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Chairperson: Mr. Windsor (Vice-Chairperson). (Australia)

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In the absence of Mr. Chipaziwa (Zimbabwe), Mr. Windsor (Australia), Vice-Chairperson, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 50: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (*continued*) (A/65/20)

1. **Mr. Srivali** (Thailand), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that space applications contributed greatly to many aspects of human life, providing valuable information in a variety of fields; space technology should therefore be used more widely. ASEAN continued to support regional and subregional cooperation to promote the peaceful uses of outer space and recognized with appreciation the success of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) and the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs in ensuring the peaceful and non-discriminatory use of outer space for all member States, irrespective of their level of scientific, technical and economic development. ASEAN had established a Subcommittee on Space Technology and Applications to create a framework for enhancing collaboration in space technology and its applications. Future networking between that body and COPUOS could help promote the use of remote sensing technology by intergovernmental organizations.

2. ASEAN member States had been promoting capacity-building in the use of outer space for the benefit of mankind and encouraged the Office and COPUOS to do likewise, especially among developing countries. In light of the growing impact of climate change and natural disasters in South-East Asia, early warning and protection mechanisms would help limit the scale of calamities. ASEAN welcomed the work of the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER), especially with regard to the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III). It also welcomed the recent signing of an agreement between UN-SPIDER and a number of Asian and African countries to establish regional centres and a support office to provide access to all types of space-based information and disaster management services.

3. Over the past few years, ASEAN had become very active in strengthening disaster management at the regional and subregional levels, especially after Cyclone Nargis. Indeed, at the most recent ASEAN Summit, leaders of ASEAN member States had noted the vital role to be played by the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management, which was to be established in Jakarta during the first half of 2011, in establishing networks with other regional humanitarian centres and cooperating more closely with UN-SPIDER.

4. ASEAN commended the efforts of COPUOS to make Sentinel Asia more effective, enhance the development of space programmes in the Asia-Pacific region and promote regional cooperation in the field of space technology and its applications. Sentinel Asia's activities in applying remote sensing and Geographic Information System technologies to disaster management in the region could provide useful models for similar activities in other regions.

5. Speaking as the representative of Thailand, he said that he supported COPUOS in taking steps to prevent the weaponization of outer space and promote cooperation on the peaceful and constructive uses of outer space. Since launching its first remote sensing satellite in June 2009, Thailand had used it primarily for monitoring rice production to support food security management, but also used it to monitor environmental threats such as drought, forest fires and floods.

6. In January 2010, Thailand and Japan had co-hosted the sixteenth session of the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum in Bangkok, on space applications and their contributions towards human safety and security. It had focused on regional cooperation in the use of space and had provided an opportunity for space and user agencies in the region to discuss cooperation in the development of space technology and applications and to strengthen partnerships.

7. To strengthen its early warning and emergency response system, Thailand had become one of the Data Provider Nodes for the Sentinel Asia project, and had co-hosted with Japan the Sixth System Operation Training session for relevant experts in July 2010. In November 2010, Thailand's Geo-Informatics and Space Technology Development Agency would co-host a workshop on space law with the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs to promote the exchange

of information on national space legislation and policies, and to consider the legal aspects of commercializing space activities.

8. **Ms. Halimah** (Malaysia) said that her country continuously sought opportunities to collaborate globally in efforts to strengthen the peaceful uses of outer space for the benefit of all humanity. It was working with Japan on microgravity and parabolic flight experiments and had been sending protein samples to the International Space Station since 2008, which it would continue to do until 2012. It was also working with the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum in the Satellite Technology for the Asia-Pacific Region programme and on the International Space Weather Initiative. Malaysia was also participating in the Mars-500 programme, hosted by the Russian Federation, with a view to benefiting everyone through the exploration of the planet Mars.

9. Malaysia would continue to work towards the development of space science and technology, with an emphasis on technological innovation, and would welcome collaboration from any interested partners in fulfilling the mission of Malaysia's Space Sector Development Programme. The first expert meeting on the Human Space Technology Initiative would be held in Malaysia in the second quarter of 2011.

