



INVITATION LETTER

International Conference

“CURRENT INTERNATIONAL LEGAL REGIME OF NATURAL RESOURCES OF CELESTIAL BODIES: CHALLENGES OF LEGISLATIVE INNOVATIONS”

On October 12, 2023, the University of Belgrade Faculty of Law, in cooperation with the International Law School of MGIMO-University organizes an international conference on the topic "Current International Legal Regime of Natural Resources of Celestial Bodies: the Impact of Legislative Innovations". The Conference will be held at the premises of the Faculty of Law in Belgrade as well as online.

The growing trend of commercialization of space activities, and in particular the new U.S. legislative and bilateral treaty policy on the use of natural resources of celestial bodies has already sparked discussions at the intergovernmental level, primarily within the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

To this date, new legislative frameworks for the extraction of natural substance from the surface and subsoil of celestial bodies have already been outlined, notably by *the US Space Resource Exploration and Utilization Act of 2015* and similar legislation in Luxembourg (2017), the UAE (2019) and Japan (2021). In addition, the US initiated the *bilateral Artemis Accords*, reflecting the US legislative approach to the exploration and use of the Moon, Mars, comets, asteroids and other celestial bodies. The United States has already concluded such bilateral agreements with more than twenty partner nations.

From the international legal point of view, natural resource activities in space *cannot be regulated only at the national legislative level*: outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, *is an object of international space law*, which is confirmed by *the 1967 Outer Space Treaty*, in which more than a hundred states, including the United States, participate. This treaty defines the general universal order of space activities, including commercial ones. At the same time, the 1967 Outer Space Treaty does not contain special rules regarding the exploitation of natural resources of celestial bodies, although it does not prohibit natural resource activities in outer space. The laws of the United States, Luxembourg, the United Arab Emirates and Japan, which provide for persons



under their jurisdiction to have ownership rights over substances extracted by them from the surface and from the subsoil of celestial bodies, proceed from the assumption that this is consistent with the Outer Space Treaty and other sources of international space law. This approach is assessed differently in international law science.

In this context, at the international conference in Belgrade, participants are invited to discuss the results of their research on international space law, based on the objective competition of the national interests of the partner states of the United States and those states that in the coming decade will not independently develop the natural resources of celestial bodies, but proceed from the fact that they have rights to such resources by virtue of international space law, primarily its principle that the exploration and use of outer space, including celestial bodies, shall be the province of all mankind, as established by the 1967 Outer Space Treaty.

Specifically, the following topical issues are proposed (but not limited) to discussion at the Conference: what is the state of the legislation on space activities of those states that do not plan to conduct such activities in the foreseeable future? In what direction should most states, that are not parties to the Artemis Accords, focus the current international legal space policy? What is the optimal specification of the applicable international legal mechanisms of regulation of natural resource activities in outer space, considering the named legislative innovations of the United States and its partners? What are the options for an effective and constructive response on the part of the majority of the states of the world participating in the 1967 Outer Space Treaty to those changes in the legal regime of the use of natural resources of celestial bodies which are caused by the “Artemis Accords”?

We cordially invite you to participate in the International Conference.

If you intend to be a speaker at the conference we kindly invite you to submit to the Organizing Committee a title of your presentation and an abstract of your presentation (not more than 100 words) before September 15, 2023.

Contacts: conference.ub.mgimo@ius.bg.ac.rs

Looking forward to seeing you in Belgrade!

The Organizing Committee