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SPACE



Treaty Series No. 70 (1978)

Convention on Registration of Objects launched into Outer Space

New York, 14 January 1975

[The United Kingdom instrument of ratification was deposited and the Convention entered into force for the United Kingdom on 30 March 1978]

*Presented to Parliament
by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs
by Command of Her Majesty
August 1978*

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**CONVENTION
ON REGISTRATION OF OBJECTS LAUNCHED INTO OUTER
SPACE**

The States Parties to this Convention,

Recognising the common interest of all mankind in furthering the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes,

Recalling that the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies⁽¹⁾, affirms that States shall bear international responsibility for their national activities in outer space and refers to the State on whose registry an object launched into outer space is carried,

Recalling also that the Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space⁽²⁾ provides that a launching authority shall, upon request, furnish identifying data prior to the return of an object it has launched into outer space found beyond the territorial limits of the launching authority,

Recalling further that the Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects⁽³⁾ establishes international rules and procedures concerning the liability of launching States for damage caused by their space objects,

Desiring, in the light of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies to make provision for the national registration by launching States of space objects launched into outer space,

Desiring further that a central register of objects launched into outer space be established and maintained on a mandatory basis, by the Secretary-General of the United Nations,

Desiring also to provide for States Parties additional means and procedures to assist in the identification of space objects,

Believing that a mandatory system of registering objects launched into outer space would, in particular, assist in their identification and would contribute to the application and development of international law governing the exploration and use of outer space,

Have agreed as follows:

ARTICLE I

For the purpose of this Convention:

(a) The term "launching State" means:

(i) A State which launches or procures the launching of a space object;

⁽¹⁾ Treaty Series No. 10 (1968), Cmnd. 3519

⁽²⁾ Treaty Series No. 56 (1969), Cmnd. 3997

⁽³⁾ Treaty Series No. 16 (1974), Cmnd. 5551

- (ii) A State from whose territory or facility a space object is launched;
- (b) The term "space object" includes component parts of a space object as well as its launch vehicle and parts thereof;
- (c) The term "State of registry" means a launching State on whose registry a space object is carried in accordance with article II.

ARTICLE II

1. When a space object is launched into earth orbit or beyond, the launching State shall register the space object by means of an entry in an appropriate registry which it shall maintain. Each launching State shall inform the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the establishment of such a registry.

2. Where there are two or more launching States in respect of any such space object, they shall jointly determine which one of them shall register the object in accordance with paragraph 1 of this article, bearing in mind the provisions of article VIII of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, and without prejudice to appropriate agreements concluded or to be concluded among the launching States on jurisdiction and control over the space object and over any personnel thereof.

3. The contents of each registry and the conditions under which it is maintained shall be determined by the State of registry concerned.

ARTICLE III

1. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall maintain a Register in which the information furnished in accordance with article IV shall be recorded.

2. There shall be full and open access to the information in this Register.

ARTICLE IV

1. Each State of registry shall furnish to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, as soon as practicable, the following information concerning each space object carried on its registry:

- (a) Name of launching State or States;
- (b) An appropriate designator of the space object or its registration number;
- (c) Date and territory or location of launch;

(d) Basic orbital parameters, including:

- (i) Nodal period,
- (ii) Inclination,
- (iii) Apogee, and
- (iv) Perigee;

(e) General function of the space object.

2. Each State of registry may, from time to time, provide the Secretary-General of the United Nations with additional information concerning a space object carried on its registry.

3. Each State or registry shall notify the Secretary-General of the United Nations, to the greatest extent feasible and as soon as practicable, of space objects concerning which it has previously transmitted information, and which have been but no longer are in earth orbit.

ARTICLE V

Whenever a space object launched into earth orbit or beyond is marked with the designator or registration number referred to in article IV (1) (b), or both, the State of registry shall notify the Secretary-General of this fact when submitting the information regarding the space object in accordance with article IV. In such case, the Secretary-General of the United Nations shall record this notification in the Register.

ARTICLE VI

Where the application of the provisions of this Convention has not enabled a State Party to identify a space object which has caused damage to it or to any of its natural or juridical persons, or which may be of a hazardous or deleterious nature, other States Parties, including in particular States possessing space monitoring and tracking facilities, shall respond to the greatest extent feasible to a request by that State Party, or transmitted through the Secretary-General on its behalf, for assistance under equitable and reasonable conditions in the identification of the object. A State Party making such a request shall, to the greatest extent feasible, submit information as to the time, nature and circumstances of the events giving rise to the request. Arrangements under which such assistance shall be rendered shall be the object of agreement between the parties concerned.