10. **Mr. Arima** (Japan) said that in May 2010, his country had launched the Venus explorer *Akatsuki* and the space yacht *Ikaros*. The mission of the latter was to demonstrate pioneering technology that enabled it to cruise through space using only its sun sail and the immense capacity of thin-film solar cells. That ambitious project would make it possible to obtain technology that was essential for the age of geographical discovery in the solar system. In June 2010, the explorer *Hayabusa* had returned from the asteroid Itokawa after an eventful seven-year trip through space, becoming the first vessel to complete such a round-trip mission.

11. It was important for space vehicle launches to contribute towards solving global issues. The advanced land observing satellite *Daichi*, for example, could provide urgently needed images of areas affected by natural disasters; data captured by the satellite had recently been used by Brazil and Indonesia to monitor illegal logging and conduct forest carbon tracking in tropical rainforests. The *Ibuki* satellite had begun providing data on the disbursement of greenhouse

gases, which could contribute to global planning for their reduction. It had also provided useful information to the United Kingdom for monitoring ash plumes during the recent air traffic disruption resulting from the eruption of an Icelandic volcano. Japan had been contributing to climate monitoring throughout the Asia-Pacific region for more than 30 years using the *Himawari* series of satellites, data from which was being used as the basis for research into climate change, including changes in water cycles.

12. Delivering satellite images and space data to disaster-affected areas was one of Japan's top priorities. The Sentinel Asia project utilized data from satellites including *Daichi* to support disaster management in the Asia-Pacific region; about 80 observations of disasters had been carried out thus far. Japan also continued to contribute to the regional framework for cooperation in space education through the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum and was promoting the International Space Station project in coordination with the countries concerned.

13. Japan believed that it was important to participate in the rule-making process that would ensure the long-term sustainability of space activities; it would therefore continue its active contribution in that regard.

14. **Mr. Hodgkins** (United States of America) said that COPUOS and its Legal Subcommittee had a distinguished history of working through consensus to develop space law in a manner that promoted space exploration. The Legal Subcommittee had played a key role in establishing the primary outer space treaties, under the framework of which space exploration had flourished. As a result, space technology and services were contributing immeasurably to economic growth and improvements in the quality of life around the world. However, many States, including some members of COPUOS, had not accepted key treaties, so he encouraged them to ratify and implement them. He also encouraged States that had accepted the core instruments to review the adequacy of their national legislation with regard to the implementation of those instruments.

15. The Legal Subcommittee, at its most recent session, had had an informative exchange of information on national legislation relevant to the peaceful exploration and use of outer space that had provided useful insights into how States oversaw their governmental and non-governmental activities in outer

space, and what steps they had taken to control space debris. The Subcommittee's consideration of capacity-building in space law had proven encouraging, with discussion of efforts under way at the national and international levels. Such efforts, including the draft curriculum on space law developed by the Office for Outer Space Affairs, were vital in that endeavour.

16. The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee had also made significant progress in a number of areas at its most recent session. The decision to establish the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities, in particular, was very timely, due to the increasing number of space actors, spacecraft and space debris. Measures must be agreed in order to reduce the risks to space operations. There had also been progress towards consensus on a new multi-year workplan for the Working Group on the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space. That Group would examine any obstacles to the implementation of the Safety Framework for Nuclear Power Source Applications in Outer Space through national mechanisms. The United States also welcomed the Subcommittee's new item on the International Space Weather Initiative, which was a natural follow-on to the International Heliophysical Year and would allow valuable international cooperation to continue in the quest for greater understanding of the Sun's effects on space infrastructure and the Earth's environment.

17. The National Space Policy of the United States of America, which set forth the country's principles and goals with regard to its interests and activities in space, had been released in June 2010. It represented a commitment that the United States would lead the way in preserving space for the benefit of all nations and stressed the critical importance of enhancing international cooperation. It advocated that countries should work together to adopt approaches for responsible activity in order to preserve outer space for future generations; the world's growing dependence on information collected from and transmitted through outer space meant that irresponsible acts could have damaging and potentially long-term consequences for all. The United States would expand its work in the United Nations and with other organizations to address the growing problem of orbital debris and promote best practices for the sustainable use of outer space. It would also pursue pragmatic transparency and confidence-building measures to mitigate the risk of mishaps, misperceptions, mistrust and miscalculations.

