

GENERAL ASSEMBLY



Dear Delegates,

My name is Mauro Zurita, and this year I have the honor of serving as chair of the General Assembly at CancunMUN. I am 16 years old, and I'm currently in 11th grade. In my free time, I mostly like to play video games. Especially sci-fi games. Once I graduate, I'd like to study avionics and eventually become an airplane pilot.

This will be my third MUN conference. My past experiences in MUN have not only been in CancunMUN, where I participated as a senator in the United States Senate and as the Vice President of the EU, but also in RIMUN. I have a deep appreciation for international politics, making me proud and excited to be your chair this year. As for the committee, the purpose of the General Assembly is to promote the well-being and security of the world while also addressing risks, supporting dialogue, and making recommendations.

As for you, we expect every Delegate to be respectful to other people and to follow all of the procedures forming part of this committee. I look forward to seeing all of you in person. If you have any doubts or questions, feel free to contact me at mauro.zurita@ciac.edu.mx.

Make sure to look at the guide; just keep in mind it does not contain everything, and you will have to do your own research. Make sure to study well, investigate, and overall have a good experience in MUN. I look forward to seeing you. Good luck.

Sincerely,

Mauro Zurita-Chair
General Assembly

Welcome Delegates!

My name is Andre Maiz, and I'm honored to be your Co-Chair for the General Assembly CancunMUN 2025. I am 17 years old, a senior at the International American School of Cancun. In my free time, I enjoy playing American football, going to the beach, and spending time with my friends and family. Later on, after I graduate in 2027, I'd like to study either architecture or business.

This would be my fourth MUN conference. I was a delegate in the World Health Organization of CancunMUN 2024 and a delegate in the United Nations Environment Programme CancunMUN 2023. I've had great experiences participating in these conferences, and this committee interests me because it covers topics such as international peace and security, human rights, sustainable development, global trade, climate change, and poverty reduction. I believe these matters are highly important and must be openly debated.

My goal is to create a mature, comfortable, professional, and competitive environment in this committee. Take into account that your background guide should not be your only source of information. I expect all the delegates attending this conference to be well-informed, well prepared, well mannered and confident. I am looking forward to seeing all of the delegates debating at this conference.

I am so very delighted to be working with all of you. If any of you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact me at carlos.maiz@ciac.edu.mx. I wish you the best of luck, delegates!

Andre Maiz, Co-Chair
General Assembly



COMMITTEE MISSION

The United Nations General Assembly (GA) is the main deliberative, policymaking, and representative organ of the UN. Established in 1945 under the Charter of the United Nations, it provides a unique forum for multilateral discussion of the full spectrum of international issues covered by the Charter. It is the only UN organ where all 193 Member States have equal representation, embodying the principle of sovereign equality.

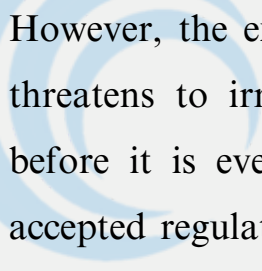
Topic A: Establishing a Legal Framework for the Governance and Exploitation of Resources in the Moon and Deep Sea

Introduction:

The governance of untouched frontiers, specifically the deep seabed and the lunar surface, presents a critical challenge as technological advancements make the extraction of their resources economically feasible. For decades, these regions were considered the common heritage of mankind, protected by the sheer physical impossibility of large-scale commercial exploitation. However, rapid developments in deep-sea mining robotics and the privatization of aerospace travel have thrust the international community into a race for resources. This sudden accessibility has created a volatile geopolitical climate, as both technologically advanced nations and private corporations push the boundaries of existing, heavily outdated treaties. Location-wise, this issue spans the global ocean floor beyond national jurisdictions and the lunar South Pole, both regions highly coveted for their rare earth metals, polymetallic nodules, and Helium-3 reserves.

The significance of this issue cannot be understated, as these resources are essential for the global transition to green energy and advanced computing. Deep-sea polymetallic nodules are rich in cobalt, nickel, and manganese, vital components for electric vehicle batteries. On the Moon, Helium-3 is theorized to be the perfect fuel for future nuclear fusion reactors, while lunar ice is crucial for sustaining deep-space exploration.






