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Summary record of the 8th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 17 October 2012, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Messone . . . . . (Gabon)

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12-55225 (E)

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

Agenda item 49: University for Peace (A/67/272; A/C.4/67/L.6)

1. **Mr. Maresca** (Rector, University for Peace) said that education, one of the most powerful forces in the world, must be a positive force, reinforcing all peoples' shared values and advancing the goal of a truly peaceful planet. That had been the intention of the General Assembly in 1980, when it had established the University for Peace at the urging of Costa Rica.

2. The University sought to realize that intention through innovation, outreach and the establishment of a range of programmes, including a new online master's degree programme. It was broadening the scope of its teaching, was creating a growing number of University for Peace centres able to reach people in their regions, and was engaged in capacity-building with partner universities that desired to establish peace studies programmes. In all, the University for Peace had become a dynamic and cutting-edge institution, a model for educational institutions around the globe.

3. However, the University needed help. Each year it had difficulty balancing its budget, and it had no regular sources of income. The report of the Secretary-General (A/67/272) listed actions that Member States could take to support the University, whether financially with donations of any size, or politically by signing the University's Charter, which would publicly demonstrate a commitment to peace.

4. He was about to end his term as Rector, after more than five years. He hoped that all Member States would give their full support to the new rector and to the extraordinary institution of the University, which was working in the interests of the entire international community and of world peace.

Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.6: University for Peace

5. **Mr. Ulibarri** (Costa Rica) introduced the draft resolution on behalf of the sponsors, which had been joined by Brazil, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Finland, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Monaco, Montenegro, the Netherlands, the Russian Federation and Togo. It reviewed the new advances achieved by the University for Peace in the period 2010-2012, as covered in the report of the Secretary-General. The sponsors hoped that the resolution would be adopted by consensus.

6. Speaking as the representative of Costa Rica, he said that the University for Peace contributed to peace through interdisciplinary teaching, research, training and the sharing of basic knowledge on peace. Costa Rica considered it an honour to host the institution founded by the late Costa Rican President Carazo Odio. As host, it had the welcome duty of cooperating actively in its institutional and academic development.

7. Despite the present difficult financial conditions, during the past three years the University for Peace had significantly broadened its academic footprint and its contribution to universal peace and understanding. He described some of the expansions in the University's course offerings, including most recently a doctoral programme on the study of peace and conflict, other programmes offered through its affiliates in all continents, and courses taught in Spanish. Cooperation between the United Nations system and the University could well be strengthened, for the University could usefully help train staff involved in peacekeeping and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

8. Costa Rica thanked the international community for its support to the University to date, and urged Member States to sign the International Agreement for the Establishment of the University for Peace and to contribute to the University's programmes and budget.

9. **Mr. Vidal** (Uruguay) said that he wished to acknowledge Costa Rica's ongoing support for the University, enabling it to fulfil the noble objectives for which it had been founded. Education was an indispensable tool for peace, and the work of the United Nations in preventive diplomacy, mediation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding and related fields would not be complete without an institution like the University for Peace, headquartered in a developing country and taking students from all over the world.

10. In line with the basic precepts of its foreign policy in favour of international peace and security, tolerance and liberty, Uruguay had been an early supporter of the institution and Uruguay's former President Sanguinetti was currently serving in the University administration.

11. The University for Peace was currently facing major challenges. For that reason Uruguay endorsed the draft resolution introduced by Costa Rica. Its adoption by consensus would send a clear message about the need for all those involved to renew their

commitments so that the University for Peace could continue to grow in keeping with its ideals.

