



# General Assembly

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**Committee on the Peaceful  
Uses of Outer Space**  
Scientific and Technical Subcommittee  
Forty-sixth session  
Vienna, 9-20 February 2009

## Draft report

### Addendum

#### **X. Examination of the physical nature and technical attributes of the geostationary orbit and its utilization and applications, including 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**

1. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 63/90, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee considered agenda item 12, "Examination of the physical nature and technical attributes of the geostationary orbit and its utilization and applications, including 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", as a single issue/item for discussion.
2. The representatives of Colombia, the Czech Republic, Greece and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) made statements on the item. The observer for the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) also made a statement.
3. The Subcommittee welcomed the information provided in the annual report for 2008 of the ITU Radiocommunication Bureau on the use of the geostationary satellite orbit and other orbits (<http://www.itu.int/itu-R/space/snl/report>). The Subcommittee invited ITU to continue submitting reports to it.
4. Some delegations reiterated the view that the geostationary orbit was a limited natural resource and that it was at risk of becoming saturated. Those delegations were of the view that the exploitation of the geostationary orbit should be

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rationalized and made available to all States, irrespective of their current technical capabilities, thus giving them the opportunity to have access to the geostationary orbit under equitable conditions, taking into account in particular the needs of developing countries.

5. The view was expressed that a balance should be established between commercial use of the geostationary orbit and the need for equitable access to that resource by developing countries.

6. The view was expressed that equitable access by all States to spectrum resources within the geostationary orbit was severely threatened by commercial operators that, under the protection of a number of Governments, over-exploited a limited resource of strategic importance.

7. The view was expressed that gaps in the regulatory framework for the geostationary orbit made it difficult for developing countries to gain equitable access to spectrum resources within the geostationary orbit. That delegation was of the view that the Committee could assist developing countries in gaining equitable access by preparing a contribution to the World Radio Communications Conference, to be held in Geneva in 2011, and proposed that a working group be established to prepare such a document.

8. The view was expressed that ITU was the sole specialized agency of the United Nations system empowered to regulate telecommunications, including the international allocation of the radio frequencies and associated orbital positions in the geostationary orbit and other orbits, and that it would be inappropriate for a working group to be established with the aim of preparing a document that would intervene in the work of ITU.

## **XI. International Heliophysical Year 2007**

9. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 63/90, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee considered agenda item 13, "International Heliophysical Year 2007", as a single issue/item for discussion.

10. The representatives of Canada, China, Japan, Nigeria and the United States made statements on the item.

11. The Subcommittee heard the following scientific and technical presentations:

(a) "The Corot mission", by the representative of France;

(b) "Achievements of the International Heliophysical Year 2007", by the representative of the United States;

(c) "The PICARD mission", by the representative of France;

(d) "The lunar explorer KAGUYA: one year in operation and early results", by the representative of Japan.

12. The Subcommittee had before it the following:

(a) *IHY 2007 Final Report (ST/SPACE/43)*;

(b) Report on the Fourth United Nations/European Space Agency/National Aeronautics and Space Administration/Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency Workshop on the International Heliophysical Year 2007 and Basic Space Science, held in Sozopol, Bulgaria, from 2 to 4 June 2008 (A/AC.105/919).

13. The Subcommittee noted that the objectives of the International Heliophysical Year 2007 were:

(a) To provide benchmark measurements of the responses of the magnetosphere, the ionosphere, the lower atmosphere and the Earth's surface in order to identify global processes and drivers that affected the terrestrial environment and climate;

(b) To further the global study of the Sun-heliosphere system outwards to the heliopause in order to understand the external and historical drivers of geophysical change;

(c) To foster international scientific cooperation in the study of current and future heliophysical phenomena;

(d) To communicate the unique scientific results of the International Heliophysical Year to interested members of the scientific community and to the general public.

14. The Subcommittee welcomed the report by the secretariat of the International Heliophysical Year on relevant activities conducted in 2008.

15. The Subcommittee expressed its appreciation to the secretariat of the International Heliophysical Year and the Office for Outer Space Affairs for conducting an international campaign, from 2005 to 2009, aimed at exploring solar-terrestrial interaction and deploying ground-based worldwide instrument arrays for space weather investigation, particularly in developing countries. As a result of that campaign, more than 90 States, of which over 70 were developing countries, were actively collecting data to be used to understand how space weather, caused by solar variability, could affect space systems and human space flight; electric power transmission; high-frequency radio communications; global navigation satellite system (GNSS) signals; long-range radar; and the well-being of passengers in high altitude aircraft.

16. The Subcommittee expressed its appreciation to the secretariat of the International Heliophysical Year and the Office for Outer Space Affairs for the numerous publications, posters and leaflets they had published and disseminated and for the exhibitions they had organized to promote the International Heliophysical Year 2007 among the space science and technology community and the general public, particularly in developing countries.

17. The Subcommittee noted with appreciation that the publication *IHY 2007 Final Report* provided a comprehensive overview of the extensive activities conducted worldwide between 2005 and 2008 to implement the objectives of the International Heliophysical Year 2007.

18. The Subcommittee noted with appreciation that Canada, China, Japan, Nigeria and the United States had reported on their achievements and on the activities they had carried out in 2008 in the framework of the International Heliophysical Year 2007.

19. The Subcommittee agreed that it was important to continue: to explore the solar corona; to deepen understanding of the function of the Sun and the effects that the variability of the Sun could have on Earth's magnetosphere, environment and climate; to explore the ionized environments of planets; and to determine the limits of the heliosphere and to deepen understanding of its interaction with interstellar space.

20. The Subcommittee agreed to consider, beginning at its forty-seventh session, a new agenda item entitled "International Space Weather Initiative" under a three-year workplan in order to build upon the success of the International Heliophysical Year 2007.

## **XII. Draft provisional agenda for the forty-seventh session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee**

21. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 63/90, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee considered proposals for a draft provisional agenda for its forty-seventh session, to be submitted to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Pursuant to paragraph 11 of that resolution, the Subcommittee requested the Working Group of the Whole, reconvened at its 703rd meeting, on 11 February, to consider the draft provisional agenda for the forty-seventh session of the Subcommittee.

22. At its [...]th meeting, on [...] February, the Subcommittee endorsed the recommendations of the Working Group of the Whole concerning the draft provisional agenda for the forty-seventh session of the Subcommittee, contained in the report of the Working Group of the Whole (see annex I).

23. The Subcommittee noted that the Secretariat had scheduled the forty-seventh session of the Subcommittee to be held from 8 to 19 February 2010.