



# General Assembly

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## Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space Fifty-fifth session Vienna, 6-15 June 2012

### Draft report

### Chapter II

### Recommendations and decisions

#### J. Future role of the Committee

1. The Committee considered the agenda item entitled “Future role of the Committee”, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 66/71.
2. The Committee recalled its agreement at its fifty-fourth session to continue its consideration of the item at its fifty-fifth session, in 2012, for one year only, and to consider submissions under the item, including a proposed update of the working paper by the Chair of the Committee for the period 2008-2009 entitled “Towards a United Nations space policy” (A/AC.105/L.278).
3. The representatives of Argentina, Brazil, China, Italy, Nigeria, the Russian Federation, the United States and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) made statements under the item. During the general exchange of views, statements relating to the item were also made by representatives of other member States.
4. The Committee noted with appreciation the discussion paper entitled “Next phase in global governance for space research and utilization” (A/AC.105/2012/CRP.4), submitted by the current Chair of the Committee with the aim of stimulating thought and promoting an open dialogue on various cross-cutting issues before the Committee.
5. The Committee noted that many issues related to its future role had already been addressed under other agenda items and would therefore be reflected in other parts of the present report.
6. Some delegations expressed the view that the Committee and its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and Legal Subcommittee constituted a unique common



platform for promoting international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space at the global level, and therefore interaction between the three bodies on the cross-cutting issues before them should be intensified.

7. The view was expressed that the utilization of space for the benefit of humankind would have positive effects on the sustainable industrial development of nations and that space could play a key role in assisting developing countries in improving their capabilities. In that context, that delegation was of the view that the Committee should explore ways to cooperate in the future with other United Nations bodies, such as the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development of the Economic and Social Council, in order to find ways in which space technology could contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and any future development targets that might result from political commitments undertaken by Member States upon the conclusion of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20).

8. Some delegations expressed the view that, in order to maintain the peaceful nature of space activities, it was essential for the Committee to enhance its cooperation and coordination with the First Committee of the General Assembly; the group of governmental experts to conduct a study on outer space transparency and confidence-building measures, established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 65/68; and the Conference on Disarmament.

9. The view was expressed that while the working paper referred to in paragraph 2 above contained useful ideas and could be supported in general, several concepts introduced in the paper were ambiguous and different priorities had to be set for their further consideration. That delegation was of the view that any new proposals should not establish a new interpretation of the existing provisions of international space law and that the language of and the definitions contained in such proposals should be clear and consistent with the language and terminology used by the Committee and in international space law.

10. The view was expressed that since the Committee had, in practice, completed the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III, consideration should be given to holding a fourth United Nations conference on the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space in the near future, and that the new multilateral framework that would eventually emerge from Rio+20 would create even more favourable conditions for such an initiative.

11. The Committee agreed to continue its consideration of the item at its fifty-sixth session, in 2013, for one year only.

## **K. Other matters**

12. The Committee considered the agenda item entitled "Other matters", in accordance with General Assembly resolution 66/71.

13. The representatives of Argentina, Austria, Azerbaijan, Chile, China, the Czech Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Germany, Hungary, Iraq, Italy, Mexico, Nigeria,

Romania, the Russian Federation, Pakistan, Portugal, South Africa, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) made statements under the item. Statements were also made by the representatives of Ecuador on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States and Argentina on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. During the general exchange of views, statements relating to the item were also made by representatives of other member States, as well as by the representative of France, together with the observer for the European Union, on behalf of the European Union. The observers for Armenia, Costa Rica and Jordan made statements. Statements were also made by the observers for the Ibero-American Institute of Aeronautic and Space Law and Commercial Aviation and the Scientific Committee on Solar-Terrestrial Physics (SCOSTEP).

**1. Proposed strategic framework for the programme on the peaceful uses of outer space for the period 2014-2015**

14. The Committee had before it for its consideration the proposed strategic framework for the programme on the peaceful uses of outer space for the period 2014-2015 (A/67/6 (Prog. 5)). The Committee agreed on the proposed strategic framework.

**2. Composition of the bureaux of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies for the period 2014-2015**

15. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 66/71 and pursuant to the measures relating to the working methods of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies,<sup>1</sup> as endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 52/56, the Committee considered the composition of the bureaux of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies for the period 2014-2015.

16. The Committee noted that the African States had endorsed the candidature of Azzedine Oussedik (Algeria) for the office of Chair of the Committee for the period 2014-2015 (A/AC.105/2012/CRP.10).

17. The Committee noted that the Latin American and Caribbean States had decided that Ecuador would nominate its representative for the office of First Vice-Chair of the Committee for the period 2014-2015 (A/AC.105/2012/CRP.20).

18. The Committee noted that the Eastern European States had endorsed the candidature of Elöd Both (Hungary) for the office of Chair of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee for the period 2014-2015 (A/AC.105/2012/CRP.11).

19. The Committee noted that the Western European and Other States had endorsed the candidature of Kai-Uwe Schrogl (Germany) for the office of Chair of the Legal Subcommittee for the period 2014-2015 (A/AC.105/2012/CRP.12).

<sup>1</sup> *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 20 (A/52/20), annex I; see also Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 20 (A/58/20), annex II, appendix III.*

20. The Committee noted that the Asian States would nominate their candidate for the office of Second Vice-Chair/Rapporteur of the Committee for the period 2014-2015.

### **3. Membership of the Committee**

21. The Committee took note of the application of Armenia for membership of the Committee. The application and the relevant correspondence were before the Committee in conference room paper A/AC.105/2012/CRP.7.

22. The Committee took note of the application of Costa Rica for membership of the Committee. The application and the relevant correspondence were before the Committee in conference room paper A/AC.105/2012/CRP.6.

