

32nd IAA SYMPOSIUM ON SPACE POLICY, REGULATIONS AND ECONOMICS (E3)
Assuring a Safe, Secure and Sustainable Environment for Space Activities (4)

Author: Prof. Peter Martinez
Secure World Foundation, United States

FIRST FRUITS OF THE LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY DISCUSSIONS IN UN COPUOS: FROM
GUIDELINE DEVELOPMENT TO GUIDELINE IMPLEMENTATION

Abstract

In 2010, the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UN COPUOS) established the Working Group on the Long-Term Sustainability (LTS) of Outer Space Activities. The Working Group was tasked with producing a set of voluntary, non-binding guidelines for all space actors to help ensure the long-term sustainable use of outer space. The Working Group's mandate ended in June 2018. During its mandate, the UN COPUOS member States agreed on twenty-one guidelines and a politically significant context-setting preambular text. These consensus guidelines represent a set of internationally agreed best practices for the transparent, responsible and safe conduct of space activities. States are now starting to implement these guidelines on a voluntary basis, even while they continue the LTS discussions under a dedicated agenda item of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of COPUOS. This paper will provide an overview of the 21 consensus guidelines, the experiences and challenges reported by States in their implementation of the guidelines, and a status update on the discussions in COPUOS on the way forward for the next phase of the Committee's work on LTS.