



as of 15 Nov
Delegation agreement
ad referendum

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AGREEMENT ON THE RESCUE OF ASTRONAUTS, THE RETURN
OF ASTRONAUTS, AND THE RETURN OF OBJECTS
LAUNCHED INTO OUTER SPACE

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The Contracting Parties,

Noting the great importance of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, Including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, which enunciated the principle of rendering all possible assistance to astronauts in the event of accident, distress, emergency or unintended landing, of prompt and safe return of astronauts, and of the return of objects launched into outer space,

Desiring to develop and give concrete expression to these principles,

Wishing to promote international cooperation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space,

Prompted by sentiments of humanity,

Have agreed on the following:

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Article 1

NOTIFICATION

Each Contracting Party which receives information or discovers that the personnel of a spacecraft have suffered accident or are experiencing conditions of distress or have made an emergency or unintended landing in territory under its jurisdiction or on the high seas or in any other place not under the jurisdiction of any State, shall immediately:

(a) notify the launching authority*, or, if it cannot identify and immediately communicate with the launching authority*, immediately make a public announcement by all appropriate means of communication at its disposal; and

(b) notify the Secretary-General of the United Nations who should disseminate the information without delay by all appropriate means of communication at his disposal.

*The US proposal "launching authority" is not agreed. The USSR proposes "the Contracting Party on whose registry the spacecraft is carried".

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Article 2

TERRITORIAL ASSISTANCE

[If, owing to accident, distress, emergency or unintended landing, the personnel of a spacecraft land in territory under the jurisdiction of a Contracting Party, it shall immediately take all possible steps to rescue them and render them all necessary assistance. It shall inform the launching authority and also the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the steps it is taking and of their progress. If assistance by the launching authority would help to effect a prompt rescue or would contribute substantially to the effectiveness of search and rescue operations, the Contracting Party shall cooperate with the launching authority with a view to the effective conduct of search and rescue operations. Such operations shall be subject to the direction and control of the Contracting Party, which shall act in close and continuing consultation with the launching authority.*]

*US proposal.

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Article 3

NON-TERRITORIAL ASSISTANCE

If information is received or it is discovered that the personnel of a spacecraft have alighted on the high seas or in any other place not under the jurisdiction of any State, those Contracting Parties which are in a position to do so shall, if necessary, extend assistance in search and rescue operations for such personnel to assure their speedy rescue.

Article 4

RETURN OF ASTRONAUTS

When the personnel of a spacecraft have made a landing in distress or an accidental, or emergency, or unintended landing on ^{or} territory under the jurisdiction of another Contracting Party, or have been found on the high seas, or in any other place not under the jurisdiction of any State, they ^{of their spacecraft} shall be safely and promptly returned to representatives of the launching authority*.

*See footnote to Article 1.

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Article 5

RETURN OF OBJECTS

1. Each Contracting Party which receives information or discovers that a space object has returned to Earth in territory under its jurisdiction or on the high seas or in any other place not under the jurisdiction of any State, shall notify the launching authority* and the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

2. Each Contracting Party having jurisdiction over the territory on which a space object has been discovered shall, upon the request of the launching authority*, take such steps as it finds practicable to recover the object.

3. Upon request of the launching authority,** objects launched into outer space or their component parts found beyond the limits of the launching authority* shall be returned to the representatives of that Contracting Party, which shall, upon request, furnish identifying data prior to their return.

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Article 5 (Continued)

4. Notwithstanding paragraphs 2 and 3 of this Article, a Contracting Party which finds that a space object discovered in territory under its jurisdiction, or recovered by it elsewhere, is of a hazardous or deleterious nature may so notify the launching authority* which shall immediately take effective steps, under the direction and control of the said Contracting Party to eliminate possible danger of harm.

5. Expenses incurred (by a Contracting Party) in fulfilling obligations to recover and return a space object under paragraphs 2 and 3 of this Article shall be reimbursed.

*See footnote to Article 1.

**Brackets surround US proposals;
parentheses surround Soviet proposals.

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Article 6

[For the purposes of this Agreement, the term "launching authority" shall refer to the State or international organization responsible for launching, as the case may be.]*

(The provisions of this Agreement shall apply to the personnel of such spaceships, and to such spaceships or other space objects, as may be launched by international inter-governmental organizations.)

Any practical questions arising in connexion with the rescue or return of the personnel of spaceships, and with the salvage or return of spaceships or other space objects, launched by international organizations, shall be resolved by the Contracting Parties either with the appropriate international organization or with one or more States Members of that international organization, which are Parties to this Agreement.)

*Brackets surround US proposals;
parentheses surround Soviet proposals.

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Under the provisions of this Article the term space object includes manned space ships. The unique character of manned space ships requires that these space objects be given extraordinary consideration as compared to any other space object. Each Contracting Party having jurisdiction over the territory on which a manned space ship has been discovered shall, upon rendering assistance to the occupants, take all practicable steps to promptly recover the space ship and return it to the launching authority. This action will assist the launching authority in determining the cause of the malfunction which resulted in the space ship returning to earth in a location other than that intended by the launching authority.