12. **Mr. Bamba** (Côte d'Ivoire) said that peace was the basis of his Government's foreign policy, and the search for peace, by academic study, went right to the heart of the objectives of the United Nations. Consequently his country, which was emerging slowly but surely from a long and painful crisis, with its corollary of insecurity, interruption of schooling and closure of universities, aligned itself unreservedly with the ideas behind the establishment of the University for Peace. Côte d'Ivoire had followed the course of dialogue and reconciliation in creating the conditions for a return to a long-lasting peace. However, it was important also to deal with such questions at an early stage, by educating minds for peace and tolerance. While working on reopening the universities, his Government intended to begin aligning their technical programmes with those of the University for Peace, with a view to re-establishing, in due course, a society in Côte d'Ivoire embodying once again the virtues of peace and coexistence.

13. A welcome cooperation had been in place for some years between the University for Peace and certain African States, notably Ethiopia. The University had established an Africa programme in 2002 on the basis of wide-ranging consultations across the continent, drawing up an action plan to deal with real needs, aspirations and obstacles to education, an indispensable precondition for the creation of peace in Africa. The conflicts in the developing countries could not indefinitely be resolved by intervention from the international community. It was therefore necessary to search for other ways forward, such as the one taken by the United Nations with its creation of the University for Peace and its emphasis on values and civic virtues.

14. **The Chair**, indicating that draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.6 had no budgetary implications, announced that Algeria, Lebanon, Nicaragua and Ukraine had also become sponsors.

15. *Draft resolution A/C.4/67/L.6 was adopted.*

Agenda item 51: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (A/67/20; A/C.4/67/L.2 and L.7)

16. **Mr. Horikawa** (Japan), speaking as Chair of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), and introducing its report on its fifty-fifth session (A/67/20), recalled several recent anniversaries of achievements in space endeavours, which acted as reminders that space exploration and advances in space science were fundamental to the use of space technology and its applications for the benefit of human development on Earth.

17. The Committee had continuously endeavoured to promote awareness of the peaceful uses of space technology applications at many different levels and in many different areas. In particular, space technology could be used to give advance warning of natural disasters and to mitigate them. Japan, for instance, grateful to all countries for their help after its great earthquake and tsunami, now realized that the loss of life and property could have been reduced if better advance information had been available through improved risk assessment, early warning and monitoring, buttressed by timely, integrated and coordinated use of space technology applications.

18. Challenges to societies, including climate change, and to food security and global health — all interlinked with disasters — required a holistic approach. If the space-based applications of remote sensing, satellite telecommunication and navigation systems were systematically integrated into multi-source geospatial datasets, it would be easier to meet those challenges.

19. In its report to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) on harnessing space-derived geospatial data for sustainable development (A/AC.105/993), the Committee had, inter alia, recommended establishing sustainable national spatial data infrastructures; enhancing autonomous national capabilities in space-derived geospatial data and engaging in more informed international cooperation in that area; and supporting United Nations efforts to use geospatial information in its mandated programmes to assist all Member States. It was gratifying that the outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference recognized the importance of space-technology-based data for sustainable development (General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex, para. 274).

20. COPUOS itself had agreed to include in its agenda a new item devoted to space and sustainable development, under which future Committee activities reflecting the results of the Conference could be taken up. The Committee also needed to look ahead to the post-2015 global development agenda, set out in the

2012 report to the Secretary-General, *Realizing the Future We Want for All*, in which there were many areas where space-based technologies and data were of crucial importance, among them improved scientific understanding of the space environment, and more accurate environmental and social impact assessments and more informed decision-making.

21. COPUOS, operating by consensus, had a long history of resolving complex issues that influenced the space activities of many countries. It had been at the centre of efforts to peacefully explore and utilize outer space so as to further the social development of all countries, and had also been instrumental over the years in developing the legal regime governing the use of outer space.

22. Several of the Committee's agenda items related to the work done by the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities, the only United Nations-wide coordination mechanism in the field. The continued common efforts of its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and Legal Subcommittee to promote national implementation of the Committee's Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines were commendable, as was the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee's ongoing work on the use of nuclear power sources in outer space, and on near-Earth objects. A promising workplan was being carried out by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee's Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities and its four dedicated Expert Groups. In addition, the Legal Subcommittee's Working Group on National Space Legislation had adopted its final report (A/AC.105/C.2/101).

