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**Committee on the Peaceful
Uses of Outer Space**
Scientific and Technical Subcommittee
Forty-first session
Vienna, 16-27 February 2004

Draft report of the Working Group of the Whole

I. Introduction

1. In accordance with paragraph 19 of General Assembly resolution 58/89 of 9 December 2003, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, at its forty-first session, reconvened the Working Group of the Whole. The Working Group of the Whole held [...] meetings, on 18 to [...] February 2004. It considered the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, the implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III) and the draft provisional agenda for the forty-second session of the Subcommittee, to be held in 2005. At its [...] meeting, on [...] February, the Working Group of the Whole adopted the present report.

2. Muhammad Nasim Shah (Pakistan) was elected Chairman of the Working Group of the Whole at the 603rd meeting of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, on 18 February. The Chairman, in his opening remarks, reviewed the mandate of the Working Group of the Whole at its session in 2004. The Working Group had before it a list of issues that it should consider (A/AC.105/C.1/2004/CRP.16).

II. United Nations Programme on Space Applications

3. The Working Group of the Whole had before it the report of the Expert on Space Applications (A/AC.105/815) and noted that the Expert had supplemented her report by a statement.

4. The Working Group of the Whole noted the workshops, training courses and long-term fellowships for in-depth training, as well as technical advisory services,



as proposed to the Subcommittee in the report of the Expert on Space Applications (A/AC.105/815, annex II).

5. The Working Group noted that the number of fellowships for long-term in-depth training had decreased in the past years and appealed to Member States to consider providing such fellowships for individuals from developing countries. The Working Group noted with appreciation that the European Space Agency had continued to provide fellowship opportunities.

III. Implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

6. The Working Group of the Whole had before it the following documents:

(a) Draft report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on the implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III): summary of the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III, achievements of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies through consideration of agenda items introduced via the revised agenda structure and list of reference documents (A/AC.105/C.1/L.272/Add.3, annex I-III);

(b) Draft report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on the implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III): summary of the findings, recommendations and actions taken by the action teams established by the Committee (A/AC.105/C.1/L.272/Add.4, A/AC.105/C.1/2004/CRP.6 and A/AC.105/C.1/2004/CRP.15).

7. During the review of the progress made by the action teams, the Chairman of the Working Group of the Whole was assisted by the Chairman of the Working Group established by the Committee to prepare a report for submission to the General Assembly, in order for the Assembly to review and appraise at its fifty-ninth session, in 2004, the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III.

8. The Working Group noted with appreciation that the action teams on an environmental monitoring strategy (recommendation 1), management of natural resources (recommendation 2), weather and climate forecasting (recommendation 4), disaster management (recommendation 7), global navigation satellite systems (recommendation 10), capacity-building (recommendation 17) and increasing awareness (recommendation 18) had presented their final reports to the Subcommittee (see para. [...] of the report of the Subcommittee).

9. The Working Group noted that the Action Team on Sustainable Development (recommendation 11) and the Action Team on Innovative Sources of Financing (recommendation 32) had presented their final reports to the Subcommittee at its fortieth session and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space at its forty-sixth session respectively, in 2003.

10. The Working Group noted that the Action Team on Knowledge-Sharing (recommendation 9) and the Action Team on Near-Earth Objects

(recommendation 14) had reported on their progress and the work they had conducted thus far.

11. The Working Group of the Whole expressed its appreciation to all the chairpersons of the action teams, who had exercised leadership in conducting the work associated with the recommendations and had coordinated the activities of the action teams.

IV. Draft provisional agenda for the forty-second session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee

12. The Working Group of the Whole noted that, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 58/89, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee would submit to the Committee its proposal on the draft provisional agenda for the forty-second session of the Subcommittee, to be held in 2005.

13. The Working Group of the Whole noted that the following new work plans had been proposed for inclusion in the agenda of the Subcommittee at its forty-second session:

(a) Near-Earth objects, proposed by the Action Team on Near-Earth Objects (A/AC.105/C.1/2004/CRP.24);

(b) Space-systems-based disaster management support, proposed by Canada, China, Colombia, France, India, Indonesia, Morocco and Nigeria (A/AC.105/C.1/2004/CRP.20/Rev.1).

14. The Working Group of the Whole also noted that the following single issue/item for discussion had been proposed for inclusion in the agenda for the forty-second session of the Subcommittee: Support to proclaim 2007 as the International Geophysical Year/International Heliophysical Year, proposed by the United States of America (A/AC.105/C.1/2004/CRP.21).

15. The Working Group agreed that, starting with its forty-second session, in 2005, it would consider an item on space-system-based disaster management support according to the following multi-year workplan:

2005

Review of the recommendations of the Action Team on Disaster Management, with a view to their implementation.*

Review of the status, through presentations by experts, of earthquake prediction capabilities using data and information from satellites.

Presentations on the disaster management support provided by the International Charter "Space and Major Disasters".

Presentations on the launch and the in-orbit services from small satellite constellations for disaster management support by various countries.

* If the recommendations are approved by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the General Assembly.

