

1 **The Moon Treaty**

2 **Preamble**

3 THE STATES PARTIES TO THIS CONVENTION,

4 NOTING the achievements of States in the exploration and use of the moon and other
5 celestial bodies,

6 RECOGNIZING that the moon, as a natural satellite of the earth, has an important role
7 to play in the exploration of outer space,

8 DETERMINED to promote on the basis of equality the further development of co-
9 operation among States in the exploration and use of the moon and other celestial bodies,

10 DESIRING to prevent the moon from becoming an area of international conflict,

11 BEARING in mind the benefits which may be derived from the exploitation of the
12 natural resources of the moon and other celestial bodies,

13 RECALLING the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the
14 Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, the
15 Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects
16 Launched into Outer Space, the Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by
17 Space Objects, and the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space,

18 TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the need to define and develop the provisions of these
19 international instruments in relation to the moon and other celestial bodies, having regard to
20 further progress in the exploration and use of outer space,

21 **Articles**

22 HAVE AGREED ON THE FOLLOWING:

23 **Article 1**

24 The provisions of this Agreement relating to the moon shall also apply to other celestial
25 bodies within the solar system, other than the earth, except in so far as specific legal norms
26 enter into force with respect to any of these celestial bodies.

27 For the purposes of this Agreement reference to the moon shall include orbits around or
28 other trajectories to or around it.

29 This Agreement does not apply to extraterrestrial materials which reach the surface of
30 the earth by natural means.

1 **Article 2**

2 All activities on the moon, including its exploration and use, shall be carried out in accordance
3 with international law, in particular the Charter of the United Nations, and taking into account
4 the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-
5 operation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, adopted by the
6 General Assembly on 24 October 1970, in the interest of maintaining international peace and
7 security and promoting international co-operation and mutual understanding, and with due
8 regard to the corresponding interests of all other States Parties.

9 **Article 3**

10 The moon shall be used by all States Parties exclusively for peaceful purposes.

11 Any threat or use of force or any other hostile act or threat of hostile act on the moon is
12 prohibited. It is likewise prohibited to use the moon in order to commit any such act or to
13 engage in any such threat in relation to the earth, the moon, spacecraft, the personnel of
14 spacecraft or man-made space objects.

15 States Parties shall not place in orbit around or other trajectory to or around the moon
16 objects carrying nuclear weapons or any other kinds of weapons of mass destruction or place
17 or use such weapons on or in the moon.

18 The establishment of military bases, installations and fortifications, the testing of any
19 type of weapons and the conduct of military manoeuvres on the moon shall be forbidden. The
20 use of military personnel for scientific research or for any other peaceful purposes shall not be
21 prohibited. The use of any equipment or facility necessary for peaceful exploration and use of
22 the moon shall also not be prohibited.

23 **Article 4**

24 The exploration and use of the moon shall be the province of all mankind and shall be carried
25 out for the benefit and in the interests of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic
26 or scientific development. Due regard shall be paid to interests of present and future
27 generations as well as to the need to promote higher standards of living conditions of
28 economic and social progress and development in accordance with the Charter of the United
29 Nations.

30 States Parties shall be guided by the principle of co-operation and mutual assistance in
31 all their activities concerning the exploration and use of the moon. International co-operation
32 in pursuance of this Agreement should be as wide as possible and may take place on a
33 multilateral basis, on a bilateral basis or through international intergovernmental
34 organizations.

1 **Article 5**

2 States Parties shall inform the Secretary-General of the United Nations as well as the public
3 and the international scientific community, to the greatest extent feasible and practicable, of
4 their activities concerned with the exploration and use of the moon. Information on the time,
5 purposes, locations, orbital parameters and duration shall be given in respect of each mission
6 to the moon as soon as possible after launching, while information on the results of each
7 mission, including scientific results, shall be furnished upon completion of the mission. In the
8 case of a mission lasting more than sixty days, information on conduct of the mission
9 including any scientific results, shall be given periodically, at thirty-day intervals. For
10 missions lasting more than six months, only significant additions to such information need be
11 reported thereafter.

12 If a State Party becomes aware that another State Party plans to operate simultaneously
13 in the same area of or in the same orbit around or trajectory to or around the moon, it shall
14 promptly inform the other State of the timing of and plans for its own operations.