23. The United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs had played an important role as the substantive secretariat for various intergovernmental bodies. It served as the executive secretariat of the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems and was implementing the plan of work of the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER). The Office's United Nations Programme on Space Applications continued to play an important role in improving capacity in many important areas, and the Office itself had long been working on building capacity in space law.

24. International organizations and space agencies continued to be of major importance in promoting space activities at various levels. Regional mechanisms had the particular task of enhancing coordination and cooperation between spacefaring nations and emerging space nations, and in establishing partnerships between users and providers of space-based services; such activities were being performed by the African Leadership Conference on Space Science and Technology for Sustainable Development, the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum, the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization and the Space Conference of the Americas. In addition, the regional centres for space science and technology education, affiliated to the United Nations, had firmly established infrastructures for advanced training, and their long-standing education programmes were highly successful. Likewise, the network of UN-SPIDER regional support offices around the world promoted regional coordination in disaster risk reduction.

25. There was an ongoing need to promote the role of the Committee and its Subcommittees as a unique global platform for international cooperation in space-related research and long-term space utilization; to develop the dialogue between the Committee and regional or interregional mechanisms in the field; and to make space science and technology more relevant to the objectives set by the Rio+20 Conference.

26. **Mr. Sinhaseni** (Thailand), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that both the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had done critical work in enhancing international cooperation in the field. Over the years they had deliberated on some pivotal concerns related to capacity-building and to the use of space science and technology applications for the benefit of all, particularly the developing countries, and had enhanced international dialogue and exchange of information.

27. ASEAN was convinced that space science and technology applications could contribute significantly to sustainable development by helping to achieve goals such as improved living conditions, creation of more economic opportunities, better widespread access to information and protection of the environment. It encouraged COPUOS to continue exploring ways of integrating space technologies into the implementation of the recommendations of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of

Outer Space (UNISPACE III), as well as the application of space technology and data in the context of the post-2015 global development agenda.

28. For people in remote rural areas of Southeast Asia and other regions, the benefits of space science and technology were still very far removed. The States members of ASEAN took seriously their role in promoting awareness of such applications and improving them, and had put much effort into regularly organizing conferences in the region, such as the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum.

29. As the Asia-Pacific region was unfortunately prone to natural disasters, the ASEAN Subcommittee on Space Technology and Applications had focused its energy on developing space science and technology applications in the area of disaster management, and specifically on an early warning system relying on the ASEAN Earth observation satellite scheduled to be in operation by 2015. ASEAN was also concerned with the issue of space debris, now so widespread as to pose a serious risk, and it supported the work of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee in space debris mitigation and in the monitoring of space objects.

30. Speaking as the representative of Thailand, he said that space technology, particularly high-resolution satellite imagery, had been used intensively during the devastating 2011 flood in his country to map flooded areas, playing a crucial role in relief, compensation and rehabilitation. The Government had organized numerous seminars and conferences to promote knowledge of space technology and its applications — 55 such events in 2011, attended by over 10,000 people. It had also broadcast distance-learning courses via satellite to more than 3,000 schools nationwide. A new communications satellite was due to be launched in mid-2013.

31. Welcoming the forthcoming establishment of 12 UN-SPIDER regional support offices with voluntary funding, Thailand also encouraged UN-SPIDER to develop more real-time satellite images, of such benefit to disaster-affected countries.

32. **Ms. Pessôa** (Brazil), speaking on behalf of the States members of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) and of its associated States, recalled their commitment to the principles of the United Nations treaties on outer space, including the use of outer space for the benefit of humanity, the right of all States to explore space freely on an equal basis and use it as a tool for the maintenance of international peace and security. International conferences as well constantly referred to the scientific and human benefits resulting from the use of outer space. The outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, for example, recognized the importance of space-based data for the formulation of sustainable development policies and projects and for helping developing countries to collect environmental data.

