



SPACE GENERATION ADVISORY COUNCIL
IN SUPPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS
PROGRAMME ON SPACE APPLICATIONS

**SGAC Statement at the
63rd Annual Session of the Legal Subcommittee
of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space**

**Agenda Item 9
General exchange of views on potential legal models for activities
in the exploration, exploitation and utilisation of space resources**

**Presented by:
Antonino Salmeri, SGAC Chair**



Muchas gracias Señor Presidente.

The Space Generation Advisory Council, SGAC, sincerely appreciates the opportunity to share the united voice of the space youth on the exploration, exploitation and utilisation of space resources.

First of all, we would like to congratulate the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Working Group on the Legal Aspects of Space Resource Activities for the conduct of a successful International Conference on Space Resources, as well as UNOOSA, Luxembourg and Belgium for the insightful Expert Meeting that preceded it. We followed all these discussions with great interest, and have high hopes for the initial set of principles that the Working Group is set to develop.

At SGAC we firmly believe that space resources hold the potential to increase both the sustainability and inclusivity of space exploration. In view of this potential, and as representatives of the space youth, we urge the Working Group to ensure that space resource activities are conducted with due regard to the interests of future generations.

But what do we mean by “future generations”? Inspired by the wisdom of first people all over the world, we suggest referring to ‘the next seven again’, meaning the next seven generations ahead of us at the present time. This concept comes from the Australian Aboriginal people and can also be found in the Great Law of the Iroquois, which states that “in every deliberation, we must consider the impact on the seventh generation, even if it requires having skin as thick as the bark of a pine.”

By embracing this notion based upon centuries of ancient wisdom, we are confident that the Working Group can chart the course of its principles on the right track to enable a truly sustainable future that can withstand the test of time.

It is important to note that by recommending a forward thinking approach we are not suggesting to regulate everything at the present day. In our view, it would be far more effective to set up a balanced, structured, and dynamic governance framework that can enable and accompany the development of rules through time, following the principle of adaptive governance.

We therefore encourage the Working Group to draft an initial set of principles that can serve as key pillars, providing solid foundations for the iterative development of policies, standards, and laws, based upon our evolving understanding of the technological and economic realities of space resources.



With regard to these pillars, we would like to submit the following suggestions for kind consideration by the Working Group.

First, regarding the scope of the principles, we suggest adopting an open and flexible concept of space resources, to ensure that the principles can withstand the testing of time. Complementarily, to enhance their practical impact, we recommend drafting them in two parts: a general set applicable to all space resource activities, and a subset specific to those conducted on the Moon, given the fact that at least the first decades of space resource activities will be conducted on our natural satellite.

Second, pursuant to Article II of the Outer Space Treaty, we believe that no actor should be allowed to exercise permanent and exclusive control over the territories of celestial bodies in any manner that can be regarded as equivalent to their *de facto* appropriation. Therefore, we recommend that all space resource activities should be limited in time and size, depending on the nature of the resource pursued, and taking into account the legitimate interests of operators.

Third, in line with Article IV (2) of the Outer Space Treaty, we urge the Working Group to firmly uphold the principle that the Moon and other celestial bodies, including their natural resources, shall be used exclusively for peaceful purposes.

Fourth and final, based upon Article IX of the Outer Space Treaty, we urge the Working Group to ensure that space resources are used with due regard to the corresponding interests of others, and especially future generations and developing nations. This is particularly significant with regard to scarce resources and special locations, to ensure their fair and sustainable uses.

To this end, we recommend complementing the principles with an evolving list of space resources that are internationally recognised as scarce, including appropriate preservation measures. Following the principle of adaptive governance, we suggest updating this list on a regular cadence to ensure its continued relevance, based upon the latest scientific and technological advancements.

In conclusion, we are grateful to this Honourable Committee for the opportunity to share the united voice of the space youth on the exploration, exploitation and utilisation of space resources, and stand ready to continue providing our full support to the Working Group in this critical phase of its mandate.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.