedicated to research purposes. By the end of the century, it was already becoming a strategic military area for the developed countries. If we need to keep it more political and historical, during the early years of space activity, particularly throughout the Cold War period, space was largely perceived as a symbolic arena of technological competition and prestige. However, in the contemporary international system, space has become an indispensable component of state power, global governance, and international security. Nowadays, developed countries has more access to space resources than undeveloped and developing countries due to their economic growth and respective governments.

The power dynamics of these countries are complex, not only based on their research but also based on their help to the other nations by placing satellites on the solar system in the name of science for humanity. Satellites play a central role in communication, navigation, weather forecasting, disaster management, environmental monitoring, and global trade. Systems such as the Global Positioning System (GPS), satellite-based internet services, and Earth observation technologies are deeply integrated into both civilian life and military operations. As a result, the disruption or manipulation of space areas may cause serious consequences not only for national security but also for global economic stability and human safety.

In parallel with technological advancement, the number of actors operating in outer space has increased quickly. While space activities were once dominated by a limited number of states, particularly the United States and the Soviet Union, today many states, emerging space powers, and private commercial actors are actively involved. Some of the private actors aim for corporate income, and some others aim for all sorts of benefits. The serious growth of private space companies, especially in satellite launches and mega-constellation projects, has further intensified the strategic value of space. This difference of actors has introduced new opportunities for innovation and cooperation, but it has also created challenges related to regulation, responsibility, and coordination.

The strategic transformation of space is also closely related to military purposes. Despite the restrictions of treaties and principles of COPUOS, the militarization idea is still taking hold in many COPUOS meetings. Even the loyalists of these treaties are placing satellites on solar orbit for military purposes. This militarization idea has raised concerns regarding the potential weaponization of space and the development of anti-satellite (ASAT**)** capabilities, which could undermine strategic stability and escalate conflicts beyond the Earth's atmosphere.

Outer space has become an arena of geopolitical competition**.** Major nations view space superiority as a key element of national security and technological leadership. The pursuit of strategic advantage in space has led to increased investments in space defense programs and dual-use technologies. At the same time, developing countries emphasize equitable access to space resources and capacity-building, highlighting the importance of international cooperation and inclusivity in space governance. This divergence of interests makes the role of multilateral platforms such as UNCOPUOS increasingly vital.

Another important issue is sustainability in the solar system. The long-term sustainability of outer space has already become a strategic concern, as the loss of safe access to key orbits could limit the benefits of space for all states. In this case, transparency, confidence-building measures, and the responsible behavior of space actors are essential to prevent accidents and misunderstandings. The COPUOS treaties and principles help ensure the safety and peace amongst the nations and the solar system.

Most importantly, the usage of technology in space activities may cause information safety concerns. Some specific nations want to keep their information private and in secret for the benefit of their own national security and interests. Some of the COPUOS treaties are strictly limiting the free will of companies or governments to keep the information absolutely secret. They need to inform the United Nations Office of Space for their every decision on action. Transparency is the key to peace in space activities and COPUOS highlights the importance of that every once and then.

COPUOS holds peace among all countries and stays as a bridge amongst them. When needed for dialogue and communication for cooperation COPUOS organizes the meetings at Venice. As we highlight the importance of this committee once again, COPUOS stays as one of the most interesting committees.

m. Ethical Approaches To The Use Of Space Resources

The development and increase of technological innovation making the usage of space resources possible not only makes it necessary to examine the issue through laws and technical standards, but also highlights the need to consider ethical standards. The potential availability of natural resources found in the Moon, asteroids, and other celestial bodies has radically changed humanity's perspective on space. In this process, questions about how resources will be used, who will have access, and for what purposes are central to ethical approaches.

Whether these questions are fully answered or not, it is important to consider the methods of extraction, those who have access to the resources, and the purposes behind their use, such as commercial, scientific, or humanitarian goals. These goals should be evaluated to ensure that the activities benefit all of humanity. Ethical discussions also focuses on fairness and responsibility, especially when technological advantages allow only a small number of actors to reach and exploit space resources.

In addition, COPUOS highlights the principles and treaties, such as the Outer Space Treaty and the Moon Treaty. The 1967 Outer Space Treaty sets a foundation by banning weapons of mass destruction in space and ensuring that space is used peacefully, while the 1979 Moon Treaty focuses on the use of lunar resources and encourages cooperation among states. Together, these agreements guide states and companies as discussions about the ethical use of space continue.

At the same time, new technological developments and the growing role of private space companies make these ethical discussions even more important. Commercial actors are increasingly participating in activities related to satellite deployment, resource exploration, and potential space mining. As these actors expand their presence in space, questions about accountability, responsibility, and fair access become more complex. Without clear ethical guidelines and international cooperation, competition for space resources could increase global inequality and create tensions between states.