2006

Review of the recommendations of the Action Team on Disaster Management, with a view to their implementation.*

Organization of a one-day workshop/symposium on disaster management communications involving communication satellite operators.

Exchange of information with the International Telecommunication Union and other United Nations specialized agencies on their activities on the subject of space-system-based disaster management support, as well as the regional disaster management structures.

2007

A presentation by the disaster management international space coordination organization, if established, on disaster management support coordination at the international level.

Presentations by the International Charter “Space and Major Disasters” and other initiatives.

Long-term perspectives of various Member States and space agencies on this subject.

16. The Working Group noted that the inclusion in the draft provisional agenda of the Subcommittee of the work plan on space-system-based disaster management support would be on the understanding that the recommendations of the Action Team on Disaster Management would be adopted by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the General Assembly.

17. The view was expressed that, owing to financial constraints, it would not be possible to support any initiatives that involved costs or other obligatory financial contributions by participating member States.

18. The Working Group agreed that, starting with its forty-second session, in 2005, it would consider an item on near-Earth objects according to the following multi-year work plan:

2005

Reports by international organizations, regional bodies and others active in the field of near-Earth object research, including in terms of detection and follow-up activity, in particular, reports and presentations from the International Council for Science (ICSU) (on its multidisciplinary activity on near-Earth objects involving the International Astronomical Union, the Committee on Space Research (COSPAR) and other scientific unions), as well as from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, on the work they undertake in 2004. Other organizations playing a significant role in the field of near-Earth object research could also be asked to make presentations.

Update the work programme for later years as required.

* If the recommendations are approved by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the General Assembly.

2006

Reports from Member States and international organizations on their near-Earth object activities, including missions, search and follow-up, as well as plans for future activity.

Establishment of a working group to consider the way forward and, specifically, the possible need for further activity to be carried out nationally, regionally or through international cooperation. Such consideration of cooperation should be taken together with the prospects for harmonization and avenues for broader collaboration.

Update the work programme for the third year as necessary and consider the need for intersessional work.

2007

Continue reporting by Member States and international organizations on the range of activities related to near-Earth objects.

The working group should continue its work and make proposals as necessary, building on its work in the second year.

Consider the range of, and suitable mechanisms for, further work on near-Earth objects.

19. The Working Group agreed to revise the plan for 2005 contained in the work plan for space debris, agreed upon by the Subcommittee in 2001, at its thirty-eighth session, to allow for the Working Group on Space Debris established by the Subcommittee during its forty-first session, to consider, as necessary, the space debris mitigation guidelines and such further related comments as may be received.

20. The Working Group of the Whole recommended the following draft provisional agenda for the forty-second session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, in 2005:

1. General exchange of views and introduction to reports submitted on national activities.
2. United Nations Programme on Space Applications.
3. Implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III).
4. Matters relating to remote sensing of the Earth by satellite, including applications for developing countries and monitoring of the Earth's environment.
5. Items to be considered under work plans:
 - (a) Space debris;

(Member States begin annual reporting on a voluntary basis of national activities to implement the guidelines)¹

- (Consideration by the Working Group on Space Debris, as necessary, of the space debris mitigation guidelines and such further related comments as may be received)
- (b) Use of nuclear power sources in outer space;
(Work for 2005 as reflected in the multi-year work plan contained in A/AC.105/804, annex III)
 - (c) Space-systems-based telemedicine;
(Work for 2005 as reflected in the multi-year work plan contained in A/58/20, para. 138)
 - (d) Near-Earth objects;
(Work for 2005 as reflected in the multi-year work plan in paragraph 18 above)
 - (e) Space-system-based disaster management support;
(Work for 2005 as reflected in the multi-year work plan in paragraph 15 above).
6. Single issues/items for discussion:
- (a) Examination of the physical nature and technical attributes of the geostationary orbit and its utilization and applications, including, inter alia, in the field of space communications, as well as other questions relating to developments in space communications, taking particular account of the needs and interests of developing countries;
 - (b) Support to proclaim 2007 as the International Geophysical Year/International Heliophysical Year.
7. Draft provisional agenda for the forty-third session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, including identification of subjects to be dealt with as single issues/items for discussion or under multi-year work plans.
8. Report to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.
21. The Working Group of the Whole agreed to continue the practice of alternating each year the organization of the symposium by COSPAR and the International Astronautical Federation (IAF) and the symposium to strengthen the partnership with industry. The Working Group agreed that, in 2005, the symposium by COSPAR and IAF would be organized and the industry symposium would be suspended.
22. The Working Group of the Whole recommended that the next COSPAR/IAF symposium, to be held in 2005 during the forty-second session of the Subcommittee, should address high-resolution and hyperspectral satellite data integration for precision farming, environmental monitoring and possible new applications. The Working Group of the Whole agreed that the symposium should be organized during the first week of the forty-second session of the Subcommittee.

Other matters

23. The Working Group of the Whole recommended that it be reconvened during the forty-second session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, in 2005.

Notes

¹ See A/AC.105/761, para. 130.
