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**Committee on the Peaceful
Uses of Outer Space****Legal Subcommittee****Fifty-sixth session**

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Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

**Information on the activities of international
intergovernmental and non-governmental
organizations relating to space law****Information on the activities of international
intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations
relating to space law****Submission by European Centre for Space Law****I. Introduction****A. Background Information**

The European Centre for Space Law (ECSL) was established in 1989, on the initiative and under the auspices of the European Space Agency (ESA), with the support of experts in the field of space law. Today, the ECSL functions within the scope of the ESA Legal Services Department. ESA remains the key player in supporting the development of the ECSL, e.g. through staff resources and offices provision. The ECSL functions under a Charter, last amended in October 2009, which defines its structure and objectives. The current Chairman of the ECSL is Professor Sergio Marchisio. The current Executive Secretary is Mr. Nicholas Puschman.

The overall objective of the ECSL is to promote the awareness and development of the legal framework pertaining to space activities. It aims to do this across disciplinary lines to improve both the technical understanding of those concerned with space law research and the legal understanding of those concerned with the production, use and operation of space technologies. The two major tools for reaching this goal are information exchange among interested stakeholders and the improvement and promotion of space law teaching. The ECSL remains a valuable resource to space law, and its core activities are both academic-focused and industry-focused.

* [A/AC.105/C.2/L.299](#).



B. Management

The ECSL has a flexible and open structure. The ECSL General Meeting, open to all members, meets every three years. The ECSL Board oversees and assists in the running of the Centre's activities. The Board is composed of ten members have significant experience in the field of space law and commit themselves to actively promote the ECSL's objectives at both national and international level. Nine of the Members are elected by ECSL members and one is an *ex officio* member nominated by the ESA Director General as per Article 1.1 of the ECSL Charter. The current Board is mandated for the triennium 2016-2019. In addition to the Board members, the role of Student Representative to the ECSL Board has existed since 2014. This post is currently held by Ms. Victoria Schebek of the University of Vienna.

The ECSL Executive Secretariat is responsible for the daily management of the Centre, liaising with members and promoting the growth of the Centre's activities.

C. Membership and International Network

ECSL membership runs annually and consistently numbers well over a hundred natural and legal persons (over 150 in 2016) from ESA Member States, Cooperating States and other European countries. This includes student, professional and institutional members. The Centre brings together those with space law backgrounds and other interested parties: professionals from industry, lawyers, insurers, academics and student members all participate in order to encourage inter-disciplinary exchange at all levels. Membership is a prerequisite for voting in the elections of the Board, attending events such as the Practitioners' Forum and accessing ECSL publications and on-site resources.

The ECSL has established a strong and growing network of National Points of Contact (NPOCs) in 16 ESA Member and Cooperating States which provide local support for ECSL activities and facilitate contact between members. The two most recent NPOCs, approved by the Board in its 75th meeting in October 2016, are Norway (represented by the Norwegian Space Centre) and Slovakia (represented by the Slovak Space Policy Association). The NPOCs are active in their own right in the field of space law and provide ECSL members with details of their activities. With new Member States in ESA, the ECSL remains keen to encourage the development of new NPOCs.

Additionally, the ECSL remains committed to developing its international partnerships, for instance the ECSL-Latin America Space Law Network.

II. Summary of Activities in 2016

A. Triennial General Meeting of ECSL Members

On 18 March 2016, the ECSL held its triennial General Meeting of ECSL Members. The ECSL Chairman provided a comprehensive overview of the ECSL's activities in the previous three year period and the ESA Representative to the ECSL Board, appointed by the ESA Director General as per the Charter, reinforced the Agency's support to the ECSL and its many goals and activities which correspond to the objectives of the Agency itself, e.g. education and international cooperation. The Chairman invited representatives in attendance from various National Points of Contact to present the recent activities which had taken place within their National Section. Moreover, the Chairman announced the results of the recent Board elections and the composition of the new Board for the period 2016-2019, information on which is available on the ECSL website.

