Group of Governmental Experts on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space

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Report by the Chair of the Group of Governmental Experts on further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space[1]

Part I: 29 February 2024

1. I am pleased to convene this meeting today, in accordance with resolution 77/250, on the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space. That resolution requests the Chair of the Group to organize "a two-day open-ended intersessional informal consultative meeting, in 2024, so that all Member States can engage in interactive discussions and share their views on the basis of a report on the work of the Group to be provided by the Chair in his own capacity".

2. As specified in the programme for this consultative meeting, I have suggested dividing the time as follows. Our meetings today will be devoted to an exchange of views among Member States on the main substantive issues considered by the Group at its first session.

3. I will also invite any delegations that have general views to deliver their statements during our discussions on the general considerations and key conceptual issues.

4. Our meeting tomorrow will be devoted to the substantial elements of an international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, including, inter alia, on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space.

5. At the outset of our discussions today and tomorrow, I will provide a summary of the main points raised during the meetings of the Group. After my summary, I will open the floor to delegations, whom I encourage to take advantage of our informal format to engage in an interactive dialogue.

6. Following the practice of the informal consultative meeting held under this item in 2019, this will be an open informal meeting. This means observers and NGOs may attend and participate. Time permitting, and after discussion has been exhausted among Member States on each day, I will open the floor to observers and representatives of non-governmental organizations.

7. In addition to their interventions at this meeting, all stakeholders are invited to submit working papers, including their views on all matters relevant to the mandate of the Group. Any working papers received will be made available to the Experts for their consideration and should be submitted to the Secretariat no later than Friday, 29 March.

8. Before we start with our substantive discussions today, I will first provide a general overview of the work completed so far.

[1] In accordance with paragraph 10 of resolution A/RES/77/250, report by the Chair of the Group of Governmental Experts on further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space provided in his own capacity.

Work of the Group at its first session

9. As you are aware, resolution 77/250 requested "the Secretary-General to establish a United Nations Group of Governmental Experts, with a membership of up to 25 Member States, chosen on the basis of fair and equitable geographical representation, to consider and make recommendations on substantial elements of an international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, including, inter alia, on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space."

10. In accordance with the resolution, the following Member States nominated experts to participate in the Group, in response to the invitation of the Secretary-General: Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Cuba, Egypt, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Iran, Israel, Japan, Morocco, Pakistan, Philippines, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, South Africa, Sweden, United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and the United States.

11. Prior to the first session, the Group benefited from an informal virtual preparatory meeting, which was convened on 10 October 2023 by the Office for Disarmament Affairs and United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research in coordination with the Chair-designate of the Group.

12. The purpose of the preparatory meeting was to facilitate a preliminary exchange among experts, including on the organization of the first session of the Group as well as on the recent work of other United Nations bodies relevant to the work of the Group. In this connection, the participating experts heard briefings from the Chair of the Open-Ended Working Group on reducing space threats through norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviours and from the Chair of Working Group 2 of the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

13. The Group held its first session in Geneva from 20 November to 1 December 2023.

14. The Group was generally guided by an indicative timetable, which was a non-exhaustive planning tool to facilitate focused and structured discussions and to make most efficient use of the time available. The suggested topics were merely indicative, and the timetable was entirely without prejudice to the structure or content of the Group's report.

15. Ambassador Guilherme Patriota, Chair of the 2018–2019 Group of Governmental Experts, presented a briefing on the work of that Group, including key takeaways and lessons learned. Mr. Omran Sharaf, Chair of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space presented the work of the Committee on the cross-cutting issues relating to safety and sustainability.

16. During its session, the Group benefited from technical presentations made by external experts as well as by UNODA and UNIDIR who briefed the Group on a variety of topics. The Group also greatly benefited from the active engagement, presentations and working papers by its own members, which reached a record of 26 working papers.

General considerations and key conceptual issues

The Group considered the evolving nature of outer space activities and space threats and related capabilities from the perspective of international security

17. It was noted that the work of the Group is taking place in a difficult geopolitical environment. It was also noted that the space environment has changed significantly over the past several decades, including the increase in State and private actors with more and more satellites providing a growing range of benefits and services to civilians and militaries. In this connection, it was argued that every State has an interest in outer space security, safety and sustainability that should be taken into account.