15 In carrying out activities under this Agreement, States Parties shall promptly inform the
16 Secretary-General, as well as the public and the international scientific community, of any
17 phenomena they discover in outer space, including the moon, which could endanger human
18 life or health, as well as of any indication of organic life.

19 **Article 6**

20 There shall be freedom of scientific investigation on the moon by all States Parties without
21 discrimination of any kind, on the basis of equality and in accordance with international law.

22 In carrying out scientific investigations and in furtherance of the provisions of this
23 Agreement, the States Parties shall have the right to collect on and remove from the moon
24 samples of its mineral and other substances. Such samples shall remain at the disposal of those
25 States Parties which caused them to be collected and may be used by them for scientific
26 purposes. States Parties shall have regard to the desirability of making a portion of such
27 samples available to other interested States Parties and the international scientific community
28 for scientific investigation. States Parties may in the course of scientific investigations also use
29 mineral and other substances of the moon in quantities appropriate for the support of their
30 missions.

31 States Parties agree on the desirability of exchanging scientific and other personnel on
32 expeditions to or installations on the moon to the greatest extent feasible and practicable.

33 **Article 7**

34 In exploring and using the moon, States Parties shall take measures to prevent the disruption
35 of the existing balance of its environment, whether by introducing adverse changes in that

1 environment, by its harmful contamination through the introduction of extra-environmental
2 matter or otherwise. States Parties shall also take measures to avoid harmfully affecting the
3 environment of the earth through the introduction of extraterrestrial matter or otherwise.

4 States Parties shall inform the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the measures
5 being adopted by them in accordance with paragraph 1 of this article and shall also, to the
6 maximum extent feasible, notify him in advance of all placements by them of radio-active
7 materials on the moon and of the purposes of such placements.

8 States Parties shall report to other States Parties and to the Secretary-General
9 concerning areas of the moon having special scientific interest in order that, without prejudice
10 to the rights of other States Parties, consideration may be given to the designation of such
11 areas as international scientific preserves for which special protective arrangements are to be
12 agreed upon in consultation with the competent bodies of the United Nations.

13 **Article 8**

14 States Parties may pursue their activities in the exploration and use of the moon anywhere on
15 or below its surface, subject to the provisions of this Agreement.

16 For these purposes States Parties may, in particular:

- 17 1. Land their space objects on the moon and launch them from the moon;
- 18 2. Place their personnel, space vehicles, equipment, facilities, stations and installations
19 anywhere on or below the surface of the moon. Personnel, space vehicles,
20 equipment, facilities, stations and installations may move or be moved freely over
21 or below the surface of the moon.
- 22 3. Activities of States Parties in accordance with paragraphs 1 and 2 of this article
23 shall not interfere with the activities of other States Parties on the moon. Where
24 such interference may occur, the States Parties concerned shall undertake
25 consultations in accordance with article 15, paragraphs 2 and 3, of this Agreement.

26 **Article 9**

27 States Parties may establish manned and unmanned stations on the moon. A State Party
28 establishing a station shall use only that area which is required for the needs of the station and
29 shall immediately inform the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the location and
30 purposes of that station. Subsequently, at annual intervals that State shall likewise inform the
31 Secretary-General whether the station continues in use and whether its purposes have changed.

32 Stations shall be installed in such a manner that they do not impede the free access to all
33 areas of the moon of personnel, vehicles and equipment of other States Parties conducting
34 activities on the moon in accordance with the provisions of this Agreement or of article I of

1 the Treaty of Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer
2 Space, including the Moon and other Celestial Bodies.

3 **Article 10**

4 States Parties shall adopt all practicable measures to safeguard the life and health of persons
5 on the moon. For this purpose they shall regard any person on the moon as an astronaut within
6 the meaning of article V of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States on the
7 Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies and as
8 part of the personnel of a spacecraft within the meaning of the Agreement on the Rescue of
9 Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space.

10 States Parties shall offer shelter in their stations, installations, vehicles and other
11 facilities to persons in distress on the moon.

12 **Article 11**

13 The moon and its natural resources are the common heritage of mankind, which finds its
14 expression in the provisions of this Agreement, in particular in paragraph 5 of this article.

15 The moon is not subject to national appropriation by any claim of sovereignty, by
16 means of use or occupation, or by any other means.

