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INTERNATIONAL LEGAL LIMITATIONS AND CONTEMPORARY ISSUES FOR SPACE
RESOURCE UTILISATION IN EMERGING STATES AND DEVELOPING NATIONS**Abstract**

This paper focuses on the international legal limitations and contemporary issues associated with space resource utilisation in emerging states and developing nations. Furthermore, this paper proposes to take a holistic approach in examining the space policies of Nigeria, South Africa, Iraq and Iran in order to ascertain their interpretation of the right to freedom of use and exploration and to examine their approach, if any, in encouraging outer space commercialization without breaching fundamental principles such as the 'non-appropriation' principle. The findings of this paper are that there are legal challenges faced by these nations when incorporating commercialization mechanisms. One such challenge is the impact of recent ethical vis-a-vis commercial trends that have begun to oppose one another in what has been termed by scholars as the 'space-race'. To what extent then can countries incorporate provisions in their domestic policies that encourage outer space resource mining and in light of this should there be privatization and investment in space development to begin with. The latter question is argued in the affirmative as there is vast economic reward to be gained from outer space in the form of mineral resources as primary elements to platinum metal groups can be found on celestial bodies, hence the interest in the development of this field is not unfounded. It is also conservatively estimated that the 10,000 metric tons of Helium-3 contained in the moon's lunar regolith alone can replace fossil fuels and drive industrial development capacity. This is further necessitated by States differing commercial interests in outer space and buttressed by the call from developing states for a new economic order, one that does not exclude them from its ambit, echoing the preparatory works of the Outer Space Treaty which provide that exploration shall be conducted for the benefit and in the interests of all states regardless of their level of development. Recommendations include increased regulatory provisions in the field and the establishment of a space-centered legislative body to do so, coupled with a dispute resolution system. Participants will benefit from an introductory briefing on the permissions and prohibitions of international space law as it pertains to resource mining and other international trade aspects of space services. Finally the paper will consider analogous approaches and regimes in other areas of space commercialization such as launch services and satellite technology to examine how the field can be developed successfully as regards the former.