B. Inaugural Young Lawyers' Symposium

The ECSL Board approved the introduction of a new event to the ECSL activities calendar: the Young Lawyers' Symposium. This new initiative, which took place at ESA's headquarters in Paris, France on 17 March 2016, was established as a way of offering students and young professionals the opportunity to present their research, meet experts in the field and network with participants from across Europe. The ECSL received over 30 abstracts and selected 12 students and young professionals to present their research across three different sessions: (i) Satellites, Launchers and Contracting Practices; (ii) European Space Governance and Ensuring Sustainability and (iii) New Actors, New Activities, New Legal Challenges.

C. Practitioners' Forum

The 2016 Practitioners' Forum took place on 18 March 2016 at ESA's headquarters in Paris, France. The Forum focused on the theme of the exploitation of natural resources in outer space. The Forum was split into two sessions: the morning session on the scientific and legal perspectives on the question of natural resource exploitation, and the afternoon session on a comparative overview of resource exploitation under other legal regimes. The discussions in the morning session explored the science behind asteroid exploration and exploitation, the "province of all mankind" principle under the Outer Space Treaty 1967, the "common heritage of mankind" principle under the 1979 Moon Agreement and a keynote speech from a representative of a company developing the technology to exploit asteroid resources. As a means of understanding how the law has developed in other domains to govern resources and their exploitation, the afternoon session featured talks from legal experts working in the area of mineral mining on Earth, the resources of the deep seabed and the radiofrequency spectrum. A high number of participants from various institutional, commercial and academic professions attended the 2016 Forum.

D. Tech, Business & Regulatory Industry Workshop

In collaboration with local partners including the University of Strathclyde Law School, the Scottish Centre of Excellence in Satellite Applications, the Satellite Finance Network and Bird & Bird LLP, the ECSL organised the inaugural Tech, Business & Regulatory Industry Workshop on 26 April 2016. The 2016 workshop focused on the theme of NewSpace and featured talks from experts on themes such as emerging technology and capabilities for NewSpace, large satellite constellations, financing and business models, licensing and regulatory frameworks in Europe, space data and intellectual property and developments in the space insurance market. Over 60 representatives from the space sector, both in the United Kingdom and Europe more broadly, attended and engaged in insightful discussions on the opportunities and challenges of NewSpace. The ECSL Board decided to incorporate this workshop as a permanent feature of the ECSL which will be repeated in 2017.

E. 2016 European Rounds of the Manfred Lachs Moot Court Competition

The ECSL is the official regional organiser of the European Rounds of the Manfred Lachs Moot Court Competition. The 2016 European Rounds took place in Glasgow, United Kingdom from 27-29 April 2016. They were hosted by the University of Strathclyde Law School. The European arm of this successful international competition continues to grow. In the 2016 rounds, a record high number of teams (16) took part in the competition, including newcomers. All fiercely competed for the title of European Champion and the chance to represent Europe in front of three sitting judges of the International Court of Justice at the

World Finals held during the 67th International Astronautical Congress in Guadalajara, Mexico. The winning team was the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece. The team went on to represent Europe in Mexico where they won the Final, becoming World Champions in 2016.

F. 25th ECSL Summer Course on Space Law and Policy

The 25th edition of the ECSL Summer Course on Space Law and Policy was organised in cooperation with the University of Lazarski Institute of Air and Space Law in Warsaw, Poland from 29 August-10 September 2016. A record high number of 51 participants, including young professionals and students from across ESA Member and Cooperating States and beyond, took part in the 2016 course, representing over 20 different nationalities. The participants attended seminars from more than 35 distinguished speakers from academia, international organisations such as ESA, national space agencies, the legal profession, space industry and related sectors such as insurance. The course explored the fundamental issues of space law and policy, with a particular focus on how these issues relate to suborbital flights, the theme for the 2016 course. In groups, participants worked on a project in the form of a tender to ESA for a future suborbital flight project. The project required participants to come to grips with the basic elements of space law, policy, the market, financing and the institutional framework of ESA. The projects were presented in the Polish parliament (Sejm) in Warsaw in front of a panel composed of representatives from ESA, academia and industry. The 2016 course also involved a number of events engaging the local space and legal community, including a welcome reception hosted by the firm Wardynski & Partners, a Careers' Day, a visit to the Space Research Centre of the Polish Academy of Sciences and a visit to the Polish Air Navigation Services Agency.

