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Cameroon – Position Paper

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Currently, Cameroon does not play any major parts in the global space stage. However, the number of space-related civil organizations have been gradually increasing, making Cameroon a promising spot for space activities in the region. The government encourages this development through school and university programs with the intent of building a political and educational foundation for the population. New generations become more and more interested in bringing Cameroon into the space industry.

Topic 1: The Environment and Space Activity

Resources required for the launch of rockets must be regulated according to constraints internationally voted and agreed upon by members of a Committee composed of representatives of all nations. All measures taken must benefit all nations, no matter how influential they are, as it is established by the "No Country Left Behind" initiative. The main goal of this initiative is to help ensure that SARP implementation is better harmonized globally so that all nations have access to the significant socio-economic benefits of safe and reliable air transport. Regulation constraints should take into consideration environmental, socio-economic and political factors as to guarantee that all nations should have the opportunity to launch rockets, if they so desire, and that the procedure should result in minimal consequences to the environment and that it may not cause any harm to other nations.

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the word "orbit" can be defined as "a path described by one body in its revolution about another (as by the earth about the sun or by an electron about an atomic nucleus)". According to this definition, any object orbiting the Earth should revolve around it within a clear path in a somewhat continuous manner. Each nation should be responsible for all respective objects orbiting the earth, and must hold themselves accountable for all possible environmental, social and/or political outcomes that may be triggered. Each country should monitor their respective objects, although other nations may choose to interfere in case of a disregard of the pre-determined regulations. In addition, all objects launched into space must be registered as per the "Registration Convention". Cameroon will maintain its principles of non interference.

Humanity knows very little of space and what expands beyond our planet. By engaging in the exploration of outer space, a nation has the opportunity of leaving its own footprint on history and creating a more diverse pool for development. Each culture possesses a unique view on how different matters should be approached, and by having presence in outer space, each nation allows for a more complete perspective of the Universe. Nations will also have the possibility of exploring new natural resources and a rapidly increasing market.

The nations that are pioneers in space exploration, such as the United States of America, China, and Russia, will most likely be the ones that will immediately benefit with the new market. Said nations already possess a remarkable influence in the political-economic sphere. Therefore, in order to maximize the number of nations that will obtain a positive outcome from space exploration, all nations should cultivate diplomatic alliances and partnerships. Cameroon will continue to support international peacekeeping and Third World development, while promoting relationships of assistance between developed and underdeveloped nations.

Global consensus on regulating black carbon shall be forged by fully studying its effects on the environment. From there, nations should encourage research concerning possible accommodations to rocket technology so that the emission of black carbon can be reduced. Once the possible environmental damage can be theoretically estimated, nations will be able to gather and debate whether the fast evolution of space technology justifies a perhaps avoidable escalation of climate change and levels of greenhouse gases. The main environmental policy in Cameroon is the National Plan of Environmental Management, which includes strategies for the moderation of climate change.

Topic 2: The militarization of space and international law

A space arms race – that is the competition between nations to perform the militarization of space – can be prevented through the elaboration of treaties of peace such as "the Outer Space Treaty" and the "Prevention of Outer Space Arms Race", both of which must be constantly updated so that they cover all new technology, that way avoiding any possible grey areas and loopholes. Measures must be taken so that the nations that signed such treaties maintain an appropriate code of conduct and so that all regulations are followed. If a space arms race does occur between two distinguished nations, Cameroon will maintain its non-confrontational approach and will continue to encourage peacemaking.

In order to expand IHL to space, the international community must encourage all nations to partake in the preliminary debates of the new regulations, even if said nations do not possess any active space initiatives. That way, if any nation does decide to initiate a new space program, its position regarding the regulations would have been considered during the expansion of the IHL to space. The international community must first specify any points of conflict that may occur with the translation of the IHL from a civil context to a space one. This should include the definition of space, the difference between civilian and military astronauts, and the balance between civilian and military property. The next step should be a debate over what alterations must be made so that the IHL can more accurately fit in the space context. Factors such as environmental damage, political conflicts, economic and technological restrictions, and core laws such as the "Law of Human Rights" and the "Law of Private Property" must be taken into consideration when coming to a final decision.

