



African Union: Space Policy and Expansion

Background Guide

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To maintain international peace and security

To develop friendly relations among nations

To cooperate in solving international problems and in promoting respect for human rights

To be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations



Letter from the Chairs:

Welcome to CU Boulder's MUNs Fall 2025 High School Conference! We are very happy to host you and that you chose to join us as we push you to think about the increasingly global world we live in. The primary goal of this committee, the African Union, is to focus on finding cooperative solutions which both tackle key issues of the space economy while balancing the interests of all its members. While this committee is designed with beginner to intermediate skills in mind, we want to ensure that anyone from any skill level is excited and gets the most out of this committee. We fully encourage anyone with questions on procedure, topic material, or anything to feel welcome to ask the Dias. The topics for this committee were chosen to be thought-provoking while also accommodating to all participants. An emphasis was placed on topics that would push you to think about how to examine and question the role of the AU in regional cooperation and security and the role and responsibilities of all actors in protecting human life. At the end of the day, we want you to come out of this conference and committee with a new perspective on how these key issues might be addressed and inspired to take on the problems of tomorrow. Most of all, we want you to have fun! We are excited to see what fresh ideas you bring this October!

Introduction and History of the Committee:

The African Union (AU) is the primary regional organization for cooperation and integration across the African continent. Established in 2002 as the successor to the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the AU was designed to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing global environment and to strengthen Africa's collective voice on the world stage. Its founding objectives include promoting unity and solidarity among African states, coordinating and intensifying cooperation for development, and safeguarding the sovereignty and territorial integrity of its members. The AU is composed of 55 member states and operates through a variety of organs, including the Assembly, the Executive Council, the Pan-African Parliament, and the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights. Among its most significant achievements are its efforts to mediate conflicts, foster economic growth, and develop long-term strategies for sustainable development.

In recent years, the AU has expanded its scope to include emerging issues such as digital governance, climate resilience, and space exploration. Recognizing that space technology is essential for socio-economic progress and security, the AU adopted the African Space Policy and Strategy in 2016 and later established the African Space Agency (AfSA) in 2019. These initiatives reflect the AU's commitment to ensuring that Africa plays a meaningful role in global space exploration while also using space technology to address continental challenges such as food security, disaster management, and connectivity.

IMPORTANT NOTE: ALL RESOLUTIONS IN THIS COMMITTEE MUST BE PASSED WITH A $\frac{2}{3}$

MAJORITY IN ACCORDANCE WITH AFRICAN UNION RULES OF PROCEDURE

Topic I: Increasing African Space Capabilities through Development

Introduction of Topic I:

Africa is a continent on the rise, and its recent growth of its space sector is a testament to this process. For many African nations, space technology is not a luxury but a crucial tool for socio-economic development. Satellites provide indispensable data for tackling some of the country's most pressing challenges, from enhancing food security and managing natural resources to improving disaster response. As more nations expand their own space programs, the question of how to foster growth in an equitable and sustainable manner becomes crucial. This requires a continental approach, a robust policy framework, and strategic international partnerships. The African Union and its newly formed African Space Agency are at the forefront of this effort, aiming to ensure that all member states can benefit from space technology.

Background of Topic I:

The recent growth of the space sector in Africa has called for the continent to pursue its own space program rather than rely on data from foreign-built satellites. The African Union has recognized the strategic importance of this shift, formalizing its commitment through key initiatives. The African Space Policy and Strategy, adopted in 2016, is the key feature of this movement. It outlines a coordinated vision for African space policy. The goals of this policy are to promote a pan-African space program, utilize space for socio-economic development, and foster a suitable space industry and manufacturing. To implement this vision, the African Union created the African Space Agency(AfSA) in 2019, with its headquarters in Cairo, Egypt. AfSA serves as the continent's central coordinating body for space activities, advising and advocating more member states. Note that AfSA will be officially inaugurated later this year, so new policy must be implemented in this committee to focus on future development. Despite this progress significant challenges remain. Many African nations face constraints in financial resources, technical expertise, and infrastructure. This often leads to a reliance on external partners for

satellite launches and data, which can be very expensive. As of late 2024, 18 African countries have launched a total of 63 satellites, but the distribution of these capabilities are uneven, with countries like Egypt, South Africa, and Nigeria leading the way.

