

Only three sessions of the working group were held this year, a large part of which were devoted to procedural matters. The situation with respect to the draft moon treaty therefore remains basically unchanged. On the one hand are a number of developing countries who continue to insist on a direct reference to the moon and its natural resources and other celestial bodies and their natural resources as the common heritage of mankind. These countries are also committed to the establishment of an international legal régime to govern the exploitation of such resources when this becomes feasible. On the other hand are those states which do not wish to place undue international legal restrictions on research and unforeseen future prospects for exploitation of the resources of the moon and other celestial bodies. Unless major changes take place in these positions, the prospects for progress on this item at the next session of the Legal Sub-Committee do not appear promising.