

**CONVENTION ON THE TRANSFER AND USE OF DATA OF REMOTE
SENSING OF THE EARTH FROM OUTER SPACE**

A/33/162

Opened for signature at Moscow
19 May 1978

Entered into force
21 August 1979

The States Parties to this Convention, hereinafter referred to as the "Contracting Parties",

Considering that outer space is free for use by all States without discrimination of any kind, on a basis of equality and in accordance with international law, including the Charter of the United Nations and the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, for the purpose of carrying on activities in the remote sensing of the Earth from outer space;

Believing that in carrying on such activities the sovereign rights of States, in particular their inalienable right to dispose of their natural resources and of information concerning those resources, should be respected;

Reaffirming that activities in the field of the remote sensing of the Earth from outer space and international co-operation to this end should promote peace and understanding among States and be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all peoples irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development;

Convinced that space technology can provide new valuable information necessary for the exploration of the natural resources of the Earth, geology, agriculture, forestry, hydrology, oceanography, geography and cartography, meteorology, environmental control, and for the solution of other problems connected with the systematic exploration

of the Earth and is surrounding space in the interests of science and the economic activities of states;

Determined to create favourable conditions and necessary technical and economic prerequisites for expanding co-operation in the effective practical use of data of the remote sensing of the Earth from outer space,

Have agreed as follows:

ARTICLE I

For the purposes of this Convention:

(a) The term "remote sensing of the Earth from outer space" means observations and measurements of energy and polarization characteristics of self-radiation and reflected radiation of elements of the land, ocean and atmosphere of the Earth in different ranges of electromagnetic waves which facilitate the location, description of the nature and temporal variations of natural parameters and phenomena, natural resources of the Earth, the environment as well as anthropogenic objects and formations;

(b) The term "data of the remote sensing of the Earth from outer space" means the initial data obtained by remote sensors installed on space objects and transmitted from them by telemetry in the form of electromagnetic signals or physically in the form of photographic film or magnetic tape, as well as preprocessed data derived from the flow of data which may be used for later analysis;

(c) The term "information" means the end-product of the analytical process of handling, deciphering and interpreting remote sensing data from outer space, in combination with the data and evidence obtained from other sources;

(d) The term "natural resources of the Earth" means natural resources forming part of the aggregate of natural conditions of the human habitat and constituting major components of man's natural environment which are used in social production for satisfying the material and cultural requirements of society.

ARTICLE II

The Contracting Parties shall co-operate with each other in the transfer and use of data of the remote sensing of the Earth from outer space.

ARTICLE III

The specific list, technical parameters, the volume of the said data, the time-table of their receipt and conditions of the transfer as well as the degree of participation of the Contracting Parties concerned in their processing and thematic interpretation shall be determined by agreement between the Contracting Parties concerned on a bilateral or multilateral basis.

ARTICLE IV

A Contracting Party in possession of initial data of the remote sensing of the Earth from outer space, with a better than 50 metres resolution on the terrain, relating to the territory of another Contracting Party, shall not disclose or make them available to anyone except with an explicit consent thereto of the Contracting Party to which the sensed territories belong, nor shall it use them or any other data in any way to the detriment of that Contracting Party.

ARTICLE V

A Contracting Party that has obtained as a result of the deciphering and thematic interpretation of any data of the remote sensing of the Earth from outer space information about the natural resources or the economic potential of another Contracting Party shall not disclose such information or make it available to anyone except with an explicit consent thereto of the Contracting Party to which the sensed territories and natural resources belong, nor shall it use such or any other information in any way to the detriment of that Contracting Party.

ARTICLE VI

The Contracting Parties shall bear responsibility for national activities in the use of data of the remote sensing of the Earth from outer space relating to the territories of other Contracting Parties.

ARTICLE VII

The Contracting Parties shall co-operate, subject to agreement on a bilateral or multilateral basis, in elaborating and developing technical means and methods necessary for taking measurements, the processing and thematic interpretation of the data obtained from the remote sensing of the Earth from outer space, as well as in training appropriate personnel for making an early and most efficient practical use of modern space technology and data of the remote sensing of the Earth from outer space.

ARTICLE VIII

1. The Contracting Parties shall resolve questions arising in the process of the implementation of this Convention in the spirit of mutual respect by negotiation and consultation.
2. In order to resolve questions arising in connexion with the implementation of this Convention, meetings of representatives of the Contracting Parties concerned may be held, when necessary, by agreement between such Contracting Parties.

ARTICLE IX

Any Contracting Party may propose amendments to this Convention. Amendments shall enter into force for each Contracting Party accepting the amendments upon their approval by two-thirds of the Contracting Parties. An amendment that has entered into force becomes binding upon the other Contracting Parties upon their acceptance of such amendment.

ARTICLE X

1. This Convention shall be subject to approval of signatory States in accordance with their legislation. The Convention shall enter into force on the deposit of instruments of approval by five Governments, including the Depository Government of the Convention.

For Contracting Parties whose instruments of approval are deposited after the entry into force of this Convention, it shall enter into force on the date of the deposit of their instruments of approval.

2. This Convention shall remain in force for five years.

For each of the Contracting Parties which does not withdraw from the Convention six months prior to the expiry of the said five-year period and successive five-year periods, it shall remain in force for each successive period of five years.

ARTICLE XI

1. Other States sharing the purposes and principles of the Convention may accede to this Convention. Instruments of accession shall be deposited with the depositary of the Convention.
2. Accession of a new State shall be considered to have taken effect 30 days from the date of receipt by the depositary of the instrument of accession, who shall promptly notify so all the Contracting Parties.

ARTICLE XII

1. Each of the Contracting Parties may withdraw from this Convention by giving notice to the depositary of the Convention. Such withdrawal shall take effect 12 months from the date of receipt by the depositary of the notification.
2. Withdrawal from the Convention shall not affect obligations of cooperating organizations of the Contracting Parties under the working agreements or contracts concluded by them.

ARTICLE XIII

1. This Convention shall be deposited with the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which shall act as the depositary.
2. The depositary shall transmit certified copies of this Convention to all the Contracting Parties and inform them of all notifications received by him.
3. This Convention shall be registered by the depositary pursuant to Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations.

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ARTICLE XIV

This Convention is drawn up in four copies in the Russian, English, French and Spanish languages, all of the texts being equally authentic.