18. In order to properly assess and consider elements of an international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, it was considered that there is a need for a comprehensive and common understanding of the underlying security threats, including counter-space capabilities and behaviours that pose security threats. In this connection, it was suggested that security threats should be regarded as the harmful effects

of intentional actions pertaining to the use of counter-space capabilities to hold at risk, interfere with, damage, or destroy space systems as well as the misuse of dual-use capabilities.

19. The Group discussed threats to or involving space systems emanating from four vectors: earth-to-space, space-to-earth, space-to-space and earth-to-earth. There was convergence among experts that the Group should take up a holistic and comprehensive approach in its work and when elaborating its recommendations. In this regard, experts emphasized that the Group's work should address all vectors of threats to space systems.

Evolution of efforts for the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects

20. It was recalled that the concept of the prevention of an arms race in outer space (PAROS) was first introduced during the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and that the final document of the special session stated that "further measures should be taken and appropriate international negotiations held in accordance with the spirit of the Outer Space Treaty". A view was expressed that the special session did not specify the types of measures that should be addressed or whether they should be elaborated in non-legally binding or legally binding instruments.

21. It was recalled that the Conference on Disarmament first took up the matter of PAROS in 1982 and first established an ad hoc committee on this item in 1985. It was noted that little progress had been made within the Conference on Disarmament until the introduction in 2008 of the draft treaty prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and the threat or use of force against space objects as well as its revised version in 2014.

22. The Group considered that it should take into account all past work within the United Nations on outer space security, including the group of governmental experts on transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities, the last group of governmental experts on further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space, the United Nations Disarmament Commission, the Open-ended working group on reducing space threats through norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviors, the Conference of Disarmament and the First Committee. It was emphasized that the work of the Group should respect the division of labour outer space issues within the United Nations. The Group also considered that its outcome should serve as a foundation for future work on the prevention of arms race in outer space, including the forthcoming open-ended working groups.

The existing legal and normative framework

23. Experts affirmed the applicability of international law to outer space, including the Charter of the United Nations and additional relevant outer space and arms control treaties. Many Experts expressed the need to seek the universalization, operationalization and implementation of existing legal instruments. Experts considered the Outer Space Treaty as a foundation of international space law and general framework governing space activities. In this connection, Experts highlighted specific provisions of the Treaty that are relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

24. A number of experts also affirmed the relevance of non-legally binding instruments, including General Assembly resolutions, the Debris Mitigation Guidelines and Guidelines for the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities, transparency and confidence building measures in outer space activities, the Hague Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation, and the Missile Technology Control Regime. It was also suggested that guidelines developed by the private sector and arrangements developed in other domains, such as the Code for Unplanned Encounters at Sea, could be relevant to the development of a legally binding instrument on PAROS.

25. Experts considered that the existing legal and normative framework was insufficient to prevent an arms race in outer space.

26. Experts reaffirmed the applicability of Article 2 paragraph 4 to outer space. A number of experts considered that any future instrument should restate this article without modification. Those experts expressed concern that any attempt to adapt that article to

address specific scenarios in relation to outer space would create uncertainty and possible loopholes in relation to the law on the use of force.

27. Experts expressed various views on discussing the application of international humanitarian law (IHL) in outer space. A concern was expressed that an explicit reaffirmation in an legally binding instrument of the applicability of IHL in outer space could be seen as legitimizing the use of force in outer space. A number of experts considered that such a discussion would lead to common understanding on constraints relating to the conduct of hostile activity in relation to space systems and that no such discussion could be construed as legitimizing any use of force.

28. The Group discussed the relevance and possible role of the principle of due regard as an element of a legally binding instrument to prevent an arms race in outer space.

General considerations relating to obligations, definitions, verification and monitoring

29. It was suggested that the Group should develop criteria for the effectiveness of provisions of a future legally binding instrument. In this connection, it was suggested that any proposed measures must be practical, clear, scientifically and technically accurate, and tailored to the specific objective of that measure.