33. COPUOS had worked effectively to clarify the principles involved through its important contributions to the Rio+20 Conference; and the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs had also advanced the success of the Conference.

34. The well-being of peoples and the safeguarding of social and economic rights were increasingly dependent on space-derived data and applications. Many public services, scientific research, trade and information flows all required reliable communications and remote sensing systems that in turn demanded an appropriate and democratic governance of outer space.

35. Regional and international cooperation was fundamental to ensuring the peaceful use of outer space, promoting space science and technology and their applications, assisting States — particularly the developing countries — to develop their space capabilities, and furthering the Millennium Development Goals and the goals of the Rio+20 outcome document.

36. The greatest threat was the prospect of an arms race in outer space. To avoid it, confidence-building and transparency measures were needed. MERCOSUR and its associated States were firmly committed to multilateralism, which in the legal framework of the United Nations served as a guarantee that outer space would be explored and used for the benefit of all countries, whatever their degree of economic and scientific development, and of all human beings.

37. In order to ensure that outer space was used for exclusively peaceful purposes, in conformity with articles 3 and 4 of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (Outer Space Treaty), regulations had to be adopted to enforce those principles.

38. The report of COPUOS had made useful recommendations regarding ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes, especially with reference to its own fundamental role and to the necessity of international, regional and interregional cooperation. Since regional cooperation was particularly important to MERCOSUR and its associated States, they welcomed the decision to establish a new UN-SPIDER support centre for the Latin American and Caribbean region in Argentina, intended to provide capacity-building and to promote the use of satellite technologies in all phases of disaster management and emergency response.

39. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela was to be congratulated on its recent launching of a satellite that would assist in a wide range of national development projects; as was the United States on the fortieth anniversary of the launching of the LANDSAT satellite, to whose valuable scientific data it had decided to give unrestricted access, following a policy similar to that of Brazil and China on the distribution of images from the CBERS satellite. The centres for space science and technology education located in the Latin American and Caribbean region were other essential sources of national capacity-building. The forthcoming seminar on space law organized by Argentina in conjunction with the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs and the European Space Agency should also prove very beneficial to the region.

40. **Mr. Hallergard** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the acceding country Croatia; the candidate countries Iceland, Montenegro, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the stabilization and association process countries Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Armenia, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had laid down a firm legal basis for all forms of space activities, thus promoting international cooperation and understanding in the field.

41. Progress had been particularly significant in two areas. First, the Working Group on National Legislation Relevant to the Peaceful Exploration and Use of Outer Space had issued a final report that constituted an excellent analysis of the current status and development of national space legislation and regulatory frameworks. The report should be submitted to the General Assembly, in order to give it more visibility. Secondly, the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities had been launched, and its work would be of key importance.

42. Improving and rationalizing the working methods of COPUOS and its Subcommittees was also crucial and, in the interests of efficiency, the European Union was ready to explore concrete proposals such as the reallocation of resources, the staggered consideration of agenda items, or the merger of items.

43. The socioeconomic applications of space systems were another important topic of discussion within COPUOS and elsewhere. From security to natural resource management to climate change, satellites were assuming a growing importance in everyday life and users of the applications needed to be educated on how to make better use of outer space and space systems. The European Union had been closely following the achievements of UN-SPIDER thus far. The Platform was central to ensuring that all countries could access and use space-based information during all phases of disaster management.

44. Many of the leading spacefaring nations were European. The first priorities of the European Space Policy were global navigation and Earth observation, requiring specific action on climate change, security, competitiveness and space exploration. The European Space Agency focused on research and development of space systems while the European Union, which funded space programmes, was assuming more responsibility in space matters, especially applications, and developing a picture of how space could best serve Europe’s citizens and European policies. A milestone in the pan-European navigation satellite programme EGNOS was the launching of two more satellites, an important step towards the deployment and utilization of a competitive and independent Galileo system.

