

10 June 2009

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**Committee on the Peaceful  
Uses of Outer Space**  
Fifty-second session  
Vienna, 3-12 June 2009

**Letter by Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses  
of Outer Space to the Rector of the United Nations  
University**

**Note by the Secretariat**

1. The Committee at its fifty-first session in 2008 invited the Chairman of the Committee to contact the United Nations University with a view to exploring the possibility of including subjects related to international space law in the education curricula of the University.
2. In its resolution 62/217 the General Assembly encouraged the United Nations University, a think tank of the United Nations and several of the specialized agencies, to explore the possibilities of providing training and policy research at the crossroads of international law, climate change and outer space. The same message was repeated in Assembly resolution 63/90. The Legal Subcommittee, at its forty-eighth session in 2009, recommended that the United Nations University be invited to report on its activities relating to capacity-building in space law.
3. The annex to this document contains the letter by the Chairman of the Committee and the reply from the United Nations University.





Chairman of the Committee  
on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

17 April 2009

Dear Prof. Osterwalder,

I am writing to you in my capacity as Chairman of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), which is the main intergovernmental body in the United Nations system dealing with international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

The Committee was established in 1959 and has today 69 member States and 24 intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations with permanent observer status. The Committee and its two subsidiary bodies, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the Legal Subcommittee, are currently dealing with a broad range of topics related to the enhancement of national, regional, and international capacity-building and training in space science and technology applications and space law. The Office for Outer Space Affairs (OOSA), which is the Secretariat of the Committee, conducts a wide range of capacity-building and training activities, through the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, in areas such as satellite communications for tele-health applications; monitoring and protection of the environment; management of natural resources; developing capabilities in the use of global navigation and positioning satellite systems, including through the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems (ICG); and capacity-building in space law, and activities through its newly established United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER), with an office already set-up in Bonn, Germany. The Office also works closely with the four Regional Centres for Space Science and Technology Education, affiliated to the United Nations.

In its resolution 62/217 of 17 December 2007, the General Assembly encouraged the United Nations University, a think tank for the United Nations and several of the specialized agencies, to explore the possibilities of providing training and policy research at the crossroads of international law, climate change and outer space. The same message was repeated in General Assembly resolution 63/90 of 5 December 2008. The Legal Subcommittee, at its recent 48<sup>th</sup> session in March 2009, recommended that the United Nations University be invited to report on its activities relating to capacity-building in space law.

The Committee, at its 51<sup>st</sup> session in 2008, invited me to contact the United Nations University with a view to exploring the possibility of including subjects related to international space law in the education curricula of the University.

/...

Prof. Dr. Konrad Osterwalder  
Rector  
United Nations University Centre  
5-53-70 Jingumae  
Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150-8925  
Japan  
Fax: (+81-3) 3499-2828



Chairman of the Committee  
on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

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I have taken note with great interest of the activities and training programmes of UNU, including its network of research and training centres. I have also noted the broad areas of research taking place within the framework of UNU and its Associated Institutions, such as in the broader fields of sustainability, peace and international cooperation; governance and regional integration, development economics; and strategic approaches to sustainable development, and in more specific fields such as biotechnology and society; environment and human security; food and nutrition capacity building; natural resource management; climate change impact on global health; water, environment and human health; and socio-economic impacts of new technologies. I have also noted planned activities in the field of sustainable forestry. All these fields have strong links to the use of space technology applications such as Earth observation, satellite navigation and positioning, and communication.

The Committee and its Subcommittees are deeply involved in promoting regional and inter-regional coordination and cooperation, in particular in areas related to the implementation of major global agendas for sustainable development and human development. Space law and regulatory frameworks are increasingly becoming important pillars in the development of national and regional mechanisms for space activities, and for advancing capacity-building, in particular for the benefit of developing countries. One example where space law and space science and technology education, research and training will be more closely integrated is the ongoing project of the Office for Outer Space Affairs in creating an education curriculum for a basic course in space law to be used by the Regional Centres, mentioned above, and which are located in Morocco (French) and Nigeria (English) for Africa; India for Asia and the Pacific; and Brazil and Mexico for Latin America and the Caribbean. The curriculum in space law is also aimed for future use by other research and training institutions at national, regional, and international levels.

With this in mind, I would appreciate it if UNU could inform me on any current or planned activities within its network of associated institutions and programmes that relate to the field of space and development, in particular on inter-linkages between science and technology on the one hand and policy and international law on the other, or the possible inclusion of such cross-cutting training in future curricula of UNU.

I also have the pleasure of inviting you or a representative of UNU network and associated institutions, as appropriate, to attend the upcoming 52<sup>nd</sup> session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, to be held in Vienna, from 3 to 12 June 2009, to make a general presentation on UNU programmes and/or on specific research and training activities that could be of interest to Member States of the Committee.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ciro Arévalo Yepes'.

