

Concept Paper

APSCO Space Law Alliance (ASLA)

1. Introduction

In the fast-growing space technology era, the number of actors in space activities are increasing every day, subsequently the legal challenges related to space activities have manifold. It is of the utmost importance to learn the new trends and be involved actively in space law and policy area. Close cooperation and exchange of information for developing legal consensus on space related issues, is a dire need of all nations. In this regard, APSCO initiates this proposal to create an alliance of institutions and universities working in the field of space law and policy in the Asia-Pacific region, to exchange knowhow, best-practices and research initiatives in the field of space law and policy to contribute to the development of expertise of institution and the region in this field.

2. Background

APSCO completed a decade of successful cooperation in 2018. APSCO has entered in a new decade of its activities and a New Development Plan of Cooperative Activities of APSCO Activities (2021-2030) has been approved by APSCO Council in 2020. In this regard, a comprehensive vision for Space Law and Policy for the new decade has been developed and approved by the Council of APSCO in 2020, referred as the “*Strategy for Space Law and Policy of APSCO (2021-2030)*”. This strategy focuses on enhancing the role of APSCO in the field of space law and policy to provide more practical benefits to Member States and strengthening the contribution of APSCO in the fields of space law and policy.

The Strategic Plan on Space Law and Policy of APSCO focuses on the following four key important areas:

- A. Capacity Building in Space Law and Policy for Member States
- B. Assistance in Developing National Space Law and Policy for Member States
- C. International Cooperation in Space Law and Policy
- D. Developing Regional and International Alliance of Space Law Institutions**

Following the strategic plan, initiated by APSCO, a side-event during the APSCO/ESA/CISL workshop 2021, has been organized to discuss the concept of establishing APSCO Space Law Alliance (ASLA).

3. Objective of ASLA

- A. Development of networking among research institutes, organizations etc. working in the field of space law and policy
- B. Promoting joint activities, joint research and collaboration on matters related to space law and policy with renowned universities in Member States of APSCO, international organizations and institutions.
- C. Providing exchange opportunities to boost capabilities, knowledge sharing and research among ASLA Members.
- D. Promote ASLA members work and initiatives among each other.

4. Potential Activities of ASLA

- A. Sharing of information on events related to space law and policy
- B. Inviting Member States' institutions, universities and the members of the alliance to participate in each other's conferences, workshops, trainings and discussion forums related to space law and policy
- C. Exchange ideas and discussions on contemporary issues related to space law and policy
- D. Opening opportunities for inviting research papers from universities of Member States of APSCO and ASLA members
- E. Providing support to Member States on any topic related to space law and policy, if requested by Member State through the alliance mechanism.
- F. Guiding universities and institutions about the establishment of a standard curriculum in space law and policy
- G. Sharing experiences knowledges, and materials, where possible, related to contemporary issues and space law
- H. Enable frequent coordination of faculty members, professors and research students working in the field of space law.
- I. Providing a platform to all the alliance members to meet together, besides online or virtual forums will be organized to monitor or discuss activities of Space Law.
- J. Any other activities, mutually decided by the alliance members.

5. Working Mechanism of ASLA

Step-1: At the first stage, the related profound universities from China, involved in space law and policy related programs, and Research Institutes in Space Law and Policy have been invited to participate onsite in the event and exchange ideas and willingness

for their participation in the APSCO Space Law Alliance (ASLA).

Step-2: Member States of APSCO shall be requested to nominate related universities/institutions. The 2nd meeting is planned to be held in October 2021, virtually, inviting APSCO Member States institutions. The concept note will be finalized after that meeting and shall be submitted to APSCO Council for approval. After the approval of the Council of APSCO, formal note verbale will be sent to all universities/ institutions for joining Alliance. Written letter and consent will be sent by universities/ institutions.

Step-3: The Alliance would be open to international organizations/ institutions and universities to join.

A. Board Members

A committee/board will be established comprising the following:

- 1) President/vice-president of the Board (elected from among the nominated members, based on profile and work in the field of space law)
- 2) Secretary of the Alliance (APSCO Secretariat)
- 3) Member of the Board from member institutions.

B. New Members

Once the Alliance is established, the Board will approve any new application for joining of the alliance member, with consensus

C. Meetings

- 1) The alliance members will meet once in a year (one year virtual and one year onsite during biennial APSCO Space Law Workshop)
- 2) ASLA members will meet in person during sideline event of APSCO Space Law Conf/Workshop which is a biennial event.
- 3) Besides, the alliance can arrange other meetings, as and when require basis.

D. Annual Report

- 1) An Annual report on the activities of ASLA shall be prepared and published.
- 2) The annual report shall be presented to the Council of APSCO on the activities of ASLA by APSCO Secretariat.

E. ASLA Webpage

A dedicated webpage will be created on APSCO website, to provide all members of the alliance to publish/promote their events, programs and activities related to space law and policy and share related any books and materials.

6. Potential Costs and Benefits

A. Cost

ASLA would be voluntarily cooperation work that would allow universities, academic institutions and research institutions in the space law and policy area to work together and there would be no financial requirement or contribution for any member of the alliance. For attending on-site meetings of alliance, the members will bear their own expenditure.

B. Benefits

- 1) Avail greater connections and cooperation opportunities in space law and policy.
- 2) Contribute to the development of the space law and policy in the region.
- 3) Be part of the international space law community in advance research
- 4) Avail publication opportunities in renowned publications of alliance members
- 5) Become part of the data-bank on space law experts in the Asia-Pacific region.
- 6) Learn from each other experiences and get support from members