18. The policy reaffirmed the long-standing position that the United States would consider arms control concepts and proposals provided that they met rigorous criteria of equitability, verifiability and consistency with its national security interests. The United States intended to promote appropriate commercial space regulations, international standards that supported fair market competition and the international use of United States capabilities, including launch vehicles, commercial remote sensing services and the Global Positioning System. It would pursue enhanced cooperation with other spacefaring nations in space science and human and robotic space exploration and in the use of Earth observation satellites to support weather forecasting, environmental monitoring and sustainable development worldwide.

19. Referring to the remarks made by the representative of Chile at the previous meeting, he said that the United States had indeed provided considerable support to Chile in relation to the remarkable rescue of the 33 miners trapped in the San José mine. Within days of discovering that the miners had survived the cave-in, the Chilean authorities had contacted the United States for assistance, specifically in dealing with the effects of long-term isolation and harsh conditions, on which medical experts had done considerable research under the United States space programme. A team had been dispatched from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration who had then spent nearly a week advising the Chilean authorities on the steps that should be taken to ensure the miners' physical and mental well-being. The whole experience could be said to have illustrated the unintended benefits of space exploration.

20. **Mr. Kafando** (Burkina Faso) commended the actions of COPUOS in its efforts to combat the militarization and pollution of outer space and in the regulation of all types of space activity. Indeed, the militarization of outer space was one of the international community's primary concerns in the field of disarmament. The Committee should accord particular attention to the prevention of an arms race in space, in view of its adverse impact on international peace and security.

21. There was no doubt that space applications and technology could be of significant benefit in many areas of development, particularly telecommunications, health, education, disaster management and weather forecasting, demonstrating the importance of outer

space as an instrument of social, economic and cultural development.

22. Burkina Faso, like many other countries, had experienced widespread flooding in recent times, as a direct and insidious consequence of climate change. Its experiences had reinforced the importance of continually assessing and strengthening its disaster prevention and management capacities. Sadly, the transfer of space technologies to developing countries was still slow, so that they were unable to protect themselves against the dangers of natural disasters and climate change. The international community should strengthen cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space and continue to support the Committee, its Subcommittees and the Office for Outer Space Affairs in order to increase their capacity. The international community should promote the sound management of outer space, which was the common heritage of all humanity and should benefit everyone.

23. **Mr. Aborawi** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that the COPUOS should step up its efforts to regulate the use of outer space and States should fill the gap in existing legislation by establishing a comprehensive international instrument that defined outer space and helped to prevent its weaponization and militarization. All States, regardless of their level of development, should be afforded equal access to outer space, to which no one should endeavour to lay exclusive claim.

24. The use of nuclear power sources in outer space should be minimized, especially when safer and more efficient energy sources were available, and all the States concerned should provide comprehensive information on the measures that they had taken to guarantee the safe use of those resources. Moreover, COPUOS should establish legally binding norms and guidelines to help reduce space debris, which posed a threat to the Earth and especially to countries along the Equator.

25. Information gleaned from space sciences should be shared with developing countries as a means, inter alia, of addressing climate change challenges, helping to build effective early warning systems to deal with natural disasters and extending technological assistance to the countries that needed it. In that connection, COPUOS was to be commended for its work to strengthen cooperation between the various monitoring emergency response mechanisms in Europe, Asia, the Mesoamerican region and elsewhere and UN-SPIDER.

26. He drew attention to the opening in 2009 of a direct reception station in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, which would capture information to help serve the development needs of his country and Africa at large and pinpoint problems such as desertification and the presence of anti-personnel mines. A Libyan company had furthermore launched a satellite in August 2010, which would cover all of Africa, southern Europe and the Middle East, and would be used, for example, to enable hospitals and universities in Africa to link up to their counterparts elsewhere and run distance learning programmes. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had provided 63 per cent of the funding for the project, reflecting the importance which it accorded to the peaceful uses of outer space.

