

Interactive Presentations (IP)
Topic 5 - Interactive Presentations (5)

Author: Mr. Raphael Costa

Institut du Droit de l'Espace et des Telecommunications (IDEST), France, raphael.costa@idest-paris.org

LEGAL ISSUES RAISED BY LONG RANGE EXPLORATION AND EXOPLANETS EXPLORATION

Abstract

If the intrasolar system exploration is often a topic for space law papers, the legal issues raised by exoplanet and extrasolar exploration are almost not discussed among those papers. As an introduction we will expose that this topic is an issue we must take into account for two reasons. First, now that Voyager 1 has reached the interstellar space, there is now a State which have a portion of jurisdiction of the solar system : with Voyager 1, not only manmade objects have reached so far, but also our law. Secondly, because if international community wants to prevent unilateralism, we must legally organize long term activities. We must discuss legal regime applicable to a space object before it launch, even if the destination is far from 50 years.

After this introduction that will detail legal regime applicable to sooner extrasolar exploration will expose legal issues raised by the exploration of exoplanets and extrasolar star systems : jurisdiction of earthling States so far ; problem for applying space law treaties in case of damage, or more generally regarding space objects because they have to be launched to outer space but what about space ship launched from outer space ? ; problems regarding jurisdiction conflicts about occupation of exoplanets by different States which are not cooperating ; environmental protection of places so far from other States interests ; et even maybe protection of living ecosystem founds on place : and what about intelligent lifeforms ?

As a second part, the presentation will expose current defects of international space law to regulate consistently long range and exoplanets exploration : application of outer space treaty to all human activities in outer space but limitation of the Moon Agreement to intrasolar celestial bodies, etc. Also, if this exploration is made by individuals, legal issues are raised regarding human rights of those persons and their children.