Ciro Arévalo Yepes



UNITED NATIONS  
UNIVERSITY

30 April 2009

Dr. Ciro Arévalo Yepes  
Chairman  
Committee on the Peaceful Uses  
of Outer Space  
United Nations Office at Vienna  
Vienna International Centre  
Wagramerstrasse 5, A-1220 Vienna  
AUSTRIA

**Centre**

53-70, Jingumae 5-chome 国際連合大学 本部  
Shibuya-ku  
Tokyo 150-8925 150-8925  
Japan 東京都渋谷区神宮前5丁目53-70  
Tel: (03) 5467-1212  
Fax: (03) 3499-2828  
E-mail: mbox@hq.unu.edu

Dear Dr. Arévalo Yepes,

**Subject: Collaboration between the United Nations University and the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS)**

We thank you for your faxed letter of 17 April 2009. We would like to inform you that the matter of future collaboration on training and policy research in the areas of international law, climate change and outer space is being put before the Executive Committee of the United Nations University for further consideration.

We will be mailing you our 2008 Annual Report, which should go some way in clarifying our ongoing research projects. We hope that this will be of some help in elucidating not only the mandate of the United Nations University, but also the direction of our future research.

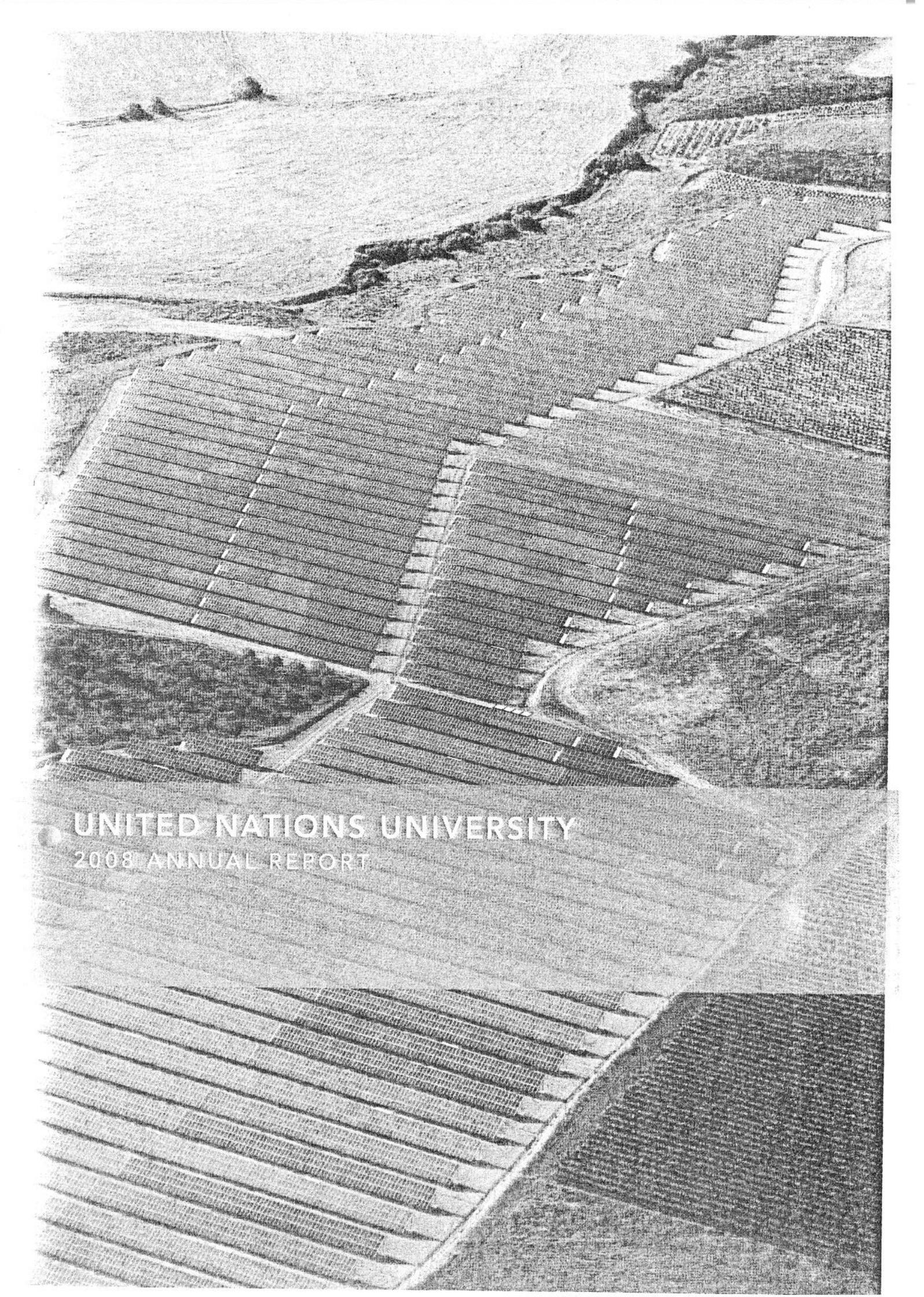
We hope to revert back to you in the near future and would like to take this opportunity to apologize for this delayed response.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,

Max Bond  
Executive Officer  
Office of the Rector  
United Nations University (UNU)

<b>OFFICE FOR OUTER SPACE AFFAIRS (OOSA) / UNOV</b>	
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