



ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Third Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable  
Development in Asia and the Pacific

5-10 February 2007

Kuala Lumpur

Preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials

5-7 February 2007

**DRAFT MINISTERIAL DECLARATION**

(Item 7 of the provisional agenda)

*Note by the secretariat*



## **BACKGROUND**

1. The Commission at its sixtieth session held at Shanghai from 22 to 28 April 2004 agreed to hold the third Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific in 2007. It recommended that the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development should be further strengthened to help its members and associate members to reach the Millennium Development Goals as well as other internationally agreed development goals, especially those from the World Summit on the Information Society. ESCAP members and associate members reaffirmed their commitment to taking action to achieve the objectives of the World Summit, and to promoting regional cooperation and effective integration of satellite-based information and communication technology applications with other information technologies for informed sustainable economic and social development planning and management and improved quality of life.

2. The Commission at its sixty-second session held at Jakarta from 6 to 12 April 2006 welcomed the offer made by the Government of Malaysia to host the third Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific in February 2007. It recommended the continuation of the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development, and requested, in preparing for the Conference, to harmonize the efforts under the Programme with the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the World Conference on Disaster Reduction. The Commission also requested the secretariat to continue the preparations for the Ministerial Conference as an important mechanism to regional follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society.

3. The major outcomes of the Ministerial Conference will consist of a strategy and action plan on space technology applications for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific and a ministerial declaration, which will include general policy decisions and the adoption of the strategy and action plan. The strategy and action plan will provide a regional framework for the implementation of the future regional cooperative programme with recommended actions at the regional and national levels for the next five years (2008-2013).

4. In preparation for the third Ministerial conference, an initial draft ministerial declaration has been circulated to the Intergovernmental Consultative Committee on the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific at its twelfth session held in conjunction with the High-level Expert Group Meeting on the Preparations for the third Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, held in Daejeon, Republic of Korea, from 17 to 19 October 2006.

5. The draft ministerial declaration, taking into account comments received from members following the Intergovernmental Consultative Committee, high-level expert group meetings and informal consultations with concerned members, has been circulated to the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission at its three hundred and seventh session held in Bangkok on 8 December 2006. The Advisory Committee appreciated the preparations made towards the Ministerial Conference.

6. The draft ministerial declaration annexed to this document will be placed before the Preparatory Meeting of Senior Officials for deliberation and finalization. The final draft declaration, which will include policy decisions and the adoption of the strategy and action plan on space technology applications for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific, will be submitted to the Ministerial Segment for consideration and adoption.

## DRAFT MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

We, the members and associate members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, convening at the Third Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, held in Kuala Lumpur from 5 to 10 February 2007,

*Recalling* that the first Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Development in Asia and the Pacific, held in Beijing in 1994, was an important milestone in the promotion of space technology development and applications in the Asian and Pacific region,

*Recalling also* that the second Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, held in New Delhi in 1999, was another important milestone in the promotion of regional cooperative mechanisms and operational applications of space technology for socio-economic development in the Asian and Pacific region,

*Acknowledging* that the launching of the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific and its implementation have had a significant impact on national capacity-building, having enhanced networking and cooperation among members, strengthened regional capabilities and elevated the Asian and Pacific region into one of the fastest growing regions for the development of space technology and applications,

*Guided* by the decisions, recommendations and resolutions adopted by various United Nations and other forums on the application and use of space technology for the benefit of humanity, and in particular:

(a) The United Nations Millennium Declaration,<sup>1</sup> in which Heads of State and Government resolved to ensure that the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communication technologies, are available to all;

(b) The Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development,<sup>2</sup> in which [Heads of State and Government] highlighted the important linkages between poverty, environment and the use of natural resources, while identifying Earth observation satellites and global mapping as essential tools for making improvements in these areas;

(c) The Geneva Plan of Action<sup>3</sup> at the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, held in Geneva in December 2003, and the Tunis Agenda<sup>4</sup> for the Information Society at the second phase of the World Summit, held in Tunis in November 2005, recognize the intrinsic relationship between disaster reduction, sustainable development and the eradication of

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<sup>1</sup> General Assembly resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

<sup>3</sup> A/C.2/59/3, annex, chapter I, section B.