Therefore, ethical considerations are becoming an essential part of international discussions on space governance. Ensuring that the exploration and use of space resources are conducted responsibly requires cooperation between governments, international organizations, and private actors. Within COPUOS, these debates continue to focus on how humanity can balance technological progress with fairness, sustainability, and the peaceful use of outer space for the benefit of present and future generations.

n. Orbital Security and the Problem of Increasing Space Traffic

Orbital security refers to the safe, orderly, and sustainable existence of satellites and spacecraft operating in Earth orbit. In recent years, the rapid involvement of both governments and private actors in space activities has led to intense space traffic, particularly in low Earth orbit. This increase has made existing orbital areas more complex and risky.

Increased space traffic brings with it numerous safety challenges, primarily the risk of collisions and space debris. Potential collisions between active satellites and defunct satellites or debris can create cascading effects, rapidly disrupting the orbital environment. Such events jeopardize the continuity of critical space based services such as communications, navigation, and Earth observation systems. As the number of satellites continues to grow, especially with the expansion of large commercial satellite constellations, the pressure on orbital regions becomes even greater. This situation increases the probability of accidental encounters between space objects and complicates the management of orbital pathways.

Orbital security should not be considered merely a technical issue. Managing space traffic is a governance matter requiring effective cooperation, transparency, and information sharing between states and private actors. A lack of common rules and norms of conduct increases the risks of miscalculations and undesirable incidents. Without coordinated efforts, even minor technical failures or misinterpretations of satellite maneuvers may escalate into larger disputes or operational disruptions.

Another important aspect of orbital security is the long term sustainability of the space environment. The accumulation of space debris threatens not only current missions but also future access to space. If debris continues to grow without effective mitigation strategies, certain orbital regions could become increasingly hazardous for satellite operations. This would have serious consequences for scientific research, commercial activities, and global communication systems that rely heavily on satellite infrastructure.

For this reason, many experts emphasize the importance of improving space situational awareness and strengthening international cooperation in monitoring objects in orbit. Developing shared guidelines for responsible behavior in space and encouraging better coordination between space actors are increasingly important steps. Within the framework of COPUOS, discussions often focus on creating cooperative approaches that can reduce collision risks, improve traffic management, and protect the orbital environment for future generations.

o.Tensions Between Security and Economic Interests in Space

Outer space is no longer limited to scientific exploration, it has become a field where strategic priorities and economic ambitions are deeply connected. States consider space as a vital component of national security, while at the same time viewing it as a rapidly growing economic sector. This dual character of space activities sometimes creates tension between security concerns and commercial interests.

On one hand, governments invest heavily in satellite surveillance systems, early warning technologies and defensive space capabilities in order to protect their national interests. On the other hand, they encourage private companies to expand commercial space operations, attract investment and develop new markets. However, strict security regulations, export controls and data restrictions may limit international partnerships and slow down commercial expansion. In some cases, companies face difficulties when security policies restrict technology sharing or access to foreign markets.

At the same time, prioritizing economic competition over security considerations may also create risks. The rapid deployment of large satellite constellations increases orbital congestion and collision risks. Some actors may focus more on market advantage than long term sustainability, which can negatively affect the stability of the orbital environment. If space becomes dominated only by economic rivalry, it could undermine international trust and cooperation.

Furthermore, resource extraction and commercial exploitation of celestial bodies raise additional concerns. Without clear and commonly accepted legal standards, competition for valuable resources may lead to political disputes and strategic mistrust between states. For

this reason, balancing security priorities with economic development is essential for maintaining peaceful and sustainable space governance. Within the framework of COPUOS, multilateral dialogue is necessary in order to prevent fragmentation and to ensure that economic growth does not weaken collective security principles.

p.The Impact of Space Security on Civilian Life

Space security has direct consequences for everyday civilian life, even if it is often perceived as a distant and technical issue. Modern societies depend heavily on satellite systems for communication, navigation, financial transactions and weather forecasting. Therefore, any instability in the space environment can quickly affect millions of people around the world. Satellite based infrastructure has become an essential component of modern life, supporting both governmental and private sector activities across different regions of the world.

Satellite based communication networks support internet access, emergency response coordination and international trade. If satellites are damaged due to collisions, cyber interference or military related incidents, disruptions may occur in essential services. This can affect disaster response operations, aviation safety and maritime navigation. In highly digitalized economies, even short interruptions in satellite timing systems could create serious economic losses. Banking systems, transportation networks and global logistics chains often rely on accurate satellite signals, therefore disruptions in these systems may have wider economic and social consequences.

In addition, the increasing militarization of space creates uncertainty for civilian infrastructure. When space assets become potential strategic targets, civilian satellites may also face indirect risks. The blurring line between military and civilian technologies makes it more complicated to guarantee full protection of non military systems. This situation may increase global insecurity and reduce public trust in the stability of space services. It may also create political tensions between states if incidents in orbit are interpreted as hostile actions or strategic threats.

