

# Model Code of Conduct for Responsible Space-Faring Nations

**Central Objective of this Code of Conduct:** To preserve and advance the peaceful exploration and use of outer space.

## **Preamble:**

We the undersigned;

Recognizing the common interest of all humankind in achieving progress in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes;

Reaffirming the crucial importance of outer space for global economic progress, commercial advancement, scientific research, sustainable development, as well as national, regional and international security;

Desiring to prevent conflict in outer space;

Reaffirming our commitment to the United Nations Charter;

Taking into consideration the salience of Article 2(4) of the Charter, which obliges all members to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations;

Taking special account of Article 42 of the Charter, under which the United Nations Security Council may mandate action by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security;

Recognizing the inherent right of self-defense of all states under Article 51 of the Charter;

Reinforcing the principles of the Outer Space Treaty of 1967, including:

- the exploration and use of outer space, including the moon and other celestial bodies, shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all countries,
- outer space, including the moon and other celestial bodies, shall be free for exploration and use by all States without discrimination of any kind, on a basis of equality and in accordance with international law,
- outer space, including the moon and other celestial bodies, is not subject to national appropriation by claim of sovereignty, by means of use or occupation, or by any other means,
- in the exploration and use of outer space, States Parties to the Treaty shall be guided by the principle of co-operation and mutual assistance and shall conduct

all their activities in outer space with due regard to the corresponding interests of all other States Parties to the Treaty;

- States Parties to the Treaty undertake not to place in orbit around the Earth any objects carrying weapons of mass destruction;
- The moon and other celestial bodies shall be used by all States Parties to the Treaty exclusively for peaceful purposes.

Recalling the importance of space assets for non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control treaties, conventions and regimes;

Recognizing that harmful actions against space objects would have injurious consequences for international peace, security and stability;

Encouraging signature, ratification, accession, and adherence to all legal instruments governing outer space, including:

- 1967 Outer Space Treaty
- 1968 Rescue Agreement
- 1972 Liability Convention
- 1976 Registration Convention
- 1984 Moon Agreement

Recognizing the value of mechanisms currently in place related to outer space, including the 1994 Constitution of International Telecommunications Union; the 1963 Partial Test Ban Treaty; the 1988 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty; the 1994 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty; and the 2003 Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions.

Recognizing the dangers posed by space debris for safe space operations and recognizing the importance of the 2007 Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space;

Recognizing the importance of a space traffic management system to assist in the safe and orderly operation of outer space activities;

Believing that universal adherence to this Code of Conduct does not in any way diminish the need for additional international legal instruments that preserve, advance and guarantee the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes;

Declare the following rights and responsibilities:

**Rights of Space-Faring States:**

1. The right of access to space for exploration or other peaceful purposes.
2. The right of safe and interference-free space operations, including military support functions.
3. The right of self-defense as enumerated in the Charter of the United Nations.

4. The right to be informed on matters pertaining to the objectives and purposes of this Code of Conduct.
5. The right of consultation on matters of concern and the proper implementation of this Code of Conduct.

**Responsibilities of Space-Faring States:**

1. The responsibility to respect the rights of other space-faring states and legitimate stakeholders.
2. The responsibility to regulate stakeholders that operate within their territory or that use their space launch services in conformity with the objectives and purposes of this Code of Conduct.
3. Each state has the responsibility to regulate the behavior of its nationals in conformity with the objectives and purposes of this Code of Conduct, wherever those actions occur.
4. The responsibility to develop and abide by rules of safe space operation and traffic management.
5. The responsibility to share information related to safe space operations and traffic management and to enhance cooperation on space situational awareness.
6. The responsibility to mitigate and minimize space debris in accordance with the best practices established by the international community in such agreements as the Inter-Agency Debris Coordination Committee guidelines and guidelines of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.
7. The responsibility to refrain from harmful interference against space objects.
8. The responsibility to consult with other space-faring states regarding activities of concern in space and to enhance cooperation to advance the objectives and purposes of this Code of Conduct.
9. The responsibility to establish consultative procedures to address and resolve questions relating to compliance with this Code of Conduct, and to agree upon such additional measures as may be necessary to improve the viability and effectiveness of this Code of Conduct.