ARTICLE VII

1. In this Convention, with the exception of articles VIII to XII inclusive, references to States shall be deemed to apply to any international intergovernmental organization which conducts space activities if the organization declares its acceptance of the rights and obligations provided in this Convention and if a majority of the States members of the organization

are States Parties to this Convention and to the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies.

2. States members of any such organization which are States Parties to this Convention shall take all appropriate steps to ensure that the organization makes a declaration in accordance with the preceding paragraph.

ARTICLE VIII

1. This Convention shall be open for signature by all States at United Nations Headquarters in New York. Any State which does not sign this Convention before its entry into force in accordance with paragraph 3 of this article may accede to it at any time.

2. This Convention shall be subject to ratification by signatory States. Instruments of ratification and instruments of accession shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

3. This Convention shall enter into force among the States which have deposited instruments of ratification on the deposit of the fifth such instrument with the Secretary-General of the United Nations^(*).

4. For States whose instruments of ratification or accession are deposited subsequent to the entry into force of this Convention, it shall enter into force on the date of the deposit of their instruments of ratification or accession.

5. The Secretary-General shall promptly inform all signatory and acceding States of the date of each signature, the date of deposit of each instrument of ratification of and accession to this Convention, the date of its entry into force and other notices.

ARTICLE IX

Any State Party to this Convention may propose amendments to this Convention. Amendments shall enter into force for each State Party to the Convention accepting the amendments upon their acceptance by a majority of the States Parties to the Convention and thereafter for each remaining State Party to the Convention on the date of acceptance by it.

ARTICLE X

Ten years after the entry into force of this Convention, the question of the review of this Convention shall be included in the provisional agenda of the United Nations General Assembly in order to consider, in the light of past application of the Convention, whether it requires revision. However, at any time after the Convention has been in force for five years, at the

(*) The Convention entered into force on 15 September 1976.

request of one third of the States Parties to the Convention, and with the concurrence of the majority of the States Parties, a conference of the States Parties shall be convened to review this Convention. Such review shall take into account in particular any relevant technological developments, including those relating to the identification of space objects.

ARTICLE XI

Any State Party to this Convention may give notice of its withdrawal from the Convention one year after its entry into force by written notification to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Such withdrawal shall take effect one year from the date of receipt of this notification.

ARTICLE XII

The original of this Convention, of which the Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts are equally authentic⁽⁵⁾, shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations who shall send certified copies thereof to all signatory and acceding States.

In witness whereof the undersigned, being duly authorized thereto by their respective Governments, have signed this Convention, opened for signature at New York on 14 January 1975.

⁽⁵⁾ After the Convention has been registered with the United Nations, texts in the Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish languages will be published in the United Nations Treaty Series, available through Agency Section, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, P.O. Box 569, London SE1 9NY. Tel 01-928 6977, ext. 410.

SIGNATURES AND RATIFICATIONS

<i>State</i>	<i>Date of Signature</i>	<i>Date of deposit of instrument of ratification</i>
Argentine Republic	26 Mar. 1975	
Austria	14 Oct. 1975	
Belgium	19 Mar. 1975	24 Feb. 1977
Bulgaria	4 Feb. 1976	11 May 1976
Burundi	13 Nov. 1975	
Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic	30 June 1975	
Canada	14 Feb. 1975	4 Aug. 1976
Czechoslovakia	5 Apr. 1976	26 July 1977
Denmark	12 Dec. 1975	1 Apr. 1977
France	14 Jan. 1975	17 Dec. 1975
German Democratic Republic ...	27 Aug. 1975	12 May 1977
Germany, Federal Republic of ...	2 Mar. 1976	
Hungary	13 Oct. 1975	26 Oct. 1977
Iran	27 May 1975	
Mexico	19 Dec. 1975	1 Mar. 1977
Mongolia	30 Oct. 1975	
Nicaragua	13 May 1975	
Niger	5 Aug. 1976	22 Dec. 1976
Pakistan	1 Dec. 1975	
Poland	4 Dec. 1975	
Singapore	31 Aug. 1976	
Sweden	9 June 1976	9 June 1976
Switzerland	14 Apr. 1975	15 Feb. 1978
Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic ...	11 July 1975	14 Sept. 1977
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics ...	17 June 1975	
United Kingdom	6 May 1975	30 Mar. 1978*
United States of America	24 Jan. 1975	15 Sept. 1976

* The United Kingdom instrument of ratification included the Associated States (Antigua, Dominica, Saint Christopher, Nevis and Anguilla, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent) and Territories under the territorial sovereignty of the United Kingdom, as well as the Solomon Islands and State of Brunei.

ACCESSIONS

<i>State</i>	<i>Date</i>
Cuba	10 Apr. 1978
Seychelles	28 Dec. 1977
Uruguay	18 Aug. 1977
Yugoslavia	24 Feb. 1978

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