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INTERNATIONAL LEGAL ASPECTS ON THE EXPLORATION AND USE OF SOLAR ENERGY IN
OUTER SPACE

Abstract

In the context of global energy crises related to the traditional energy sources, such as oil or gas, as well as in the connection with modern challenges and threats caused by the instability of the world energy markets there is a necessity to expand and use the objects of energy complex that use renewable energy sources. This situation is complicated by a rather complex international geopolitical situation. States often face with a difficult task of diversifying sources and suppliers of energy resources in the context of ensuring energy security from external factors. The attention of States concerning threats to the energy security at the same time is necessary in the context of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. International legal cooperation of States in this area has become possible thanks to the UN activities and IRENA, which in the 21st century has become the main forum to coordinate energy policies of States and to combat changes and negative consequences for the climate and the environment. In the conditions of a particular use of the renewable energy sources, certain “technical” characteristics are required for the final region of use. Unfortunately, not all regions can implement such energy projects. With regard to the solar energy, States which do not have good characteristics from the solar resources of map’s point of view, but are interested in implementing such projects, are forced to turn their attention to the alternative methods of obtaining this type of energy. One of these “projects” is the recently proposed initiative of China to place special installations in the near-earth space. The usage of such kind of energy would be a reason for different interstate disputes due to the uncertainty in international legal regime of space energy sources in accordance with international space law. Firstly, there is no legal definition “space resource”. Secondly, the current international space treaties contain only basic principles and norms for the regulation of this kind of space activities. Finally, there could be many issues related to the responsibility and liability for such new kind of space activity. This paper will be devoted to above mentioned and other related to this problem questions.