30. The view was raised that the Group should avoid perpetuating a false dichotomy between proposals for legally binding and non-legally binding measures as well as between the so-called behavioural approach and capabilities approach. In this connection, it was recalled that non-legally binding measures can contribute to the development of legally binding instruments and that all such measures can be developed in a complementary manner. A concern was also raised regarding the concept of responsible behaviour, which was regarded as subjective, discriminatory, over simplified and prone to politicization.

31. A distinction was made between legally binding measures and various types of non-legally binding measures, including political commitments and voluntary measures. It was further noted any of such measures can have a legal character through their implementation by national legislation.

32. It was noted that, the elaboration of elements by the Group could remain agnostic in relation to their final form, whether they are codified in a legally binding or non-legally binding instrument while focusing on the relevance and effectiveness of each element. A number of experts emphasized the necessity of pursuing a legally binding instrument as the most effective means to prevent an arms race in outer space.

Definitions

33. Experts expressed various views on whether an instrument would require definitions. The view was expressed that definitions should include the minimum number of terms for the instrument to function and should be exclusive for its object and purpose. It was stated that definitions should be practical, clear, scientifically and technically accurate and tailored to the specific objectives of the instrument. It was also stated that definitions should cover key concepts to avoid any legal disputes, to ensure comprehensive coverage of all threats and to avoid being overly broad or addressing controversial matters. It was also suggested that the elaboration of definitions take into account multilingualism.

34. It was noted that explicit definitions might not be required if the underlying concepts were sufficiently clear. The list of the specific terms on which definitions may be sought is included: critical infrastructure; convert; damage; denial; destroy; disruption of normal functioning; dual-use; dual-purpose; harmful interference to outer space objects; lowering of effectiveness; military use of outer space; outer space object; partial orbit; operations in a professional manner; placement in outer space; rendezvous and proximity operations; safe separation; safe trajectory; space weapon; threat or use of force against outer space objects; threat or use of force by means of outer space objects; use of outer space for commercial purposes; weapon in outer space.

Verification

35. A number of experts considered that verification should be an integral part of any legally binding instrument and should be considered at every stage of the deliberative and negotiating process. They recalled that the 1978 special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament emphasized that disarmament and arms limitation agreements should provide for adequate measures of verification satisfactory to all parties concerned to create the necessary confidence and ensure that they are being observed by all parties.

36. It was noted that it was not the task of the Group to determine procedures or the technical aspects of verification or to draw definitive conclusions on the feasibility of any particular verification approach. It was also acknowledged that the elaboration of verification measures would take time and require engagement by technical experts. They also considered that verification in outer space did not necessarily have to be perfect in order to be effective.

37. It was suggested that a layered or packaged approach towards verification should be pursued. Such an approach could be based on multiple methods including monitoring, pre-launch inspections, on-site inspections, routine inspections, ground and space-based sensors for space situational awareness, data exchanges and declarations, consultative and dispute mechanisms as well as post facto observations of violations.

Transparency and confidence-building measures

38. It was stressed that transparency and confidence-building measures (TCBMs) could complement but not replace verification measures in a legally binding instrument, nor could such measures be a substitute for a legally binding instrument. It was noted that disarmament and arms control treaties can incorporate compulsory or non-compulsory transparency measures.

39. In this connection, a number of experts suggested various measures that could form the basis for elements in a legally binding instrument, including certain measures contained within the 2013 report of the Group of Governmental Experts the 2023 report of the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

40. Such measures included:

(i) information exchanges on military strategies and doctrines;

(ii) pre-launch notifications;

(iii) pre-launch inspection of dual-use space objects;

(iv) enhanced registration of space objects;

(iv) public access to national space registries;

(v) notification of scheduled manoeuvres;

(vii) familiarization visits to space facilities and launch sites; and

(viii) technology demonstrations.

41. The view was expressed that future TCBMs could also provide routine communication and notifications of military activities in space; establish emergency channels to facilitate the resolution of crises; and establish points of contact between operation and spaceflight safety centers to facilitate the resolution of issues. The view was expressed that TCBMs could also extend to civilian actors, including commercial actors.