However, the exploitation of these regions poses immense risks. Deep-sea mining threatens to irreparably damage fragile benthic ecosystems, erasing biodiversity before it is even fully understood. In space, the lack of a modern, universally accepted regulatory body opens the door to the monopolization of celestial bodies by a handful of wealthy spacefaring nations, completely sidelining developing countries.

Consequently, the international community finds itself at a crossroads between encouraging technological innovation and preserving the equitable distribution of resources. The current legal structures, mainly the 1967 Outer Space Treaty and the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) were drafted in an era before commercial spaceflight and advanced autonomous submarines, leaving massive legal loopholes. Developing nations fear a new era of neo-colonialism where the global commons are carved up by corporate interests, while developed nations argue that heavy regulations will stifle the very innovation needed to save the planet's climate. Therefore, the General Assembly must establish a modernized, comprehensive legal framework that balances the commercial exploitation of lunar and deep-sea resources with environmental preservation and the equitable sharing of benefits among all nations.

History:

The historical development of laws governing global commons began in the mid-20th century, largely driven by the Cold War dynamics. In 1967, the UN established the Outer Space Treaty (OST), which firmly declared that space and celestial bodies are the "province of all mankind" and prohibited the placement of nuclear weapons in space. Crucially, Article II of the OST forbade any nation from claiming sovereignty over the Moon or other celestial bodies. However, it was completely silent on the issue of private property and the extraction of resources by corporations. To address this, the UN introduced the Moon Agreement in 1979, which



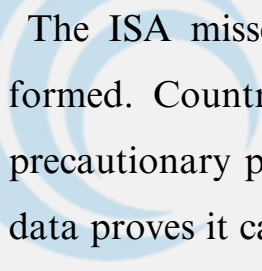
explicitly stated that lunar resources could not be owned by any state or non-governmental entity and called for an international regime to govern extraction. The Moon Agreement ultimately failed; none of the major spacefaring nations (the US, USSR, or China) ratified it, rendering it practically defunct.

Parallel to the space race, the international community was also looking to the oceans. In 1982, the UN adopted the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Part XI of UNCLOS specifically addressed the deep seabed beyond national jurisdiction, designating it as the "common heritage of mankind." It established the International Seabed Authority (ISA) in 1994, headquartered in Jamaica, to organize, regulate, and control all mineral-related activities in the international seabed area. The ISA was a monumental success in establishing an international body, but its early years were focused solely on exploration contracts, as the technology to actually mine the deep ocean did not exist.

Throughout the 2000s and 2010s, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) like Greenpeace and the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition began raising alarms about the potential environmental devastation of deep-sea mining. They pointed to the lack of scientific understanding regarding deep-sea ecosystems. Meanwhile, in the realm of space, the 2010s saw the rise of private spaceflight companies like SpaceX and Blue Origin. In 2015, the United States unilaterally passed the Commercial Space Launch Competitiveness Act, granting US citizens the right to own, transport, and sell asteroid and lunar resources, sparking international outrage and claims that the US was violating the spirit of the OST.

Current Situation:

The current situation regarding deep-sea mining has reached a critical point. In 2021, the Pacific island nation of Nauru triggered a controversial "two year rule" within the ISA on behalf of a private mining company, Nauru Ocean Resources Inc. (a subsidiary of The Metals Company). This rule required the ISA to finalize and adopt full exploitation regulations by July 2023. If the ISA failed, it would have to consider mining applications under whatever draft regulations currently existed.



The ISA missed this 2023 deadline. As a result, a massive diplomatic rift has formed. Countries like France, Germany, Chile, and Vanuatu are calling for a precautionary pause or an outright moratorium on deep-sea mining until scientific data proves it can be done without causing marine ecosystem collapse. On the other side, nations like Norway and China are pushing to finalize the mining code to secure mineral supply chains independent of current terrestrial monopolies.

In the world of lunar exploitation, the situation is increasingly fractured. In 2020, the United States introduced the Artemis Accords, a set of bilateral agreements establishing norms of behavior for lunar exploration, notably including provisions that legitimize the extraction and utilization of space resources. As of early 2024, over 30 nations have signed the Accords. In direct response, China and Russia have partnered to develop the International Lunar Research Station (ILRS) and are actively recruiting their own coalition of nations. This has effectively split space exploration into two competing blocs.

The UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) is currently attempting to mediate this divide by establishing a Working Group on Legal Aspects of Space Resource Activities, but progress is incredibly slow due to the consensus-based nature of the committee. Developing states are voicing strong concerns in the GA that the "first-come, first-served" reality of both deep-sea and lunar mining will leave them permanently disadvantaged. Currently, active measures include the ongoing, highly contested negotiations at the ISA regarding the finalization of the Mining Code, and the competing lunar missions planned for the late 2020s by NASA and the China National Space Administration (CNSA).



Points To Consider:

- How can the General Assembly reconcile the principle of the "common heritage of mankind" with the financial incentives required for private corporations to invest in extreme-environment extraction?
- Should the UN propose a new, unified oversight body for extraterrestrial resources, similar to the International Seabed Authority, or adapt existing treaties?
- What specific environmental protections and scientific thresholds must be met before deep-sea mining is permitted to commence globally?
- How will your country ensure that developing nations, particularly those without advanced aerospace or maritime technology, receive an equitable share of the benefits from these resources?

Useful Links:

<https://www.unoosa.org/oosa/sk/ourwork/spacelaw/resolutions.html>

<https://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/topics/space-economy-initiative.html>

<https://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/spacelaw/nationalspacelaw.htm>

<https://docs.un.org/en/a/res/79/19>

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Wickramatunga, Robert. *UN-Space*. www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/un-space/index.html.

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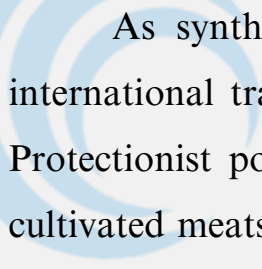


Topic B: The Impact of Synthetic Agriculture and Lab-Grown Food on Global Trade Security

Introduction:

The rapid emergence of synthetic agriculture and lab grown food presents a paradigm shift that threatens to fundamentally disrupt traditional global food trade networks and agricultural economies. Synthetic agriculture encompasses cellular agriculture (cultivated meat produced directly from animal cells) and precision fermentation (using microorganisms to produce specific proteins or fats without the animal). These technologies are currently concentrated in highly developed, tech-forward nations and regions, such as the United States, Singapore, Israel, and the European Union. However, their significance echoes loudest in the Global South. For countries in Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Southeast Asia, traditional agriculture is not just a source of food; it is the backbone of their export economies, employment sectors, and GDP.

The global implications of this technological leap are staggering. Proponents argue that lab-grown food is vital for human survival; it severely reduces the massive greenhouse gas emissions associated with livestock, eliminates the need for deforestation, drastically cuts water usage, and provides food security insulated from climate-change-induced droughts. However, the intellectual property for these technologies is tightly controlled by a few massive biotechnology firms. If cellular meat replaces traditional livestock exports, developing nations that rely on exporting beef, soy (for animal feed), and poultry could face catastrophic economic collapse, massive rural unemployment, and a new era of technological dependency.

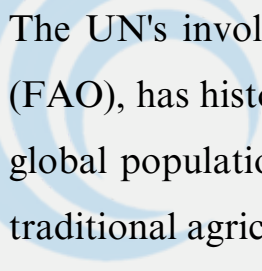


As synthetic alternatives move from laboratories to supermarket shelves, international trade laws are completely unprepared for the incoming shockwaves. Protectionist policies are already surfacing, with some nations attempting to ban cultivated meats entirely to protect local farmers, while others heavily subsidize the biotech sector to monopolize the future food market. This disparity risks fracturing the global agricultural market into isolated, hostile blocs. Therefore, the General Assembly must establish comprehensive global trade frameworks and technology-sharing initiatives that integrate synthetic agriculture safely into the global market, ensuring global food security without sacrificing the economic stability of agriculturally dependent developing nations.

History:

The concept of growing meat in a laboratory was theorized for decades, but it transitioned into reality in 2013 when Dr. Mark Post presented the first lab grown burger in London, which cost over \$300,000 to produce. This event sparked a wave of venture capitalist investment into food technology. Throughout the 2010s, startups dedicated to cellular agriculture and precision fermentation proliferated, primarily in Silicon Valley, Israel, and parts of Europe. Initially, these developments were largely ignored by global agricultural trade organizations, viewed as expensive science experiments rather than viable commercial threats.

