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**Committee on the Peaceful
Uses of Outer Space
Scientific and Technical Subcommittee
Fifty-seventh session
Vienna, 3-14 February 2020
Item 13 of the provisional agenda*
Long-term sustainability of outer space activities**

**Proposal by Canada, Japan and the United States of
America for the establishment of a working group under the
agenda item on the long-term sustainability of outer space
activities of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee**

The present conference room paper was prepared by the Secretariat on the basis of information received from the delegations of Canada, Japan and the United States of America. The information was reproduced in the form it was received.

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**Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
Scientific and Technical Subcommittee**

Fifty-seventh session

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Proposal by Canada, Japan and the United States of America for the establishment of a working group under the agenda item on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee

1. Canada, Japan and the United States of America are pleased to submit a proposal for consideration by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space's Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its fifty-seventh session. Per the report of the sixty-second session of the Committee, we request the Secretariat transmit this proposal to Member States intersessionally for their consideration.

2. We welcome the Committee's adoption of the preamble and 21 guidelines for the long-term sustainability (LTS) of outer space activities at its 61st session.¹

3. Our delegations were also pleased to join consensus on a Committee report that:

- (a) encourages States and international intergovernmental organizations to voluntarily take measures to ensure that the guidelines are implemented to the greatest extent feasible and practicable;
- (b) emphasizes that the Committee will serve as the principal forum for continued institutionalized dialogue on issues related to the implementation and review of the guidelines; and
- (c) establishes, under a five-year workplan, a new working group under the agenda item on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee.²

4. The adopted preamble and 21 LTS guidelines can promote increased communication, coordination, and capacity-building. Implementation of the voluntary, non-legally binding guidelines can also enhance practical international cooperation and advance cooperative frameworks that promote responsible exploration and use of outer space. The adopted preamble and 21 LTS guidelines are also consistent with the findings and recommendations contained in the 2013 consensus report of the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-building Measures in Outer Space Activities.³

5. As technology advances and resulting capabilities for the peaceful use of space progress, our delegations believe that the practical implementation of the 21 adopted LTS guidelines will result in new "best practices" and raise new issues regarding safe and sustainable space operations. Therefore, we propose that advancing implementation of the 21 adopted LTS guidelines serves as the primary focus for the new "LTS 2.0 Working Group" established under STSC.

6. Consistent with this focus, the two objectives of the LTS 2.0 Working Group would be to:

¹ A/74/20, paragraph 163. and Annex II

² A/74/20, paragraphs 163-165

³ A/68/189

- (a) Identify, compile, and review relevant practices and procedures to support the practical implementation of the 21 consensus Guidelines for the Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities by States Members of the Committee and related national and international organizations; and
- (b) Propose recommendations for further consideration by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee which would strengthen international cooperation in the implementation of the 21 consensus guidelines, as well as identifying and studying challenges for the consideration of possible new guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities.

7. International cooperation in the implementation of the 21 adopted guidelines on long-term sustainability of outer space activities will involve a range of governmental and private sector entities. Therefore, the LTS 2.0 Working Group must consider sharing the experiences, practices and lessons learned of the commercial space sector as well as those of States members of the Committee and relevant international intergovernmental organizations.

8. To ensure that all relevant inputs receive the fullest consideration, the method of work for the LTS 2.0 Working Group should allow for expert sub-groups to convene as needed for the full duration of the Working Group. Contributions from private sector actors to expert groups would be coordinated through designated points of contact for States members participating in the Working Group. Specifically, two expert groups could address implementation of the 21 adopted guidelines in two categories:

- (a) Expert group A: National policy and frameworks for space activities, including relevant aspects of international cooperation, raising awareness and building capacity, in particular among emerging space nations and developing countries, and
- (b) Expert group B: Safety of space operations, including relevant aspects of scientific and technical research and development.

Both expert groups could identify and study challenges and consider possible new guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities, taking full account of preceding consensus recommendations on advancing implementation of the 21 adopted LTS guidelines.

9. The LTS 2.0 Working Group and its two expert groups would take into account recommendations and decisions endorsed by the Committee and its Subcommittees on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities, as well as on progress made by other expert groups and working groups of the Committee and Subcommittee. Efforts could also take into account, but not unnecessarily duplicate, the activities being undertaken and recommendations made in other space-related international fora such as the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee.

10. Taking into account the Committee's decision that the LTS 2.0 Working Group should have a five-year work plan and an elected bureau, work could be facilitated through a bureau established on the basis of equitable geographical distribution. This bureau would include the chair/co-chairs of the full Working Group as well as the chairs of the two expert groups who would serve as vice-chairs. The bureau's facilitation efforts would place particular emphasis on ensuring all Committee delegations have an opportunity to participate in the full range of Working Group and expert group deliberations.

11. To ensure the LTS 2.0 Working Group achieves its two objectives, the following milestones are proposed:

2020 -- Establishment of the LTS 2.0 Working Group terms of reference, methods of work and dedicated work plan; election of bureau.

2021 -- Expert group review of inputs provided by States, intergovernmental, and non-governmental organizations including private sector entities, on experiences, practices, lessons, and challenges discovered through the practical implementation of the 21 adopted guidelines.

2022 -- Presentation to the 59th session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of expert group findings and recommendations regarding expanded international cooperation to facilitate practical implementation of the 21 adopted LTS guidelines by States, intergovernmental, and non-governmental organizations including private sector entities.

2023 -- Presentation to the 60th session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of preliminary findings on emerging issues for long-term sustainability of space activities resulting from the lessons or challenges discovered during practical implementation of the 21 guidelines and continued advances in government and private sector space activities.

2024 -- Presentation of a final working group report to the 61st session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, including definitive recommendations on (a) advancing implementation of the 21 adopted LTS guidelines by States, intergovernmental, and non-governmental organizations to include private sector entities and, (b) proposing possible additions or clarifications to existing guidelines, or new guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities based upon the identification and study of challenges identified during the review of inputs.

12. The chair/co-chairs of the LTS 2.0 Working Group would regularly inform COPOUS regarding the status of its efforts.

13. As with the LTS working group established in 2010, the group will conduct its efforts within existing resources, but the Working Group should be afforded time in plenary with interpretation services into the six official languages of the United Nations.