For these reasons, space security should not be discussed only in military or strategic terms. It is closely connected to human security, economic stability and sustainable development. Within COPUOS, ensuring a secure and predictable space environment is necessary not only for states but also for protecting civilian populations who depend on space based technologies in their daily lives. Strengthening international cooperation, improving transparency and encouraging responsible behavior in space are therefore essential steps in maintaining the long term safety and reliability of the space environment.

5. Critical Countries' Views on the Ensuring Space Security and Fair Use of Resources

United States of America

The United States is one of the most powerful and influential actors in global space activities. The country's space policy is largely shaped by technological innovation, development of the commercial space sector, and national security interests. The United States has a very large space industry where both government institutions and private companies operate. NASA

leads many scientific and exploration missions, while private companies such as SpaceX and Blue Origin play an important role in expanding commercial space activities.

The approach of the United States toward space security mainly focuses on protection of space infrastructure and management of increasing space traffic. Satellite systems are extremely important for the United States economy, communication networks, and national defense systems. Because of this, the country supports international cooperation to reduce threats in space and to control the growing problem of space debris. At the same time the United States also considers outer space as a strategic domain that is connected to national security.

The United States position on the use of space resources is relatively liberal compared to many other countries. In 2015 the Commercial Space Launch Competitiveness Act was adopted. This law allows American companies to own and use resources that they extract from space objects such as asteroids or the Moon. This policy created debates in international community. The United States argues that this law does not violate international space law. Through programs such as the Artemis Program and the Artemis Accords, the United States also aims to develop international cooperation for lunar exploration and resource utilization.

Within COPUOS the United States generally supports policies that encourage sustainability of space activities, development of commercial innovation, and international cooperation. However the country is often careful about strict regulations that may limit technological progress or commercial opportunities in the space sector.

China

China has rapidly developed its space capabilities during the last two decades and has become one of the major global space powers. The Chinese space program is largely managed by the government and it is considered an important instrument for technological advancement and national prestige.

The Chinese space policy emphasizes peaceful use of outer space, international cooperation, and technological development. The government believes that space technologies can support economic growth, scientific research, and national development goals. China has conducted important missions including lunar exploration projects, Mars missions, and the construction of its own space station known as Tiangong.

In the field of space security China often argues that stronger international regulations are necessary in order to prevent the weaponization of outer space. China together with Russia has supported proposals for international agreements that would prevent placement of weapons in space. However some countries have expressed concerns about China anti satellite tests which have created significant amounts of orbital debris.

Regarding the use of space resources China usually supports an approach based on international law and collective benefit. Chinese policy makers argue that resources found in outer space should not be used only for economic interests of a few countries but should benefit all humanity. Within COPUOS China often promotes multilateral cooperation and supports initiatives that increase participation of developing countries in space activities.

India

India is one of the fastest developing space actors among emerging space nations. The Indian Space Research Organisation ISRO has achieved important successes especially in cost effective satellite launch technologies and planetary missions.

India's space policy is strongly connected with development goals. The country uses space technologies to improve communication systems, agriculture monitoring, disaster management, and environmental observation. India believes that space technology should contribute to social and economic development, particularly for developing societies.

In the area of space security India supports measures that promote sustainability of the orbital environment and reduction of space debris. However India has also taken steps to develop its own strategic capabilities in space. In 2019 India conducted an anti satellite test which demonstrated its technological capability in this field. This shows that India tries to balance security concerns and peaceful uses of outer space.

Within COPUOS India usually supports policies that increase access to space technologies for developing countries. The country also emphasizes the importance of international cooperation, knowledge sharing, and capacity building programs.

Germany

Germany is one of the most important space actors in Europe and plays a significant role within the European Space Agency. German space policy mainly focuses on scientific research, technological innovation, and international cooperation.

Germany approaches space security mainly from the perspective of sustainability. The increasing number of satellites and space missions has created serious concerns about orbital congestion and collision risks. Because of this Germany supports international initiatives that aim to regulate space traffic and reduce space debris.

In terms of space resources Germany adopts a balanced approach. While the country supports development of commercial space activities, it also emphasizes that these activities should follow international legal frameworks and sustainability principles. Germany usually works closely with the European Union space policy which promotes responsible and cooperative space governance.

Turkey

Turkey is a country that has been making important progress in space activities in recent years. The announcement of the National Space Program in 2021 provided a more structured framework for Turkey long term space ambitions. The program includes goals

such as development of satellite technologies, strengthening of national space institutions, and future lunar missions.

Turkey sees space technologies as a strategic sector that can support economic development and technological independence. The Turkish Space Agency coordinates many national projects and aims to increase international cooperation in space activities.