27. **Mr. Macedo Riba** (Mexico) said that equal access to outer space for all States, irrespective of their level of development, had to be the basis of United Nations action, and it required regional and international cooperation. The Latin American and Caribbean region had had a successful experience in that connection thanks to the Space Conferences of the Americas. Mexico would be hosting the Sixth Space Conference in November, on the theme of space applications in the service of humanity and of the development of the Americas. The Space Conferences had evolved since the 1990s and their goal now was to harmonize the positions of member States on issues of common concern, devise strategies for the practical utilization of space application in support of social programmes in the region, promote the development of space law and strengthen educational and training programmes in space science and technology. As a result, there were now regional strategies and activities in place for the use of space applications in environmental protection, the prevention and mitigation of natural disasters, tele-health programmes, education and training, and various social programmes, thus furthering the economic growth and development of the countries of the region.

28. The Sixth Space Conference would help expand the participation of public and private academic institutions, young people and non-governmental organizations in regional and international programmes which used space science and technology to support development in the region. It would advance the establishment of the Mexican Space Agency and promote the collaboration of academic institutions with the Regional Centre for Space Science and Technology Education for Latin America and the Caribbean. The

Conference would have three segments, an intergovernmental segment, an academic and research segment, and an industry and services segment, and there would also be a Youth Forum and an International Aerospace and Telecommunications Industrial Fair. After the Conference ended, Mexico would head the Secretariat for the next three years, which would enable it to promote important initiatives for the benefit of the region.

29. **Mr. Sial** (Pakistan) said that his delegation believed that COPUOS had an important role to play in maximizing the benefits of space capabilities, particularly in relation to the environment, health and disaster mitigation. Space-based emergency communication and disaster management support were crucial, as Pakistan's experience had shown in the earthquake of 2005 and the recent floods. COPUOS should in addition work to ensure that the benefits of space science and technology reached the developing countries; the developed countries must demonstrate political will and accord priority to sharing experiences, transferring technology and offering non-discriminatory, affordable and timely access to relevant data. All States must have rational and equitable access to the geostationary orbit.

30. Pakistan's lead agency in the field, its Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission, was conducting programmes ranging from education to telemedicine, agriculture, irrigation, watercourse and flood monitoring, natural resource management, satellite meteorology and environmental surveying. It operated a network of three vertical ionospheric sounders and two geomagnetic observatories, and the data acquired was being shared with the World Data Centre for cooperative projects in studies related to the upper atmosphere and climate. The Commission had also been doing research into the use of remote sensing and geospatial information systems to support socio-economic projects; for example, mapping of major canals and waterways was being undertaken with a view to preventing water loss through seepage. Since 1990, Pakistan had been a participant in the COSPAS-SARSAT programme and had been gathering data for search and rescue operations. Pakistan's communication satellite PAKSAT-I, to be replaced in 2011 with a newer model, would augment the existing telecommunication infrastructure and promote the use of satellite communications, particularly for socio-economic development.

31. Pakistan was a party to the five core United Nations treaties on outer space. As a common heritage

of mankind, space should not be included in any military doctrine. There was a need for confidence-building and greater transparency in space activities; negotiations on a comprehensive convention would contribute to that objective. The question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space was germane to the work of both the Conference on Disarmament and COPUOS, and they should therefore maintain a working relationship.

32. **Mr. Cabactulan** (Philippines) noted that in 2009 the Philippines had unfortunately topped the list of countries most affected by natural disasters, with a total of 26 calamities, including typhoons and earthquakes, that had affected more than 13 million people, caused over a thousand deaths and destroyed agricultural land and infrastructure. Since then, much had been done to strengthen the Philippines' disaster risk reduction and response programme. The new Administration was reviewing and improving the country's weather forecasting system to ensure an immediate government response, and was according priority to improving the dissemination of weather information, including to those who could not afford radio equipment. At the onset of the rainy season in June 2010, it had initiated a disaster awareness programme with the participation of local government offices and representatives of political parties. The Philippines' experience had shown clearly that for any disaster preparedness programme to succeed, it had to involve all stakeholders.

