



I. Background of International Space Rights

By definition, international rights are not a world law, but more of a consensus between sovereign states. Either with the moon or with asteroids, multiple countries' existences have impinged that of others and have therefore promoted causation for an overruling law. Creating a law would mean that all consenting states would have to recognize the general principles of each significant nation. Since the 1960s, the moon has mainly been protected by the UN. Now, a legally organized international business company, deemed the Lunar Republic, has risen, consisting of more than 200 countries including, but not limited to the following: United States, Japan, Russia, China, India, Great Britain, Australia, France, Germany and others. The goal of this company is to protect the private property rights of Lunar land owners on top of working together to plan settlement of potential colonies, educational centres, tourism, etc. Since Yuri Gagarin's incipient step towards space exploration, the concept of international space rights has been an issue in necessity of being addressed. Just in April of 2010, Obama stated that NASA would no longer be sending officials to the moon and that he would rather focus on Mars and asteroids, but not for at least twenty years. This raises additional questions on who should be entitled to rights of the moon and asteroids considering participation. NASA is a programme directly involved in international space rights, but so would be the UN. Things like the Outer Space Treaty require multiple parties to consent to and supervise national space activities. Some of these include non-governmental agencies branching off into non-profit organizations and even commercial ones. Country governments themselves are directly involved in this when coming to the issue of signing off for a national space treaty. International rights to the moon and asteroids raises the issue of weapons in space. Although full of positive effects like defense, the militarization of space engenders negative effects like nuclear weapons, creating superiority or advantages over other countries. Moreover, countries must come to a general consensus over who owns which parts of space because a disagreement could produce negative consequences. In 2001, Russia proposed a resolution to update international space law to accommodate present-day realities. It is vital to peace keeping on the globe to make sure outer space laws are represented and countries are accommodated for.

II. UN Involvement

The UN began to discuss international space law in 1957 and created the Committee on Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) in 1959. This committee splits into two subcommittees, but of the two, the more important legal committee deals directly with international agreements relating to outer space. The UN, additionally, has granted 5 laws regarding space law. The first in 1967 deals directly with principles on the activity of states and countries in international law with the moon and other celestial bodies. Moreover, the last treaty regarding international involvement with celestial bodies was agreed to in 1979 by the UN. In basic terms, the control of a celestial body through means of arms control, the freedom of exploration, liability of damages, safety, and notification of activities, scientific research and exploitation of resources cannot be promoted by a sole country. The UN strongly believes in a



general consensus on law before signing a treaty. The UN has involved multiple committees to deal with the issues of international space law. For example, a main contribution would be the establishment of COPOUS in 1959 as well as the establishment of UNOOSA. Moreover, NGOs specific to each treaty are represented consistently. Some even branch off into non-profit organizations in order to raise awareness of the issue as well as provide for mass mobilization. It is important to have involvement in this issue in order to secure boundaries and peace. The UN, through COPOUS have drafted and passed 5 treaties including: The 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (aka the "Outer Space Treaty), the 1968 Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space, the 1972 Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects, The 1975 Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space and the so-called "Moon Treaty" in 1979 of Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies. Other committees set up to deal with international space rights would be UNOOSA in the UN. The UN realizes that it is important to keep some sort of focus on international space rights to the moon and asteroids because countries must remain in peace on earth as well as outside of it.

III. Possible Solutions

In order to ameliorate the issue at hand, it would be best to take a few simple actions to the effect of: Creation of a generally accepted international space law in which establishment of property rights is clearly stated, increasing extraterrestrial resource development for space agencies, including additional research for location of new asteroids and their orbits, finding their potential worth, creation of a surveillance system or robotic systems and finally plans that monitor demand for celestial minerals or metals.

IV. Bloc Positions

Asian Bloc: The Asian Bloc is a strong contender against most other countries in the space races and international rights to the space and moon. Main countries like India, China and Russia have all developed space agencies and continue to be involved in rights to space including militarization.

Latin Bloc: The Latin Bloc has little political interest in space activity but does feel that weapons in space could be suspicious.

European Bloc: Europeans have been increasingly involved in international space rights, even creating the ISS which is the European Space Agency. European participation in space activity is more of a policy priority and the European countries are heavily involved in this process although it is relative to each participating country.



African Bloc: Though these nations have little interest in space activity, they would most likely reject weaponry and have some sort of small participation, including consideration of all countries in what processes occur.

Middle Eastern Bloc: The Middle Eastern Bloc does not actively participate in international space activities, but will support the west on their positions.

V. Guiding Questions

1. How has my country gotten involved with international space law? If at all, was it significant? Why?
2. Although the UN has already signed multiple treaties, what other strategies could we procure to meet the demands of the growing masses?
3. What resources does your particular country have that could contribute to international space rights?
4. How would it be possible to make sure each bloc's position would be accommodated?
5. What would your country do about countries that would want to be able to have rights to the moon and asteroids but cannot actually afford them?
6. What are the pros and cons of creating a new space law?

Resources:

http://www.lunarlandowner.com/1979_moon_treaty.htm

<http://www.abundantplanet.org/WealthOfAsteroids>

<http://lunarregistry.com/info/legal.shtml>

<http://www.oosa.unvienna.org/oosa/SpaceLaw/moon.html>

<http://www.oosa.unvienna.org/oosa/index.html>