Within COPUOS Turkey supports peaceful use of outer space and encourages international cooperation. Turkey also emphasizes the importance of equal access to space technologies for developing countries. In the area of space security the country supports policies related to reduction of space debris, protection of orbital safety, and sustainable management of space environment.

United Arab Emirates

The United Arab Emirates is one of the fastest growing space actors in the Middle East region. The national space program is designed to support scientific research, technological innovation, and economic diversification.

The UAE Space Agency coordinates many space related initiatives including the Hope Probe mission which successfully reached Mars. This mission demonstrated the growing capabilities of the UAE in space science and technology.

The country also uses its space program as a way to encourage young generations to study science and engineering fields. Within COPUOS the United Arab Emirates supports international partnerships, educational initiatives, and sustainable space activities.

South Africa

South Africa is one of the leading space actors in the African continent. The South African National Space Agency SANSA conducts activities related to satellite data analysis and Earth observation technologies.

South Africa focuses on using space technologies to support agriculture monitoring, climate research, environmental protection, and disaster management. This approach connects space activities with sustainable development goals.

Within COPUOS South Africa strongly supports increasing participation of developing countries in global space activities. The country emphasizes the importance of capacity building programs, knowledge sharing, and international cooperation. According to South Africa space technologies should not be limited to advanced economies but should be accessible for all nations.

Spain

Spain is one of the most important members of ESA, providing strong financial support for their projects and using its own satellite technologies. Spain has its own satellite programs, such as PAZ Earth Observation Satellite and SEOsat.

Spain has signed the treaties of COPUOS and is strongly loyal to the treaties. Also, is very loyal to European Union treaties and being a representative of human rights on COPUOS.

Most importantly, the Madrid Deep Space Communication Complex is a part of NASA and its very important for communication services.

Italy

Italy is one of the largest contributors to ESA and participates in many European space missions and research programs.

Italy has its own space agency: Italian Space Agency (ASI) and ASI develops satellites, supports scientific missions, and promotes international cooperation. Italy has a national space program that keeps developing. Also showing that they have a strong capacity for space technologies.

Italy also supports the Outer Space Treaty of COPUOS.

Luxembourg

Luxembourg is one of the first countries to support the commercial use of space resources. In 2017, it adopted the Luxembourg Space Resources Law, which allows companies to own resources extracted from space.This makes Luxembourg a key actor in debates about moon mining debates.

Luxembourg hosts one of the world's biggest satellite companies, SES SA.

Luxembourg actively attends COPUOS meetings on the topic of moon mining and commercial space activities debates.

6. Keywords and Key definitions

Outer Space Treaty (1967): The main international agreement that regulates activities in outer space and emphasizes the peaceful use of space for the benefit of all humanity.

Space Resources: Natural materials found on celestial bodies such as the Moon or asteroids that may be used for scientific or commercial purposes.

Orbital Security: The protection and safe management of satellites and spacecraft operating in Earth's orbit.

Space Debris: Non functional satellites and fragments of spacecraft that remain in orbit and may cause dangerous collisions

Private Space Actors: Commercial companies that conduct space related activities such as satellite launches or space exploration.

Space Traffic Management: Space Traffic Management refers to the systems and policies used to monitor and coordinate satellite movements in orbit. It aims to prevent collisions and ensure the safe operation of space missions.

Anti Satellite Weapons (ASAT): ASAT technologies are weapons designed to damage or destroy satellites in orbit. These technologies raise concerns about the militarization of space and the potential escalation of geopolitical tensions.

Common Heritage of Humankind: This concept suggests that outer space and its resources should benefit all humanity, not only technologically advanced countries. It emphasizes fairness, cooperation, and shared access.

Low Earth Orbit (LEO): A region of space close to Earth where many satellites used for communication and observation operate

Soft Laws: Non-binding rules, principles, or guidelines that guide the behavior of states but do not create legal obligations .

Moon Mining: A debate on whether nations can use space sources for their own benefit or not.

Artemis Accords: An international agreement introduced in 2020 to promote cooperation, transparency, and the peaceful use of space, particularly in lunar exploration and the use of space resources.

7. Topics a Resolution Should Address

1.How can outer space remain peaceful despite growing competition between states?

2.How can the international community manage increasing space traffic?

3.What regulations should control the extraction of space resources?

4.How can developing countries gain better access to space technology?

5.What responsibilities should private space companies have in space activities?

6.How can states reduce the creation of space debris?

7.How should the international community respond to anti satellite weapons?

8.How can international cooperation in space activities be improved?

9.How can space resources be used fairly and sustainably?

10.What measures can protect civilian satellites and infrastructure?

11.How can transparency between spacefaring nations be increased?

12.What role should international organizations like COPUOS play in space governance?

13.How should the international community regulate moon mining and the extraction of lunar resources?

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