Part II: 1 March 2024

42. Welcome to the second day of the open-ended intersessional informal consultative meeting, convened in accordance with resolution 77/250, on the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

43. Our meeting today will be devoted to the substantial elements of an international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, including, inter alia, on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space.

44. We will follow the same order of business as yesterday. First, I will provide a summary of the main points raised during the meetings of the Group.

45. After my summary, I will open the floor to Member States. I encourage all delegations to take advantage of our informal format to engage in an interactive dialogue.

46. Time permitting, and after discussion has been exhausted among Member States on each day, I will open the floor to observers and representatives of non-governmental organizations.

Substantial elements of an international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, including, inter alia, on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space

47. Without further ado, I will now provide you a report on the work of the Group at its first session on the substantial elements of an international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, including, inter alia, on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space.

48. As specified in the annotated program for this meeting, I will break down the work of the Group on elements into five broad headings:

(i) Elements on principles and objectives.

(ii) Elements on obligations.

(iii) Elements on consultative mechanism and settlement of disputes.

(iv) Elements on international cooperation.

(v) Elements on other aspects, including institutional arrangements and requirements for entry-into-force.

49. In the interest of time, I will read a summarized version of my report. The full version will be posted on the website of the Group, maintained by the Office for Disarmament Affairs.

Elements on principles and objectives

50. The Group discussed general principles that could be the basis for the scope, principles and objectives of a legally binding instrument on PAROS. In this connection, experts generally affirmed or recognized the relevance to the prevention of an arms race in outer space of principles contained in the Outer Space Treaty. These principles included:

(i) The freedom of access to outer space without discrimination and on the basis of equality;

(ii) The applicability of international law, including the United Nations Charter in outer space;

(iii) The non-placement of nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction in outer space;

(iv) The use of the Moon and other celestial bodies exclusively for peaceful purposes;

(v) State responsibility for the activities of their nationals in outer space;

(vi) The liability of launching States for damage;

(vii) The requirement to give due regard to the interests of others in the use and exploration of outer space; and

(viii) The duty to consult before proceeding with any activity that could cause potentially harmful interference with the outer space activities of others.

51. Experts also underscored the relevance to the prevention of an arms race in outer space of principles contained in the Charter of the United Nations, including:

(i) The prohibition of the threat or use of force;

(iii) The peaceful settlement of disputes;

(iii) The right of individual and collective self-defence; and

(iv) The precedence of the United Nations Charter over other international obligations.

52. Experts also recognized the relevance of principles contained in disarmament and non-proliferation treaties, including:

(i) The right to develop technology for peaceful purposes;

(ii) The need to avoid hampering the economic or technological development of States;

(iv) Non-discrimination; and

(iv) The objective of general and complete disarmament.

53. It was suggested that the principle of due regard could be further elaborated. It was also suggested that the work of the Group should recognize the differentiated impacts of security threats to space systems on women and girls as well as take small steps such as using non gendered terms.

Elements on obligations

Use of force and intentional acts that damage or destroy space systems, or that use space objects as a means of attack

54. It was suggested that a legally binding instrument could include a general obligation not to use or threaten to use force against or by means of outer space objects, in line with Article 2(4) of the UN Charter.

55. In addition to the restatement of the provisions of the Charter, various proposals were made for elaborating specific prohibitions relating to intentional acts that damage or destroy space systems or the use of space objects as a means of attack. In this connection, various prohibitions were suggested including, inter alia, that States should refrain from:

(i) Attacks against space objects which may result in irreversible damage, including to imaging sensors;

(ii) Destroying terrestrial infrastructure used to control space objects or space surveillance systems by any means, including through malicious use of ICTs;

(iii) Using outer space objects as a means to destroy any targets on Earth, in airspace or outer space, including for anti-missile defence.