17 Neither the surface nor the subsurface of the moon, nor any part thereof or natural
18 resources in place, shall become property of any State, international intergovernmental or non-
19 governmental organization, national organization or non-governmental entity or of any natural
20 person. The placement of personnel, space vehicles, equipment, facilities, stations and
21 installations on or below the surface of the moon, including structures connected with its
22 surface or subsurface, shall not create a right of ownership over the surface or the subsurface
23 of the moon or any areas thereof. The foregoing provisions are without prejudice to the
24 international regime referred to in paragraph 5 of this article.

25 States Parties have the right to exploration and use of the moon without discrimination
26 of any kind, on the basis of equality and in accordance with international law and the
27 provisions of this Agreement.

28 States Parties to this Agreement hereby undertake to establish an international regime,
29 including appropriate procedures, to govern the exploitation of the natural resources of the
30 moon as such exploitation is about to become feasible. This provision shall be implemented in
31 accordance with article 18 of this Agreement.

32 In order to facilitate the establishment of the international regime referred to in
33 paragraph 5 of this article, States Parties shall inform the Secretary-General of the United

1 Nations as well as the public and the international scientific community, to the greatest extent
2 feasible and practicable, of any natural resources they may discover on the moon.

3 The main purposes of the international regime to be established shall include:

- 4 1. The orderly and safe development of the natural resources of the moon;
- 5 2. The rational management of those resources;
- 6 3. The expansion of opportunities in the use of those resources;
- 7 4. An equitable sharing by all States Parties in the benefits derived from those
8 resources, whereby the interests and needs of the developing countries, as well as
9 the efforts of those countries which have contributed either directly or indirectly to
10 the exploration of the moon, shall be given special consideration.

11 All the activities with respect to the natural resources of the moon shall be carried out in
12 a manner compatible with the purposes specified in paragraph 7 of this article and the
13 provisions of article 6, paragraph 2, of this Agreement.

14 **Article 12**

15 States Parties shall retain jurisdiction and control over their personnel, space vehicles,
16 equipment, facilities, stations and installations on the moon. The ownership of space vehicles,
17 equipment, facilities, stations and installations shall not be affected by their presence on the
18 moon.

19 Vehicles, installations and equipment or their component parts found in places other
20 than their intended location shall be dealt with in accordance with article 5 of the Agreement
21 on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched
22 into Outer Space.

23 In the event of an emergency involving a threat to human life, States Parties may use
24 the equipment, vehicles, installations, facilities or supplies of other States Parties on the moon.
25 Prompt notification of such use shall be made to the Secretary-General of the United Nations
26 or the State Party concerned.

27 **Article 13**

28 A State Party which learns of the crash landing, forced landing or other unintended landing on
29 the moon of a space object, or its component parts, that were not launched by it, shall
30 promptly inform the launching State Party and the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

1 **Article 14**

2 States Parties to this Agreement shall bear international responsibility for national activities on
3 the moon, whether such activities are carried out by governmental agencies or by non-
4 governmental entities, and for assuring that national activities are carried out in conformity
5 with the provisions of this Agreement. States Parties shall ensure that non-governmental
6 entities under their jurisdiction shall engage in activities on the moon only under the authority
7 and continuing supervision of the appropriate State Party.

8 States Parties recognize that detailed arrangements concerning liability for damage
9 caused on the moon, in addition to the provisions of the Treaty on Principles Governing the
10 Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other
11 Celestial Bodies and the Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space
12 Objects, may become necessary as a result of more extensive activities on the moon. Any such
13 arrangements shall be elaborated in accordance with the procedure provided for in article 18
14 of this Agreement.

15 **Article 15**

16 Each State Party may assure itself that the activities of other States Parties in the exploration
17 and use of the moon are compatible with the provisions of this Agreement. To this end, all
18 space vehicles, equipment, facilities, stations and installations on the moon shall be open to
19 other States Parties. Such States Parties shall give reasonable advance notice of a projected
20 visit, in order that appropriate consultations may be held and that maximum precautions may
21 be taken to assure safety and to avoid interference with normal operations in the facility to be
22 visited. In pursuance of this article, any State Party may act on its own behalf or with the full
23 or partial assistance of any other State Party or through appropriate international procedures
24 within the framework of the United Nations and in accordance with the Charter.