33. During the recent national tragedies, the United Nations and the international community had supported the Filipino people with financial and humanitarian assistance, and the country had also benefited from space-based technology made available through UN-SPIDER to track the movement of typhoons via satellite. His Government therefore stressed the need for available and accurate statistics to support disaster reduction. The UN-SPIDER regional support office in Asia, located in the Philippines, could play a role in providing guidance on how interoperational space information products from different satellites could be used in the different phases of disaster management. Sentinel Asia and the International Charter on Space and Major Disasters were also making space-based information readily available to support the disaster management and emergency response of various countries in the region. His Government encouraged activities that would inform people of the benefits of space technology, especially in the areas of disaster management and climate change.

34. **Mr. Kalinin** (Russian Federation) said that cooperation and care were needed to make full use of the potential offered by space technologies.

35. The Russian Federation was convinced of the importance of UN-SPIDER. It noted the progress made in implementing the recommendations of UNISPACE III and stressed the need for further steps in that direction. COPUOS and its Chairman were to be congratulated on the Committee's productive fifty-third session.

36. The Russian Federation was proud of its efforts to ensure the peaceful use of outer space for the benefit of the planet and of the fact that it currently provided about 40 per cent of the world's rocket launching services. The Federation attached great importance to the programme of manned space flights and to its role in the operation of the International Space Station and the scientific research conducted in the Russian segment of the Station, covering such topics as geophysics, cosmic radiation and physical and chemical processes in zero gravity conditions.

37. His country's Federal Space Programme for 2006-2015 focused on environmental protection, disaster mitigation, research on the Earth's natural resources, space projects to expand human knowledge, research on astrophysics, planetology, solar physics and solar-terrestrial relationships, manned orbital flights geared to economic and scientific progress, and design of technologies for the production in outer space of new materials and high-purity substances. Those important goals were achievable only on a multilateral basis. His delegation was convinced that COPUOS should continue to play a central role, organizing international cooperation in the investigation and use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

38. There was regrettably still a danger that outer space would become the scene of an arms race and that possibility was undermining cooperation and trust among States. It was essential to make full use of the potential of the United Nations to prevent the militarization of outer space.

39. In view of the development of new technologies and the commercialization and privatization of space activity, it was important to further develop international law concerning that activity. A United Nations convention on international space law, as proposed by his delegation, would make an important contribution to the development and progressive codification of international law.

40. **Mr. Mohamed** (Sudan), reaffirming the importance of implementing the recommendations of UNISPACE III, called for stronger regional and international cooperation on the use of space technology for sustainable development and action to implement the recommendations of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development and achieve the Millennium Development Goals, in particular the goal of ending poverty and hunger.

41. All States must be allowed access to space technology and transparent scientific data gleaned from satellite observations and must have the opportunity to participate, whatever their level of scientific and economic progress, in relevant scientific committees. Developing countries needed to be provided with capacity-building assistance in using such data and technology to deal, inter alia, with disasters and epidemics.

42. The international community must develop international law on outer space, and there must be increased coordination with international and regional organizations, including through seminars and conferences. In that connection, he welcomed Kenya's hosting of the Fourth African Leadership Conference on Space Science and Technology for Sustainable Development, which was to be held in 2011, and the work of the Third African Leadership Conference, which had been held in Algeria in 2009.

43. The successful activities of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications and the assistance provided to developing countries served to promote international and regional cooperation on the peaceful uses of outer space and help meet challenges ranging from poverty and development to climate change, natural disasters and crises. In that connection, COPUOS should continue to focus on issues such as climate change, biodiversity, development and preventing pollution in outer space. It should establish rules to prevent the militarization of outer space and help to develop frameworks and transparent criteria to ensure that outer space was used for the benefit of all mankind.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.