Finalized version of the two-pager "The Artemis Accords and Planetary Defense" in a Q & A format, prepared by the SMPAG LWG team (Winter - Spring 2024)

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Q1: *If countries have signed the Artemis Accords, would this affect their involvement in any Planetary Defense space mission or other related activity?*

A1: The Accords are intended to apply to activities of civil space agencies of each Signatory that take place *inter alia* on "comets, and asteroids, including their surfaces and subsurfaces (...) and in transit between these (...)". Therefore, PD space missions by civil space agencies would respect the principles enshrined in the Accords. The following Sections could have relevance in a future, multilateral planetary defense (PD) mission. Specifically:

- Section 2 of the Accords allows for appropriate instruments, such as e. g. Memoranda of Understanding or other legally binding instruments, to be concluded for cooperative activities.
- Section 3 of the Accords enshrines that activities in outer space will be "exclusively for peaceful purposes and in accordance with relevant international law."
- Section 4 (Transparency) provides that signatories will "share scientific information resulting from their activities… with the public and the international scientific community."
- Section 5 (Interoperability) recognizes the benefits of interoperable and common exploration infrastructure and standards, all of which would be critical to a multilateral PD effort, and the Signatories to the Accords commit to use interoperability standards for space-based infrastructure and to establish such standards when current standards do not exist.
- Section 8 (Release of Scientific Data) reflects the commitment to share scientific data openly, and the Signatories plan to make their scientific information generally "available to the public and the international scientific community," in a timely manner. Open and timely scientific data release would be an essential element of any PD mission.
- Section 11 (Deconfliction of Space Activities) reflects various commitments of the Signatories to:
    - Respect the principle of due regard for the activities of other actors in space;
    - Refrain from any intentional actions that may create harmful interference with others' use of outer space;
    - Preserve the long-term sustainability of outer space; and
    - Share information in advance regarding their location and the nature of their space-based activities.
- Section 12 (Orbital Debris) reflects the commitment of the Signatories to plan for the mitigation of orbital debris and commit to limit the generation of new, long-lived harmful debris.

Q2: *Would it modify the wording of the Outer Space Treaty of 1967 in any way?*

A2: No, The Accords is neither a Treaty nor a legally binding document. None of its provisions legally bind any country. Rather, it is essentially a compilation of "best practices" regarding how responsible countries intend to conduct their activities in outer space. The Accords contain no mandatory direction for any country's space agency or private actors. The Accords represent a series of unilateral commitments by all signatories to respect the provisions laid down in the OST, Registration Convention (1975), and the Rescue and Return Agreement (1968). Pursuant to the Accords, signatories commit to follow best practices and norms of responsible behavior, including the commitment to use outer space solely for peaceful purposes, to be transparent in their plans to conduct space operations, and to publicly release scientific data.

The Accords itself do not modify the wording of the Outer Space Treaty in any way, rather, they aim to provide a general understanding of how certain provisions of the Outer Space Treaty (e.g. Art. XI OST on information exchange) could be implemented.

Q3: *Would signing the Artemis Accords in any way influence the involvement in any Planetary Defense activity of a country?*

A3: No. See A2 above.