



General Assembly

Distr.: Limited
15 June 2007

Original: English

**Committee on the Peaceful
Uses of Outer Space
Fiftieth session
Vienna, 6-15 June 2007**

Draft report

Chapter II

Addendum

C. Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on its forty-fourth session

6. Space-system-based disaster management support

1. The Committee noted that, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 61/111, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee had considered the agenda item on space-system-based disaster management support in accordance with the three-year workplan adopted at its forty-first session (A/AC.105/823, annex II, para. 15) and amended at its forty-second session (A/AC.105/848, annex I, para. 21). The Committee took note of the discussions of the Subcommittee under that agenda item, as contained in the report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee (A/AC.105/890, paras. 126-142).

2. The Committee noted with satisfaction that, in its resolution 61/110 of 14 December 2006, the General Assembly had decided to establish a programme within the United Nations to provide universal access to all countries and all relevant international and regional organizations to all types of space-based information and services relevant to disaster management to support the full disaster management cycle. In the same resolution, the Assembly agreed that the programme should be named the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (SPIDER) and that it should be implemented as a programme of the Office for Outer Space Affairs under the overall supervision of the Director of the Office.

3. The Committee welcomed the implementation of the SPIDER programme, highlighting the benefits that such a programme would bring to developing



countries, particularly to those countries that suffered frequent disasters and that would benefit from access to, as well as use, space-based solutions for disaster management.

4. The Committee noted that the Office for Outer Space Affairs had presented to the Subcommittee, at its forty-fourth session, a detailed plan of work for SPIDER for 2007 and the platform programme for the period 2007-2009.

5. The Committee endorsed the plan of work for 2007 and the proposed platform programme for the period 2007-2009 presented by the Office to the Subcommittee in accordance with the request of the General Assembly.

6. The Committee noted that, in accordance with the request of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee concerning the steps to be included in the implementation of the programme (A/AC.105/890, para. 137), the Office for Outer Space Affairs was working with China and Germany to set up the offices in Beijing and Bonn, Germany, and that those offices would be established shortly. The Committee also noted that the liaison office in Geneva was being set up and that the Office for Outer Space Affairs was coordinating with various partners in the implementation of the activities planned for 2007.

7. Pursuant to the request by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee (A/AC.105/890, para. 137 (c)), the Office had corresponded with all Member States, inviting them to make cash and in-kind contributions to implement the SPIDER plan of work for 2007 and to indicate possible commitments of support for the programme in the biennium 2008-2009. The Office informed the Committee that additional Member States had indicated their intention to provide support to implement the SPIDER plan of work for the period 2008-2009.

8. Pursuant to the request by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee (A/AC.105/890, para. 137 (d)), the Office presented for the consideration of the Committee at its fiftieth session, a proposed plan of work for the period 2008-2009 (A/AC.105/2007/CRP.13) and a SPIDER summary report (A/AC.105/2007/CRP.14).

9. The Committee expressed its appreciation to the Office for the SPIDER summary report and noted that it contained background information on the programme and the main considerations put forward by the ad hoc expert group in its reports, as well as the agreements reached by the Committee at its forty-ninth session and information concerning implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/110. The Committee noted that the summary report also contained the framework for the operation and coordination of the programme, which would enable SPIDER to take advantage of support and expertise offered by Member States, as well as an outline of the resources required to carry out the SPIDER plan of work for the period 2008-2009 and in future years. The Committee agreed that the SPIDER summary report, as amended by the Committee at its fiftieth session, should be translated into all the official languages of the United Nations.

10. The Committee noted that, in preparing the proposed plan of work for the period 2008-2009, the Office took into consideration the platform programme for the period 2007-2009, endorsed by the Subcommittee, the current status of implementation of the activities being carried out within the plan of work for 2007 and the indication of commitments received from Member States for the period 2008-2009. In reviewing the proposed plan of work for the period 2008-2009, the

Committee agreed that it should include specific target activities for the SPIDER liaison office in Geneva, as well as its proposed activities for 2008 and 2009. The Committee endorsed the plan of work for the period 2008-2009, as amended.

