



Perri Sterman

UNOOSA: Topic #1- New Lunar Space Race

YUNMUN XXXVI

During the Cold War Era, the first Lunar Space Race took place primarily between the United States and the Soviet Union; with the United States ultimately “winning” the race by successfully being the first country to land humans on the moon and plant their flag in the Apollo 11 mission. In a speech given at Rice University in 1962, President John F. Kennedy proclaimed “For the eyes of the world now look into space, to the moon and to the planets beyond.”<sup>1</sup> The increasing importance of space to humanity’s future has made it a central topic of discussion and debate within the international community.

Today, a new Lunar Space Race has commenced, primarily between China and the United States, and their respective allies. This time, countries are focusing on claiming the Moon for the purpose of permanent settlements and obtaining resources; as opposed to the more symbolic acts of planting flags in the previous race. The race between the United States’ Artemis program and China’s Chang’e program raises many concerns and questions regarding the legality of these expeditions and how such conquests may affect the rest of the world and future space exploration.

When writing your position paper, please consider the following points:

- Legal Framework
  - Should a new, binding, legal framework be put in place to oversee these settlements and extractions? If so, what should the new framework include?
- Ethics and Equity
  - Should the Moon continue to be considered “the common heritage of humankind,” similar to the oceans, or should it be open for competition and innovation?

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.rice.edu/jfk-speech>



- Economic and Resource Benefits
  - Should all of mankind be able to benefit from lunar resources? Only participating nations, or even only private companies involved?
    - What can be done to monitor private companies, should they be involved?
- Security
  - Will allowing the establishment of settlements and mining operations lead to tensions and perhaps militarization between nations?
  - What mechanisms can UNOOSA put in place to prevent conflict in the lunar region and promote international cooperation?

Please do not limit yourself to these topics in your research; rather, use them as a starting point as you gather information. Since this issue is unfolding in real-time, please make sure to take into consideration when writing your papers that circumstances and your country's position may change as time goes on. Be sure to thoroughly research your country's opinion as well as the topic as a whole to thoroughly prepare yourself for the conference.

Remember that your job is to represent your country's views, not your own. Please be sure to cite your sources and not to plagiarize or use AI to write your papers, or you may be disqualified from winning an award. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me at [psterman@mail.yu.edu](mailto:psterman@mail.yu.edu). I am looking forward to reading your papers and to hearing your ideas for how to handle this unfolding situation.

Sincerely,

Perri Serman

*Chair, United Nations Office of Outer Space Affairs*

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