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English only

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

Note by the Secretariat

The present document contains the text of the statement delivered by the delegation of Germany under agenda item 7 “Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on its forty-sixth session”.



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UN-Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Fifty-second session

Vienna, 3 – 12 June 2009

TOP 7 – Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on its forty-sixth session

Mr. Chairman, distinguished Delegates,

Allow me to take the floor once more under agenda item seven, this time on behalf of my own as well as the Italian delegation. The need for space debris mitigation has been recognized by the UN more than a decade ago. Implementation of space debris mitigation measures now belong to the daily routine of many space faring nations and international organizations.

Several harmful orbital events, most recently the satellite collision in February 2009, have generated a considerable amount of long-life orbital debris. Therefore, in addition to the UN-COPUOS Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines, making available information on the existing population on objects in outer space is important in order, inter alia, to avoid collisions in outer space between operational spacecraft and space debris and other operational spacecraft respectively, as well as to protect the Earth's population in case of re-entering debris.

Mr. Chairman,

There is a wealth of valuable information from reliable sources available, relating to objects in outer space, which can be publicly accessed - free of charge - in the Internet. Nonetheless, such information is not always easy to find and, in addition, not easy to process in particular for the majority of space faring nations who do not have the capacities to effectively perform analysis.

Therefore, to make it easier for those nations, who are interested in obtaining this information and also in the spirit of providing transparency and building confidence amongst nations, we see a need for facilitating the access to existing sources of relevant data and information via a specific platform under UN-auspices that would be open and freely accessible to all UN-Member States.

Our present proposal is based on earlier motions of the Italian delegation in the last sessions of both UN-COPUOS-Subcommittees as well as in this ongoing session.

In this context Mr. Chairman, it seems that our proposal may also bear similarity to what you pointed out in your paper "Towards a UN Space Policy", in mentioning the necessity for, inter alia, "...access to data and catalogues of debris collected by Member States...".

However, such a measure as proposed will require thorough analysis and further intensive discussions. We feel that this discussion should be conducted in an initial phase among technical experts. As a preparation for such a discussion Germany and Italy propose that UN-COPUOS invite Member States of the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee (IADC), the well known, highly competent international body of space agencies, to prompt this

body to develop first ideas on concrete measures with the purpose of making available already existing sources of information as well as data and information on objects in outer space for the promotion of a safe and sustainable development of the peaceful uses of outer space. Contributions in this respect will be exclusively on a voluntary basis. Subsequently reflections on this matter shall be presented by IADC to the UN-COPUOS Scientific and Technical Subcommittee.

Germany and Italy call on interested Delegations to support this proposal.

Thank you.