As production costs slowly fell, non government organizations and global actors began to take notice. Environmental NGOs and animal rights organizations heavily endorsed synthetic agriculture, highlighting its potential to end factory farming and drastically reduce agricultural carbon footprints. Conversely, traditional farming lobbies and agricultural states began to view the technology with intense suspicion. By 2018, agricultural lobbies in several states in the US and countries in the EU successfully pushed for labeling laws, preventing lab-grown products from legally being called "meat" in an attempt to protect local industries.

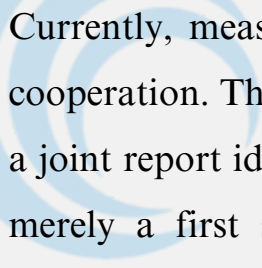


The UN's involvement, primarily through the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), has historically been cautious. The FAO recognizes the urgent need to feed a global population projected to reach nearly 10 billion by 2050, acknowledging that traditional agriculture alone cannot meet this demand sustainably. However, the UN has also stressed the socio-economic impacts on rural communities. The success of the industry was cemented in 2020 when Singapore became the first country in the world to grant regulatory approval for the commercial sale of lab-grown chicken. The failure, thus far, lies in the lack of an international regulatory standard; the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the FAO have not yet established universal sanitary, phytosanitary, or trade classification standards for synthetic foods, leaving a fragmented legal landscape.

Current Situation:

The commercialization of synthetic agriculture is accelerating exponentially. In 2023, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) granted historic approvals to two companies to sell lab-grown chicken to consumers, joining Singapore. Other nations, such as the UK, Israel, and China (which included cultivated meat in its five-year agricultural plan), are heavily investing in research and regulatory frameworks to capture the market.

However, this progress has triggered a severe geopolitical and trade backlash. In late 2023 and early 2024, Italy became the first country to formally ban the production and sale of synthetic food, citing the need to safeguard its food heritage and the livelihoods of traditional farmers. Other agricultural heavyweights, such as Brazil and Argentina, are closely monitoring the situation, fearful that a widespread transition to synthetic proteins will decimate their massive beef and soy export markets. There is a growing fear of a "protein monopoly," where the patents and bioreactors are owned by a few Global North corporations, forcing Global South nations to import proprietary food tech rather than growing their own food.



Currently, measures are focused on domestic regulation rather than international cooperation. The FAO and the World Health Organization (WHO) recently released a joint report identifying potential food safety hazards of cell-based food, but this is merely a first step. There are no active international trade treaties specifically governing the import/export of these goods, nor are there technology transfer agreements to allow developing nations to build their own cellular agriculture infrastructure. The international community is currently fractured between embracing the technology to fight climate change and blocking it to protect rural economies.

Points to Consider:

- How can the UN facilitate the transfer of intellectual property and technology regarding synthetic agriculture to developing nations to prevent a "food monopoly"?
- What measures can be implemented to transition and protect the livelihoods of traditional farmers whose economies may be decimated by the rise of lab-grown alternatives?
- Should the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the FAO establish universal labeling and safety standards for synthetic foods, and what should those standards entail?
- Does your country's current economic model benefit more from protecting traditional agriculture, or from investing in the biotechnology of synthetic food?

Useful Links:

<https://www.wfo-oma.org/press-release/world-farmers-firmly-reject-lab-grown-food/>

<https://www.congress.gov/crs-product/R47697>

<https://gfi.org/science/the-science-of-cultivated-meat/>

<https://www.ncsl.org/state-legislatures-news/details/will-states-take-lab-grown-meat-off-the-table>

<https://globalnews.ca/news/9797216/lab-grown-meat-usda-approval/>



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Country Box:

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Brazil

Canada

Chile

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Costa Rica

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Indonesia

Israel

Italy

Jamaica

Japan

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New Zealand

Nigeria

Norway

Russia

Saudi Arabia

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South Africa

South Korea

Spain

United Arab
Emirates

United Kingdom

United States of
America

**"Within the United Nations
General Assembly, every nation
has a voice, and every voice
carries the responsibility of
shaping peace, justice, and
global cooperation."**