Intentional acts that can disrupt or interfere with the safe operation or normal functioning of space objects

56. It was noted that certain destructive or disruptive acts could fall under the threshold for the use of force under Article 2(4) of the Charter, such as jamming, spoofing, or the testing of direct-ascent anti-satellite missiles against one’s own satellites. In this connection, additional prohibitions were suggested including, inter alia, that States should refrain from:

(i) Intentional acts constituting harmful interfering of space objects under jurisdiction of other States without their consent, especially with certain outer space activities that pose a particular risk of escalation, that disrupt space traffic management, or that create space safety risks;

(ii) Destruction, damaging, and/or disrupting the normal functioning or altering the trajectory of outer space objects belonging to other States.

57. It was further suggested that an instrument could contain positive obligations, including those relating to the safe and professional conduct of operations, such as, inter alia, requirements for States to ensure that satellites under their jurisdiction and control or operating on their behalf do not:

(i) Rendezvous with, physically connect to, or operate in proximity to satellites under the jurisdiction and control of another State, without prior consultation and consent as well as the provision of advance notification of the operation;

(ii) Cause safety risks to spaceflight, including by not maintaining necessary safe separation from other space objects;

(iii) Conduct counter-space testing activities that impair the safe operation of satellites under the jurisdiction and control of another State.

Protection of critical space-based services to civilians as well as services that support humanitarian operations

58. The Group discussed possible provisions for the protection of infrastructure which provides critical services to civilians. It was suggested that States should avoid jamming or spoofing activities against space systems that generate collateral impacts on civilian activity over large areas, such as disruption of air traffic, emergency services or global navigation satellite services.

59. The view was expressed that the Group should not attempt to elaborate a meaning for critical infrastructure but rather to rely on more general distinction in international humanitarian law between military and civilian objects. A concern was expressed regarding establishing special protection for a certain category of space objects which could imply that other categories of space objects could be legitimate targets.

Placement of weapons in outer space

60. It was suggested that a legally binding instrument could include obligations not to place weapons designed to attack outer space objects, terrestrial or aerial targets, in outer space, including in orbit around the Earth and celestial bodies.

61. With a view to address the relevant concerns on definitions and verification, a framework was presented for characterizing weapons placed in outer space. Such a framework is intended to facilitate analysis of the relationship between threats, characteristics, definitions and verification of threats emanating from any vector. This framework could include: 1) describing the characteristics of such a weapons system; 2) examining those characteristics to assess how the system could be differentiated from a dual-use system; and 3) assessing how such a system could be independently verified.

62. Verifying the nature of an object placed in outer space was considered a key challenge. In addition, it was noted that verification of dual-use systems may be challenging and should rely on monitoring their actual use rather than their mere characteristics. It was suggested that verification should focus on areas where there is greatest risk, such as threats to critical services to civilians. It was also suggested that a future verification system could include tiered risk categories.

63. The Group discussed the importance of space situational awareness as a means for characterizing or verifying the behavior of outer space objects. It was suggested that States consider an international mechanism under the auspices of the United Nations to facilitate data sharing with regard to space situational awareness, including to promote multilateralism and confidence in the impartiality of data and to prevent its misuse for military purposes. It was also suggested that in sharing space situational awareness data, States should adhere to principles of openness, transparency and equality, as well as take into consideration the technological and resource disparity between States.

64. In light of these challenges, it was suggested that balanced partial measures could be sought, such as banning: (1) the placement of missiles and/or other well-defined projectiles

in outer space, as an effective step towards banning the placement of other weapons; and (2) the testing and use of direct-ascent anti-satellite weapons against satellites, as an effective step towards banning the threat or use of force or armed attacks against satellites.

Research, development, testing, stockpiling and deployment of systems capable of use in intentional acts that damage or destroy space systems, as well as their elimination

65. In addition to measures relating to the threat or use of force, it was suggested that a legally binding instrument could also prohibit the research, development, stockpiling, and deployment of weapons specifically designed to attack space objects. Particular emphasis was placed on prohibiting the testing of counter-space capabilities, especially direct-ascent anti-satellite missiles. It was also suggested that a legally binding instrument should include a provision on the destruction of relevant counter-space systems States already possess.