23. The Committee took note of the application of Jordan for membership of the Committee. The application and the relevant correspondence were before the Committee in conference room paper A/AC.105/2012/CRP.5.

[...]

### **4. Observer status**

24. The Committee took note of the application of the Ibero-American Institute of Aeronautic and Space Law and Commercial Aviation for permanent observer status with the Committee. The application and the relevant correspondence were before the Committee in conference room paper A/AC.105/2012/CRP.9.

25. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly, at its sixty-seventh session, grant to the Ibero-American Institute of Aeronautic and Space Law and Commercial Aviation the status of permanent observer with the Committee. The Committee noted that the Institute, in its application, had presented documentation indicating that it had held special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council since 1976.

26. The Committee took note of the application of SCOSTEP. The application and the relevant correspondence were before the Committee in conference room paper A/AC.105/2012/CRP.8.

27. The Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly, at its sixty-seventh session, grant to SCOSTEP the status of permanent observer of the Committee on the understanding that, in accordance with the agreement of the Committee at its thirty-third session (A/45/20, para. 137) and at its fifty-third session (A/65/20, para. 311) concerning observer status for non-governmental organizations and in accordance with the practice established by the Committee, SCOSTEP would apply for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council.

### **5. Organizational matters**

28. The Committee recalled its agreement made at its fifty-fourth session, in 2011, on certain methods to enhance the organization of work of its sessions and the sessions of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and Legal Subcommittee (A/66/20, para. 298), and noted with satisfaction that those measures had already been applied successfully in the sessions of the Subcommittees in 2012. In that

regard, the Committee stressed the need for maximum flexibility in the scheduling of agenda items in order to optimize the balance between the consideration of agenda items in plenary meetings and work conducted in working groups.

29. Some delegations expressed the view that in order to make sessions more effective, the following measures could be considered: reallocation of time and resources, on an experimental basis, in particular in view of the first results of the measures in the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities; avoiding the simultaneous opening of several agenda items for consideration; merging agenda items; adopting an action-oriented agenda and action-oriented reports; and considering organizational matters earlier in the sessions to allow adequate time for substantive discussions.

30. Some delegations expressed the view that the conference room paper made available at the fifty-first session of the Legal Subcommittee entitled "Organizational matters" (A/AC.105/C.2/2012/CRP.14) should be considered by the Committee at its fifty-sixth session. Those delegations noted that the paper reviewed good practices used by other, comparable United Nations entities with respect to the structure of reports of intergovernmental bodies, and that the substance of the paper should be used as a basis for discussions on the streamlining and organization of work of the Committee and its Subcommittees.

31. Some delegations expressed the view that the current duration of the sessions of the Subcommittees and the Committee should be maintained in order for the Committee to be able to continue to ensure the rule of law in space activities and the progressive development of space law and maintain outer space — a province of humankind — for peaceful uses, and in order to allow sufficient time for the consideration of substantive agenda items, in particular with a view to the consideration of new agenda items by the Legal Subcommittee.

32. Some delegations expressed the view that measures aimed at making the sessions of the Committee and its Subcommittees more efficient should not affect the flexibility already conferred on the secretariat through the possibility of reopening agenda items for consideration if necessary.

33. Some delegations expressed the view that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee should give more importance to substantive issues and avoid commercially oriented technical presentations.

34. The view was expressed that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, whose sessions had the greatest number of technical presentations, should consider using the time between meetings for technical presentations, if necessary, in order to allow the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities as much time as possible to advance its work.

## **6. Draft provisional agenda for the fifty-sixth session of the Committee**

35. The Committee recommended that the following substantive items be considered at its fifty-sixth session, in 2013:

1. General exchange of views.
2. Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes.

3. Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on its fiftieth session.
4. Report of the Legal Subcommittee on its fifty-second session.
5. Space and sustainable development.
6. Spin-off benefits of space technology: review of current status.
7. Space and water.
8. Space and climate change.
9. Use of space technology in the United Nations system.
10. Future role of the Committee.
11. Other matters.

36. The Committee agreed that under the item entitled "Space and sustainable development" the following thematic areas, inter alia, could be considered: the use of space science and technology applications for socioeconomic development and sustainable development; the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20); and education and capacity-building.

37. The Committee noted that 2013 would mark the fiftieth anniversary of the first space flight by a woman and agreed that a half-day event should be organized by the secretariat to address the contribution of women to space activities, and agreed that the event should consist of a panel of prominent women in the space-related field of space explorations, science, technology, education, business and policy and that the topic of the event should be "Space: building the future today". In that regard, the Committee agreed that a planning meeting for interested delegations should be held on the margins of the fiftieth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee.

38. The Committee agreed that the secretariat should schedule the work of the Committee at its next session, in 2013, in such a manner as to enable the Working Group on Near-Earth Objects and the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee to benefit from interpretation services.

39. In the context of streamlining its agenda, the Committee took note of the proposal by Indonesia for an item entitled "Space and the Earth environment", which could encompass, inter alia, the following major environmental issues: climate change, environmental degradation, land degradation, land use, ecosystem resources, food security and health.

40. Some delegations stressed the importance of the role of the Committee in identifying problems resulting from inadequate cooperation between institutions with responsibilities for marine and coastal management and the national, subregional, regional and international institutions with space capacities, and proposed that a high-level panel address that issue when the General Assembly considered the item on international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space at its sixty-seventh session.

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**L. Schedule of work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies**

41. The Committee agreed on the following tentative timetable for its session and those of its Subcommittees in 2013:

	<i>Date</i>	<i>Location</i>
Scientific and Technical Subcommittee	11-22 February 2013	Vienna
Legal Subcommittee	8-19 April 2013	Vienna
Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space	12-21 June 2013	Vienna

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