45. Space was a driver of economic growth and innovation for the benefit of all people. It served to address major challenges such as climate change, scarce resources, health and ageing, and it boosted the competitiveness of industry well beyond the space sector, contributing to job creation and worldwide economic growth. It was necessary to ensure greater safety, security and sustainability in outer space, and to that end the European Union and its member States were committed to developing transparency and confidence-building measures. They were also particularly sensitive to the issue of space debris,

hazardous to current and future activities in outer space, and therefore a priority.

46. As a complement to the many other important space security initiatives already under way, the European Union had launched a proposal for an International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities, based on three principles: freedom for all to use outer space for peaceful purposes, preservation of the security and integrity of space objects in orbit, and due consideration of the legitimate security and defence needs of States. The Code would be applicable to both States and non-State entities and to both civil and military activities. Wide consultations had been held on the preliminary draft of the Code, and the initiative had already gained the support of key spacefaring nations. The draft Code would be discussed at a multilateral expert meeting, in which all States Members of the United Nations were invited to participate. The aim was to arrive at a final version of the Code acceptable to all interested States, which would then be open to participation by all on a voluntary basis.

47. **Ms. Comesaña** (Cuba) said that combined efforts had to be made to ensure that outer space did not become an arena for the arms race. That would not only endanger the very existence of space applications, destroying once and for all their promising future, but would also present even greater threats to human beings. The current legal framework governing outer space and space activities was insufficient to guarantee that there would not be an arms race in space. The Conference on Disarmament, as the only relevant multilateral negotiating forum, should take the lead in urgent negotiation of a multilateral agreement to prevent an arms race in outer space, as an essential step towards preventing its militarization and the stationing of nuclear weapons there.

48. Cuba despite its economic difficulties caused primarily by a cruel blockade, was pushing forward with space research and applications directed towards the peaceful use of outer space, notably the use of space technologies in meteorology. High-resolution satellite images had helped Cuba to detect forest fires and perfect its weather forecasting so as to prevent hurricanes and other atmospheric events, which, together with preventive evacuation, had made it possible to reduce the loss of human life considerably.

49. The right of all States to explore and utilize space for the benefit of all humanity was a universally accepted legal principle. However, for all States to achieve fully autonomous capabilities was neither technologically nor economically possible in the foreseeable future. As the number of States taking part in space activities increased, that made greater bilateral and multilateral, regional and international cooperation and technology transfers urgently necessary, especially for the developing States.

50. The relationship between the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the Commission on Sustainable Development should continue to develop. COPUOS had made a welcome contribution to the recent United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, which should be taken into account. The issues of climate change and food security should also be taken up by COPUOS.

51. **Mr. Orellana** (Guatemala) said that COPUOS was doing essential work in promoting initiatives for space exploration and research, for using the benefits of space technology on Earth, and for ensuring global security. Regional, interregional and international cooperation in space activities and capacity-building, and closer coordination between the Committee and other intergovernmental bodies, should therefore be supported.

52. The present legal system governing outer space must be strengthened to prevent the stationing of weapons there and to ensure that outer space continued to be used for peaceful purposes.

53. Any space activities for which further rules were adopted must, however, be sustainable. Their sustainability depended to a large extent on reduction of space debris. The valuable Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines drawn up by COPUOS were a step in the right direction but had to be supplemented by measures to reduce space debris creation and proliferation. It was very useful to exchange information on national legal mechanisms for reducing debris.

54. The possible saturation of the geostationary orbit, a finite natural resource, also jeopardized sustainable activities in outer space. Its use should be rationalized, placing it within the reach of all States, regardless of their current technical capacity; that should be possible with the cooperation of the International Telecommunication Union, paying particular attention to the needs of the developing countries.

55. The rapid increase in space activities and in the number of agencies pursuing them required greater coordination in order to promote understanding and ensure application of the relevant United Nations treaties, which should reduce or prevent potential disputes.