G. 2nd ECSL Student Essay Competition

In order to further promote knowledge of and interest in the law relating to space activities through the promotion of research activities, as per the ECSL Charter, the ECSL Board decided to introduce a Student Essay Competition in 2014. Following the success of this inaugural competition, the second competition for 2015-16 saw an equally high number of submissions which addressed the topic of the current and future regime for non-orbital flights. The winning essay was from Ms. Isis de Moortel of the University of Leuven, Belgium, and is available on the ECSL website.

H. Symposia and Workshops in 2016

On 4 April 2016, the ECSL and the International Institute of Space Law (IISL) jointly organised a Symposium on "40 Years of Entry into Force of the Registration Convention — Today's Practical Issues" on the first day of the 55th session of the OOSA COPUOS Legal Subcommittee. The topics explored ranged from the legal and practical considerations of registering mega-constellations and space debris, space situational awareness, lessons from other regimes such as telecommunications, maritime and aviation, the process of registration with the United Nations Secretary-General to currently debated topics like registering hosted payloads, in-orbit transfer of ownership and the future of notification and pre-launch notifications.

The Symposium has become a longstanding tradition of the Legal Subcommittee having been held every year since the early 1990s. A full report and all the presentations can be found on both the ECSL and United Nations OOSA websites.

On 8 September 2016, the ECSL co-organised together with the University of Lazarski, the Polish Space Agency and the Polish Space Industry Association an “Industry Get-Together” in Warsaw, Poland. Attendees included a broad range of representatives from the Polish space sector and key institutions. This initiative, which sought to strengthen ties between the ECSL and the local space industry, featured presentations from the Polish Space Agency, the Ministry of Economy, various companies in Poland and ESA.

III. Documentation, Resources and Publications

A. ECSL Online Legal Database

The ECSL Legal Database is a highly valuable research resource and can be consulted online via the ECSL homepage (<http://www.esa.int/ecsl>). It provides quick and easy links to national and international space law texts with a section dedicated to the various United Nations legal instruments. In addition, there is an extensive space law bibliography organised thematically and a further bibliography, organised chronologically by decade, of key events that influenced space law. It also provides a comprehensive listing of space law journals and other space law institutions.

B. Space Law Teaching in Europe and Beyond

The booklet “Space Law Teaching in Europe” was an ECSL initiative first issued in 1991 and revised in 1993. The booklet included a list of space law teaching institutions, universities and educational centres in Europe. This database is now available and updated on the ECSL website and includes information on educational centres and research facilities working in the area of space law outside Europe.

C. ECSL Archives

The ECSL maintains a substantive archive of thousands of hard copy documents organised and catalogued at ESA’s headquarters in Paris, France. ECSL members may make an on-site consultation of documents contained in the archives upon special request to the Executive Secretary.

D. ECSL Newsletter

The ECSL newsletter is available online and features articles on recent ECSL and NPOC events, book reviews and other topics of interest to the space law community.

E. Major Events and Activities Planned for 2017

The ECSL will continue to be an important resource for students, academia and the space industry. In addition to its long-standing successful activities as listed above, the ECSL will organise the second editions of the Young Lawyers’ Symposium on 18 March 2017 at ESA headquarters in Paris, France and the Tech, Business & Regulatory Industry Workshop on 13 April 2017 taking place at ESA’s facility — ESTEC — in the Netherlands. Additionally, it will introduce a new initiative — the Insight and Space 4.0 Day — the purpose of which is to offer an introductory overview to the space sector and space law for students and young professionals, and will include speakers from ESA including the Director General. Furthermore, the ECSL will organise or co-organise several workshops and conferences in 2017 including the ECSL-Norwegian Space Centre Space Law and

Policy Seminar in Oslo, Norway on 17 February 2017 and the Arctic Space and Technology Summit in Helsinki, Finland on 9 May 2017.

F. Concluding Remarks

The purposes and objectives of the ECSL are laid out in Article 2 of its Charter. Chief among these objectives is Article 2.2 which states that the ECSL shall purport to “promote knowledge of and interest in the law relating to space activities through the promotion of research activities including the dissemination of information and the organisation of workshops”. The ECSL remains a key player in Europe in promoting space law research and education, and providing important opportunities for stakeholders across the space sector — from students to academia and industry — to network and exchange on topical matters.