Conclusion of Topic I:

With the space industry becoming more important, Africa must collaborate and develop its space capabilities to avoid falling behind. The AfSA is still new and still needs to develop a cohesive space policy that ensures that space is accessible for all members and must also consider the financial cost of its activities. The AU must navigate tensions between countries to build its own independent capabilities. **Your goal for this topic is to come up with a new and improved space policy as it relates to development which includes information sharing, creating space centers, and facilitating space development.**

Research guiding questions of Topic I:

- How much should each country contribute to AfSA actions and capabilities?
- Should AfSA propose the building of space research centers and space ports?
- Should the AU and AfSA give out grants to private African space companies to facilitate the African space economy?
- How should data from African satellites be shared even if some countries do not contribute to AfSA?
- Should the AU scale down on its space sector and continue relying on foreign partners for their data?
- Should AfSA allow foreign governments to build space infrastructure in Africa?

Topic II: International Cooperation and Regulation of Outer Space

Introduction of Topic II:

In the 21st century, outer space has emerged as one of the most critical frontiers for human activity. While it was once limited to Cold War competition, access to space is now critical for global communications, climate monitoring, navigation, weather forecasting, and disaster management. Seeing as the atmosphere and outer space are global commons, domains beyond any one set of national borders, it raises important questions about regulations and equitable use. This is especially important as access to and control over advancements in solar system technology has direct implications for national security, economic development, and global cooperation. For Africa, space is a challenging, yet promising frontier for exploration. Only a handful of African nations currently operate satellites or have independent launch capabilities. However, space technology has become essential for addressing some of the continent's most pressing needs such as food security and agriculture, national security, climate resilience, and connectivity.

Background of Topic II:

In the mid 1950s, the United States and Russia were locked in the Cold War. Two of the main facets of this nonmilitary battle were the arms race and the space race. As both sides continued to develop missiles, specifically intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), many nations around the globe became worried about the use of outer space for military purposes. This worry prompted the creation of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and other Celestial Bodies in 1967. The resolution, also known as the Outer Space Treaty of 1967, is the foundational principle for international space law. Initially entering into force on October 10, 1967, the treaty has slowly gained parties and signatories since. As of May 2025, the Outer Space Treaty now has over 117 countries as parties with another 22 nations as signatories. Key provisions of the

document include prohibiting nuclear weapons in space, limiting the use of the moon and other celestial bodies to peaceful purposes, establishing that space can be explored peacefully by all nations, and precluding any nation from claiming sovereignty over outer space or any celestial body.

With over half of the continent as a party or signatory to the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, atmospheric and space exploration is clearly on the minds of African member states. Due to their increased interest in space, the African Union has taken steps of their own to develop a coordinated continental approach. In the last ten years, the African Union has made two big steps with the first being the adoption of the African Space Policy and Strategy in 2016. The second being the creation of the African Space Agency in 2019. While these are fantastic steps towards a new age of exploration for the continent, they are still facing challenges like limited financial resources, dependence on external partnerships for launches, and a lack of technical resources and expertise.

Conclusion of Topic II:

In the 21st century space race, the African Union must work to find an answer to the question of how to cooperate internally and externally. This will not only ensure equitable access, but will also keep AU member states from further marginalization in the space race. In the AU, regulation is not just about preventing the militarization of outer space or space debris. It is also about guaranteeing fair participation, sustainable use, and capacity building for all members of the African Union. Here, it is paramount that the AU establish its position on space debris, private sector involvement, and South-South cooperation. In doing so, the AU can play a major role in the cooperation and regulation regarding outer space, so that an environment where all member states can have fair and equitable access to outer space can be created. **Your goal for this topic is to develop a cohesive space policy as it relates to international regulations, by determining what space goals that Africa as a whole is committed to pursue**

which can include prioritizing military/defense, calling for asteroid mining, setting up colonies on the moon, etc.

Research guiding questions of Topic II:

- Should the AU push for new international regulations on space debris and resource exploitation?
- Should the AU as a whole push for international space exploration, by contributing to science missions to explore the universe?
- Should the AU develop a military/defense policy that advocates for military development?
- Should the AU and AfSA sign the Artemis Accords? (the committee cannot force countries to sign, but can still encourage countries to do so)
- Should the AU and AfSA rely on foreign partnerships and develop bilateral space policies?