56. Problems relating to water, which often had political implications, had become one of the most serious environmental issues. The conservation and proper utilization of water resources were of essential importance for all. Space-derived data could help to formulate policies and permit informed decisions on the handling of water resources, but for many developing countries it was difficult to obtain such data, making international cooperation necessary.

57. It was also true that climate change was having an impact on all regions of the world. Some countries were conducting satellite monitoring of atmospheric dynamics, oceans, the Earth's surface, the biosphere and other components of the climatic system that was highly valuable. There should be international cooperation in sharing the use of space technology, a basic tool for dealing with the problems of climate change, and the developing countries must be given complete access to the data thus collected and the knowledge to make appropriate use of the data.

58. **Mr. Ram** (Israel) said that the number of countries developing or relying on space programmes and space technology applications for their economic development and national security was steadily growing. Given the high cost of space programmes, many countries found it advantageous to enter into cooperative ventures. That was the approach taken by the Israeli Space Agency, which had cooperative agreements with the space agency of France to build and operate a micro-satellite to monitor vegetation and the environment in order to optimize agriculture and aquaculture; with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) of the United States, most recently on the tragic Columbia Shuttle mission that was monitoring atmospheric aerosols and the influence of global changes on the climate and coordinating ozone mapping; with the space agency of Italy on space collaboration for peaceful purposes; and with the Russian space agency on astrophysical and planetary research, space biology, medicine, navigational satellites and launching technology.

59. Israel itself had successfully produced, launched and operated 15 satellites. The Israeli private sector as well was contributing significantly to the global space industry by producing a wide range of space products and providing valuable services to a number of countries in the fields of rural communication, space electro-optics, and satellite coverage.

60. Israel was investing in science and technology for the benefit of the international community. It looked forward to cooperating and sharing its expertise with any nation that shared its dedication to space science and exploration.

61. **Ms. Nagahara** (Japan) said that space-based technologies had become indispensable in society for providing services of telecommunication, Earth observation and navigation. International cooperation was the key to the development of appropriate activities in space. COPUOS was a unique platform for enhancing global governance in the field. By exchanging views and information in COPUOS, Member States could ensure transparency and promote mutual confidence, seeking common ground on a range of different space issues and securing the long-term sustainability of outer space activities. In the interests of sustainability, Japan was organizing an international workshop on protection of the space environment in December 2012 in Kuala Lumpur.

62. The input of COPUOS to the Rio+20 Conference was a good example of how it could also help tackle other global issues like sustainable development. It was extremely important to follow up on the Committee's contributions to any such issues.

63. The Office of National Space Policy had recently been given cabinet status as her Government's lead agency in policy formulation. Japan was working with the International Space Station and in 2013 the thirty-ninth Station mission would be led by a Japanese astronaut.

64. **Mr. Genina** (Mexico) said that in the face of the growing threats to international security there was a need to reflect upon the vision and targets of COPUOS within the context of multilateral cooperation. The objective must be clear: space must remain open for all States to use exclusively for peaceful purposes.

65. International cooperation was of fundamental importance to the promotion of research and innovation in space science and technology, given the

profusion of space technology applications in recent decades. Access to space technology fostered prosperity, development and an improved understanding among peoples, brought benefits in areas as diverse as health, education, telecommunications, the environment, agriculture and food security and also helped to reduce the digital divide.

66. Mexico supported development of the legal regime governing the use of space, calling on Member States to subscribe to the United Nations treaties on outer space and to comply with decisions in that area taken within the United Nations system. In Latin America and the Caribbean, a fundamental role was played by the regional centres for space science and technology education and the Space Conference of the Americas, the sixth of which had adopted the Declaration of Pachuca to promote cooperative projects in various fields. In that context, the Mexican Space Agency had in 2012, with regional assistance, organized a meeting on the use of space for human and environmental security in the Americas, with an emphasis on sustainability and on cyber-health.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.