

International Space Law

History and Implications



Structure

- ◆ United Nations Committee on Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS)
 - ◆ UN body with 24 members
- ◆ 5 major treaties and 10 additional treaties
- ◆ Countries can:
 - ◆ Ratify. They are legally bound to the treaty
 - ◆ Sign. They have endorsed the treaty but are not legally bound
 - ◆ Be a non-party. They do not endorse treaty and are not legally bound



UNITED NATIONS
Office for Outer Space Affairs

(Photo: UNOOSA)

Outer Space Treaty of 1967

- ◆ List of principles for what nations can and cannot do in space and on other worlds
- ◆ No weapons of mass destruction in orbit
- ◆ Missions should prevent cross-contamination
- ◆ Private corporations are the responsibility of their base country
- ◆ Issues:
 - ◆ Very broad, unclear language
 - ◆ Private space exploration

Agreement on Rescue of Astronauts (1968)

- ◆ Protection for astronauts and other objects returning from space
- ◆ International collaboration for rescue and return
- ◆ Issues:
 - ◆ Rescue for astronauts abandoned on planets?



(Photo: The Martian Trailer)

Convention on Liability (1972)

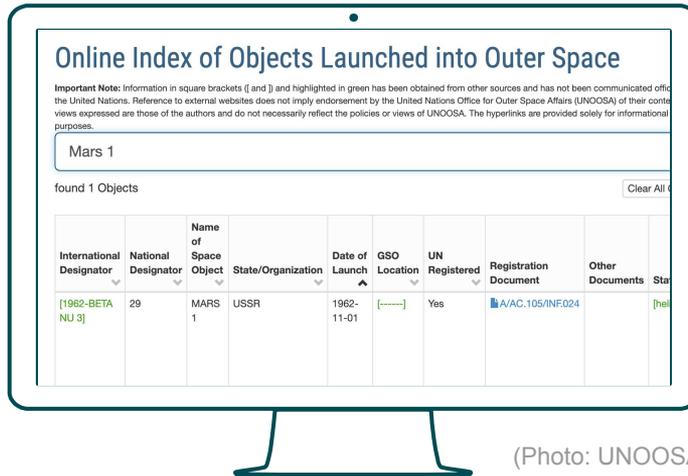
- ◆ Who is responsible for damage caused by objects launched into space?
- ◆ Damage categories:
 - ◆ Damage to Earth
 - ◆ Damage to flying objects on Earth
 - ◆ Damage to flying objects in space
- ◆ Example: Kosmos 954
- ◆ Issues:
 - ◆ Extending liability
 - ◆ Kessler Syndrome



(Photo: CAM/WN/MJ/WENN/NewsCom)

Convention on Registration (1975)

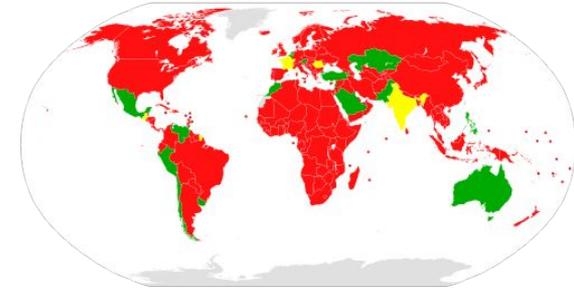
- ◆ Means to assist countries with identification of space objects
- ◆ Public database covering 89% of human objects in space
- ◆ Assists implementation of other treaties



(Photo: UNOOSA)

The Moon Treaty (1979)

- ◆ Expanded and specified previous treaties
- ◆ Bans ownership of extraterrestrial property by private organizations or people
- ◆ Resources are common heritage of mankind
- ◆ Issues:
 - ◆ Not ratified by United States, Russia, or China
 - ◆ Considered “international failure”



(Photo: Wikipedia)

United States Space Law

- ◆ Space Resource and Utilization Act (2015)
 - ◆ Obama Administration
 - ◆ Resources are owned by those who extract them
 - ◆ United States does not claim jurisdiction over celestial bodies
- ◆ Issues:
 - ◆ Contradictions with international treaties
 - ◆ “Moon Man”



(Photo: isoldthemoon.com)

The Mars Treaty (20??)

- ◆ International collaboration to deal with:
 - ◆ Property rights
 - ◆ Intellectual rights
 - ◆ Mining and resource rights
 - ◆ Structure of international governance
- ◆ Issues with Zubrin:
 - ◆ Private ownership and development is currently illegal, has to be under jurisdiction of a country



(Photo: Mars One)

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