<sup>4</sup> A/60/687, chapter I, section B.

poverty and highlight the important role of information and communication technology tools in addressing these issues;

(d) The Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters,<sup>5</sup> adopted by the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, held in Kobe, Japan, from 18 to 22 January 2005 in which the Conference recommended the use of space technology to help build resilience to disasters;

(e) The recommendations of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific at its sixtieth session, held in Shanghai, China, in April 2004, to hold the third Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable Development, and at its sixty-second session, held in Jakarta in April 2006, to continue the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development and harmonize the efforts of the Programme with the goals of the World Summit on the Information Society, the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the World Conference on Disaster Reduction;

(f) The Shanghai Declaration,<sup>6</sup> in which the members and associate members committed themselves to striving to take action to achieve the objectives of the World Summit on the Information Society, and to promote regional cooperation and effective integration of satellite-based information and communication technology applications for informed sustainable economic and social development planning and management and improved quality of life;

(g) Commission resolution 62/5 of 12 April 2006 on building the information society in Asia and the Pacific, in which the Commission reaffirmed the regional commitment to take action to achieve the objectives of the World Summit on the Information Society as well as to promote regional cooperation and effective integration of satellite-based information and communication technology applications with other information technologies for sustainable development, and requested the Executive Secretary, among other things, to continue the preparations for the third Ministerial Conference as an important mechanism for regional follow-up to the World Summit,

*Taking cognizance* of the accelerating convergence of technologies and the ever growing role of information and communication technology in the development and expansion of space technology applications, and the arising opportunities for the more integrated use of information, communication and space technologies as tools for operational applications in socio-economic development areas,

*Acknowledging* the special needs and circumstances of developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and the Pacific island countries, with regard to the capacity to utilize space-based information and communication technologies for alleviating poverty and improving the quality of life through access to more effective communication and resource management,

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<sup>5</sup> A/CONF.206/6 and Corr.1, chap. I, resolution 2.

<sup>6</sup> Commission resolution 60/1 of 28 April 2004.

*Taking cognizance of* the increasing demand for multilateral cooperation in disaster management in Asia and the Pacific and the fact that space technology applications can play an even greater role in disaster management efforts in the region, where natural disasters frequently strike,

*Realizing* that there is an urgent need to foster various regional cooperative mechanisms in space technology applications for disaster management,

*Recognizing* the need to harmonize the activities of the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development with other major regional and international initiatives, in particular the Global Earth Observation System of Systems for improved understanding of the Earth system, and enhancing relevant policy- and decision-making abilities,

*Hereby affirm* that we:

1. *Stress* the essential role of space-based information and communication technology which would substantively contribute to addressing poverty alleviation, disaster reduction, natural resource and environmental management, tele-education and tele-health through enhanced connectivity;

2. *Agree* to energize regional cooperative mechanisms on space technology applications that evolved from phase II of the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development and establish thematic networks, with a view to making them relevant, effective and efficient given the circumstances of members, in order to achieve a more equitable benefit for the countries of the region;

3. *Share* a vision of regional cooperation that addresses the potential for space-based information and communication technology applications and deals with many of the problems facing the Asian and Pacific region with the aim of alleviating poverty and improving the quality of life;

4. *Adopt* the Strategy and Action Plan on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific with a view to extending regional cooperation in space-based information and communication technology for development under the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development;

5. *Declare* the continuation of the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, which concentrates on a focused and demand-driven programme for optimizing resources in the region through cooperation, and is consistent with the Millennium Development Goals and the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society,<sup>7</sup> the World Summit on Sustainable Development<sup>8</sup> and the World Conference on Disaster Reduction;<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> A/C.2/59/3, annex, and A/60/687.

<sup>8</sup> *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolutions 1 and 2.

<sup>9</sup> A/CONF.206/6 and Corr.1, chap. I, resolutions 1 and 2.

6. *Commit* ourselves to participating actively in the Regional Space Applications Programme with the overall aim of reducing poverty and creating wealth in the region, focusing on thematic programmes in natural disaster reduction, natural resource and environmental management, and enhancing connectivity in tele-education and tele-health;

7. *Urge* Governments, bilateral and multilateral donors, regional financial institutions and international organizations as well as the private sector to contribute technical and financial resources to support the implementation of the recommendations of the third Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific;

8. *Request* the Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific to convene, at an appropriate time to be determined by emerging conditions in the region, a fourth ministerial conference on space applications to review the progress in the third phase of the Regional Space Applications Programme and the development efforts under the Strategy and Action Plan adopted herein.

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