The imbalance between space technologies between countries can be narrowed through the use of initiatives such as "No Country Left Behind", established by ICAO in 2014 so that all nations have access to significant socio-economic benefits of reliable air transportation, and the "Benefits Declaration", which declares that the exploration and use of outer space must be beneficial for all nations, taking special consideration of the needs of developing nations. Promoting international cooperation and diplomacy between developed and underdeveloped nations, meaning that nations with space programs will extend their research to the needs of the nations that are not able to conduct their own experiments, results in a global network of information and resources that will narrow the imbalance of space technologies.

Topic 3: Space Commercialization

Regulators must remain neutral, meaning that they shall not grant special privileges to any nations. As per determined by the "Rescue Agreement", all astronauts in a situation of danger and/or distress shall be promptly assisted and returned to the launching station, a process in which all nations capable of aid must partake, no matter the astronaut's nationality. All regulators must be thoroughly trained and prepared, meaning that they must be aware of all regulations and constraints, which must have been agreed upon in a democratic manner by all nations participating in the Symposium. Furthermore, all regulators must present a strong sense of ethics, respect and justice. In case of an accident, property damage or any other sort of disturbance to the orderly development of aerospace activities, the situation shall be investigated by a neutral party and the regulator and/or the nation may be held responsible, as determined by the judicial system of the affected nation. This process, however, will not be performed by the Symposium committee. In addition, all nations that wish to partake in space activities must be encouraged to agree to follow the established regulations and to ensure a safe and orderly development on their part.

In order to promote and support more sustainable aerospace practices on an international scale, it is important to invest in the conscientization of not only the general population, but also of its leaders. By understanding the consequences of space explorations, leaders can more responsibly take decisions in name of their nation, which not only favors a more ecological approach, but also forces leaders to consider the long-term effects of their decisions, leading to more sensible verdicts. Investing in research projects related to the impacts of aerospace practices on the environment and how such damage can be minimized will not only enrich the current database on the topic, but also promote cooperation between nations as they work together in their research.

The same principle of researching before acting can be applied to the rapid growth of space tourism. Once the theoretical results are estimated, it is possible for nations to make more conscious decisions regarding the subject. Space tourism may be an excellent bridge to underdeveloped nations to reach a spotlight in the international market and, as it grows swiftly, unavoidably attracts more and more prospective investors. According to the principles of the Free Market, a product may be supplied as long as there is a demand for it. Companies should be allowed to explore and invest in the space tourism industry, as long as they are held accountable for any outcomes. Nevertheless, the relationship between regulators, nations, and private companies regarding space tourism should be one of partnership.

Commercial exploration and development of aerospace material for space tourism, like any sort of exploration at its earliest stages, should not be limited or allowed at any major extents for there are still many unknowns to be determined. Each nation should be allowed to conduct their own development and exploration without any external manipulations. On the other hand, the creation of regulations that offer benefits to those nations that do conduct themselves in an exemplary manner – by following the guidelines of previous or current treaties regarding environmental and socio-economic issues – may be used as a form of positive constraint.

As the topic becomes more and more prominent, the amount of money invested in aerospace increases constantly. Naturally, the amount available for investment by developed nations is much greater than the amount available by undeveloped nations, but that does not mean there must be a monopoly of the space exploration. Each nation should contribute with the amount of funds they are willing to offer and should be able to decide whether to place it in national or private organizations. The common goal of the nations investing should be to promote aerospace exploration and development, ideally in a manner that will also promote cooperation between nations and a universally beneficial policy.

In conclusion, Cameroon will continue to support the exploration and development of space whilst maintaining a non interferential and non confrontational approach. Cameroon believes that peacekeeping, environmental protection, and the assistance of underdeveloped nations are some of the core values of its foreign relations policies and that bringing nations together in a democratic setting to forge partnerships and corporations is the ideal approach to solving any dilemmas regarding the exploration of space.

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