Military space policies, doctrines and strategies and other measures that could reduce the risk of unintended escalation, conflict and an arms race in outer space

66. Various proposals were also made for other measures that could reduce the risk of unintended escalation, conflict and an arms race in outer space, including, that States should, inter alia:

(i) Operate in, from, to, and through space in a safe and professional manner;

(ii) Operate their space objects in a manner that maintains safe separation from other space objects and plan trajectories that avoid introducing spaceflight safety risks for other space objects;

(iii) Refrain from any tests, experiments, or other activities that result in satellite break-ups or the intentional destruction of spacecraft or orbital stages;

(iv) Communicate and make notifications to enhance the safety and stability of outer space activities and to resolve concerns about international peace and security that arise from the conduct of outer space activities;

(v) Provide advance notification of defence and security exercise that could have an impact on space systems and services in order to reduce the risk of misunderstanding or misperception of their intentions.

Elements on consultative mechanism and settlement of disputes

67. The Group discussed how a legally binding instrument could address the resolution of disputes. Various options were suggested including resort to the International Court of Justice, to the Security Council, to the General Assembly, or to the mechanisms provided for in the Charter of the United Nations. It was also suggested that States could expand current existing consultative mechanisms and, in the case where existing mechanisms may not be sufficient to address concerns related to outer space, to establish them on a bilateral basis.

Elements on international cooperation

68. Experts recalled the elements on international cooperation in the Outer Space Treaty, taking into particular account the needs of developing countries. It was considered that any future instrument should: (i) recognize the right of States Parties to the peaceful exploration and use of outer space; (ii) include an undertaking for States to facilitate, and have the right to participate in, the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful exploration of outer space; (iii) and for States in the position to do so, to provide technical assistance and capacity building which could include the exchange of experience, scientific knowledge, technology and equipment for space activities on an equitable, unhindered, nondiscriminatory and mutually acceptable basis.

69. It was emphasized that any measures should avoid undue restrictions on commercial development and the advancement of technology for peaceful purposes as well as protect sensitive information whether for national security reasons or for commercial proprietary reasons.

Elements on other aspects

70. The Group briefly discussed proposals on institutional arrangements, including on the need for a dedicated secretariat or an implementation support unit. It was proposed that a future instrument could provide for review of its implementation process through review conferences, regular meetings of States Parties, and the establishment of a specialized international institutional body.

71. The Group also discussed requirements for the entry into force of a legally binding instrument. The view was expressed that participation by major space-faring nations would be essential for the effectiveness of such an instrument, bearing in mind the experience of instruments with complex formulas for their entry into force.

Conclusions

72. It was emphasized that legally binding measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space should be comprehensive and address all possible threats to or in relation to space systems. It was recalled that non-legally binding measures can contribute to the development of legally binding instruments and that all such measures can be developed in a complementary manner.

73. It was suggested that a future agreement on the prevention of arms race in outer space could be approached through the pursuit of partial measures, which could focus on specific types of verifiable characteristics or capabilities, such as missiles. A number of Experts considered that a partial ban could be a pragmatic approach depending on the specific goals and objectives of the possible agreement. In this connection, it was argued that this could avoid an unfeasible one size fits all approach and enable complex issues to be addressed on a case-by-case basis. It was emphasized that any pursuit of partial measures would need to be done in a balanced manner and with comprehensive consideration of all threats to space systems.

74. Experts also recalled the report of the Secretary-General A/77/80 on further practical measures on prevention of an arms race and the Secretary-General's Policy Brief No. 7 entitled "For All Humanity – the Future of Outer Space Governance", in which he recommends that Member States develop, through the relevant disarmament bodies of the United Nations and with the widest possible acceptance, international norms, rules and principles to address threats to space systems and, on that basis, launch negotiations on a treaty to ensure peace, security and the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

75. It was also proposed, without prejudice to the substance of existing proposals, that States Parties to the Outer Space Treaty could consider one or more additional optional protocols to the Treaty. Such protocols could be negotiated by a working group established by the General Assembly, by the Legal Subcommittee of COPUOS, or by a conference of States Parties to the Treaty.