25 A State Party which has reason to believe that another State Party is not fulfilling the
26 obligations incumbent upon it pursuant to this Agreement or that another State Party is
27 interfering with the rights which the former State Party has under this Agreement may request
28 consultations with that State Party. A State Party receiving such a request shall enter into such
29 consultations without delay. Any other State Party which requests to do so shall be entitled to
30 take part in the consultations. Each State Party participating in such consultations shall seek a
31 mutually acceptable resolution of any controversy and shall bear in mind the rights and
32 interests of all States Parties. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall be informed
33 of the results of the consultations and shall transmit the information received to all States
34 Parties concerned.

35 If the consultations do not lead to a mutually acceptable settlement which has due
36 regard for the rights and interests of all the States Parties, the parties concerned shall take all

1 measures to settle the dispute by other peaceful means of their choice and appropriate to the
2 circumstances and the nature of the dispute. If difficulties arise in connexion with the opening
3 of consultations or if consultations do not lead to a mutually acceptable settlement, any State
4 Party may seek the assistance of the Secretary-General, without seeking the consent of any
5 other State Party concerned, in order to resolve the controversy. A State Party which does not
6 maintain diplomatic relations with another State Party concerned shall participate in such
7 consultations, at its choice, either itself or through another State Party or the Secretary-General
8 as intermediary.

9 **Article 16**

10 With the exception of articles 17 to 21, references in this Agreement to States shall be deemed
11 to apply to any international intergovernmental organization which conducts space activities if
12 the organization declares its acceptance of the rights and obligations provided for in this
13 Agreement and if a majority of the States members of the organization are States Parties to
14 this Agreement and to the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the
15 Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies. States
16 members of any such organization which are States Parties to this Agreement shall take all
17 appropriate steps to ensure that the organization makes a declaration in accordance with the
18 provisions of this article.

19 **Article 17**

20 Any State Party to this Agreement may propose amendments to the Agreement. Amendments
21 shall enter into force for each State Party to the Agreement accepting the amendments upon
22 their acceptance by a majority of the States Parties to the Agreement and thereafter for each
23 remaining State Party to the Agreement on the date of acceptance by it.

24 **Article 18**

25 Ten years after the entry into force of this Agreement, the question of the review of the
26 Agreement shall be included in the provisional agenda of the General Assembly of the United
27 Nations in order to consider, in the light of past application of the Agreement, whether it
28 requires revision. However, at any time after the Agreement has been in force for five years,
29 the Secretary-General of the United Nations, as depository, shall, at the request of one third of
30 the States Parties to the Agreement and with the concurrence of the majority of the States
31 Parties, convene a conference of the States Parties to review this Agreement. A review
32 conference shall also consider the question of the implementation of the provisions of article
33 11, paragraph 5, on the basis of the principle referred to in paragraph 1 of that article and
34 taking into account in particular any relevant technological developments.

1 **Article 19**

2 This Agreement shall be open for signature by all States at United Nations Headquarters in
3 New York.

4 This Agreement shall be subject to ratification by signatory States. Any State which
5 does not sign this Agreement before its entry into force in accordance with paragraph 3 of this
6 article may accede to it at any time. Instruments of ratification or accession shall be deposited
7 with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

8 This Agreement shall enter into force on the thirtieth day following the date of deposit
9 of the fifth instrument of ratification.

10 For each State depositing its instrument of ratification or accession after the entry into
11 force of this Agreement, it shall enter into force on the thirtieth day following the date of
12 deposit of any such instrument.

13 The Secretary-General shall promptly inform all signatory and acceding States of the
14 date of each signature, the date of deposit of each instrument of ratification or accession to this
15 Agreement, the date of its entry into force and other notices.

16 **Article 20**

17 Any State Party to this Agreement may give notice of its withdrawal from the Agreement one
18 year after its entry into force by written notification to the Secretary-General of the United
19 Nations. Such withdrawal shall take effect one year from the date of receipt of this
20 notification.

21 **Article 21**

22 The original of this Agreement, of which the Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and
23 Spanish texts are equally authentic, shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the
24 United Nations, who shall send certified copies thereof to all signatory and acceding States.

25 **Ratification**

26 IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned, being duly authorized thereto by their respective
27 Governments, have signed this Agreement, opened for signature at New York on 18
28 December 1979.