11. The Committee noted that the Office had indicated that, in order to carry out the activities included in the plan of work for the period 2008-2009, it would require an annual operating budget of \$1.78 million to cover personnel, data processing and information technology equipment, fellowships and grants, printing and publication, operating expenses and official travel, and that approximately two thirds of those resources would be made available by Member States that had already indicated financial and in-kind support for the programme for the biennium 2008-2009. In particular, the Committee noted that the extrabudgetary resources being offered by the Governments of Austria, China, Germany and Switzerland included provisions for professional staff, offices and meeting room space, initial furniture and equipment to establish the SPIDER offices in Beijing and Bonn, Germany, the liaison office in Geneva, and to strengthen the Office for Outer Space Affairs in Vienna.

12. The Committee also noted that, in accordance with paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 61/110, the Office for Outer Space Affairs had rearranged its priorities within its proposed programme budget for the period 2008-2009 to provide some support for SPIDER activities while minimizing the impact on its other programme activities.

13. The Committee noted that the regular budget resources were required in order to strengthen the existing capabilities of the Office for Outer Space Affairs to carry out the following elements of the SPIDER programme:

(a) Three programme officers, to be located in Beijing, Bonn, Germany, and Vienna. Each officer would be responsible for coordinating and implementing the activities to be carried out by his or her respective office, for coordinating and implementing the activities to be carried out with the liaison office in Geneva and coordinating the activities to be carried out with the network of regional support offices;

(b) Travel and subsistence allowance for participants in an annual expert meeting of representatives of the network of regional support offices, and a nominal amount for official travel of staff of the programme.

14. The Committee noted that the Secretariat would carry out a thorough review of the implications of the measures indicated in paragraph 13 above and that a written statement containing the programme budget implications of those measures would be submitted to the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on its fiftieth session and of the decision of the Fourth Committee in that respect, if necessary.

15. The Committee recalled that, in its resolution 61/110, the General Assembly had agreed that the programme would be supported through voluntary contributions and through a rearrangement of priorities within the framework of the United Nations reform process and, if necessary, a rearrangement of priorities of the Office for Outer Space Affairs of the Secretariat and that the additional activities would not, as far as possible, have a negative impact on the current programme activities

of the Office and should not result in an increase in the total regular budget of the United Nations.

16. The Committee agreed that progress reports of SPIDER and future workplans should be considered by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee under a regular agenda item on space-system-based disaster management support and that the agenda item should be included in the list of issues to be considered by its Working Group of the Whole. The Committee also agreed that the Office should report to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, at its forty-fifth session, on the activities carried out by SPIDER in 2007.

17. In the event that SPIDER did not receive all the budget resources expected for 2008-2009, the Office for Outer Space Affairs would prepare and present to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, at its forty-fifth session, a reduced plan of work based on the plan of work for the period 2008-2009 endorsed by the Committee.

18. The Committee requested the Office for Outer Space Affairs to continue to secure further support and in-kind or cash contributions for the implementation of the SPIDER plan of work for the period 2008-2009, and to ensure the integration of the contributions offered by the Governments of Austria, China, Germany and Switzerland, as well as the commitments and indications of possible commitment made by Algeria, Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Finland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Morocco, Nigeria, Romania, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey. The Committee further requested the Office to work with those Member States in defining and implementing a network of regional support offices. The network of regional support offices would contribute to any of the specific activities included in the plan of work for the period 2008-2009 by taking on joint responsibility for funding and implementing specific activities in coordination with SPIDER.

19. Recognizing the central role that the network of regional offices would have in promoting and carrying out the work of SPIDER at the regional level, the Committee requested that the Office for Outer Space Affairs work on the definition and implementation of the network with the Member States listed as contributors in paragraph 18 above, as well as with other interested Member States. The network would be able to contribute to any of the specific activities included in the plan of work for the period 2008-2009 by sharing responsibility for funding and implementing a specific activity jointly and in coordination with SPIDER.

20. The Committee agreed that the acronym of the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response should be UN-SPIDER, for its easier recognition as a United Nations programme.

21. Some delegations highlighted the need for the SPIDER programme to focus on disasters from a broader perspective, encompassing not only the full disaster management cycle, but also disasters induced by global climate change.