



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 I

Introduction

1. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space held its fifty-fifth session in Vienna from 6 to 15 June 2012. The officers of the Committee were as follows:

<i>Chair:</i>	Yasushi Horikawa (Japan)
<i>First Vice-Chair:</i>	Filipe Duarte Santos (Portugal)
<i>Second Vice-Chair/Rapporteur:</i>	Piotr Wolanski (Poland)

A. Meetings of subsidiary bodies

2. The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had held its forty-ninth session in Vienna from 6 to 17 February 2012, under the chairmanship of Félix Clementino Menicocci (Argentina). The report of the Subcommittee was before the Committee (A/AC.105/1001).

3. The Legal Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had held its fifty-first session in Vienna from 19 to 30 March 2012, under the chairmanship of Tare Charles Brisibe (Nigeria). The report of the Subcommittee was before the Committee (A/AC.105/1003).



B. Adoption of the agenda

4. At its opening meeting, the Committee adopted the following agenda:
 1. Opening of the session.
 2. Adoption of the agenda.
 3. Election of officers.
 4. Statement by the Chair.
 5. General exchange of views.
 6. Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes.
 7. Implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III).
 8. Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on its forty-ninth session.
 9. Report of the Legal Subcommittee on its fifty-first session.
 10. Spin-off benefits of space technology: review of current status.
 11. Space and society.
 12. Space and water.
 13. Space and climate change.
 14. Use of space technology in the United Nations system.
 15. Future role of the Committee.
 16. Other matters.
 17. Report of the Committee to the General Assembly.

C. Election of officers

5. At the 644th meeting, on 6 June, Yasushi Horikawa (Japan) was elected Chair of the Committee, Filipe Duarte Santos (Portugal) was elected First Vice-Chair and Piotr Wolanski (Poland) was elected Second Vice-Chair/Rapporteur, each for a two-year term of office.
6. Also at the 644th meeting, the Committee endorsed the election of Félix Clementino Menicocci (Argentina) as Chair of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and Tare Charles Brisibe (Nigeria) as Chair of the Legal Subcommittee for a two-year term of office, starting with the sessions of the Subcommittees held in 2012.

D. Membership

7. In accordance with General Assembly resolutions 1472 A (XIV), 1721 E (XVI), 3182 (XXVIII), 32/196 B, 35/16, 49/33, 56/51, 57/116, 59/116, 62/217, 65/97 and 66/71 and decision 45/315, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space was composed of the following 71 States: Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and Viet Nam.

E. Attendance

8. Representatives of the following [...] States members of the Committee attended the session: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chile, China, Cuba, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and Viet Nam.

9. At its 644th meeting, on 6 June, the Committee decided to invite, at their request, observers for Angola, Armenia, Belarus, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Israel, Jordan, Luxembourg, Oman, Panama and the United Arab Emirates, as well as the Holy See, to attend its fifty-fifth session and to address it, as appropriate, on the understanding that it would be without prejudice to further requests of that nature and that it would not involve any decision of the Committee concerning status.

10. At the same meeting, the Committee decided to invite, at its request, the observer for the European Union to attend its fifty-fifth session and to address it, as appropriate, on the understanding that it would be without prejudice to further requests of that nature and that it would not involve any decision of the Committee concerning status.

11. Observers for the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) attended the session.

12. The session was attended by observers for the following intergovernmental organizations with permanent observer status with the Committee: the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization (APSCO), the Association of Remote Sensing

Centres in the Arab World, the European Organisation for Astronomical Research in the Southern Hemisphere, the European Space Agency (ESA), the European Telecommunications Satellite Organization, the International Organization of Space Communications (Intersputnik) and the Regional Centre for Remote Sensing of North African States.

13. The session was also attended by observers for the following non-governmental organizations with permanent observer status with the Committee: EURISY, the European Space Policy Institute, the International Academy of Astronautics (IAA), the International Association for the Advancement of Space Safety, the International Astronautical Federation (IAF), the International Astronomical Union, the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis, the International Institute of Space Law, the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing, the Prince Sultan bin Abdulaziz International Prize for Water (PSIPW), the Secure World Foundation, the Space Generation Advisory Council (SGAC) and the World Space Week Association.

14. At its 644th meeting, on 6 June, the Committee also decided to invite, at their request, the observers for the Ibero-American Institute of Aeronautic and Space Law and Commercial Aviation and the Scientific Committee on Solar-Terrestrial Physics to attend its fifty-fifth session and to address it, as appropriate, on the understanding that it would be without prejudice to further requests of that nature and that it would not involve any decision of the Committee concerning status.

15. A list of representatives of States members of the Committee, States not members of the Committee, United Nations entities and other organizations attending the session is contained in [...].

F. General statements

16. Statements were made by representatives of the following States members of the Committee during the general exchange of views: Algeria, Austria, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Canada, China, Cuba, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Libya, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Poland, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, United States and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). Statements were also made by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of African States and the representative of Ecuador on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, and the representative of France together with the observer for the European Union made statements on behalf of the European Union. The observers for Armenia, Israel, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates also made statements. A statement was made by the observer for ITU. Statements were also made by the observers for APSCO, the Association of Remote Sensing Centres in the Arab World, ESA, IAA, IAF, the Secure World Foundation and the Space Generation Advisory Council. A statement was also made by the observer for the Scientific Committee on Solar-Terrestrial Physics (SCOSTEP).

17. At the 644th meeting, on 6 June, the Chair delivered a statement highlighting the role played by the Committee and its Subcommittees in promoting efforts to further space exploration and research and in bringing the benefits of space

technology to Earth, in particular with regard to meeting the challenges of climate change and disasters, and to food security and the health of the global population. He stressed the need to support regional and interregional cooperation in the field of space activities and capacity-building, and the need to ensure closer coordination between the Committee and other intergovernmental bodies involved in the global development agenda of the United Nations.

18. At the 646th meeting, on 7 June, the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs of the Secretariat briefed the Committee on the work carried out by the Office during the past year and its current financial status and stressed the importance of the availability of financial and other resources for the successful implementation of the Office's programme of work.

19. The Committee welcomed Azerbaijan as a new member. The Committee also welcomed the Association of Remote Sensing Centres in the Arab World as a new non-governmental organization with permanent observer status with the Committee.

20. The Committee conveyed its condolences to the peoples of those countries that had suffered natural disasters, in particular for the loss of many lives and the great damage caused, and stressed that loss of life and property could be diminished if better information were available through improved risk assessment, early warning and monitoring of disasters.

21. The Committee congratulated the United States on the fortieth anniversary of the Landsat programme and its contributions to Earth observation and international cooperation in space activities. The Committee noted that the Earth Resources Technology Satellite, which had been launched on 26 July 1972 and renamed Landsat in 1975, had marked the beginning of the longest-running civilian Earth observation programme. The Committee further noted that the programme was a good example of international space cooperation, with Landsat data now being used around the world for a broad range of applications.

22. The Committee noted with appreciation the special panel on the fortieth anniversary of the Landsat programme and the worldwide evolution of remote sensing from space that had been held on 6 June. The panel had been chaired by Yasushi Horikawa, Chair of the Committee, and opening remarks had been delivered by Ken Hodgkins of the United States Department of State. The presentations given had included the following: "Origin and legacy of the Landsat programme", by Jean Parcher of the United States Geological Survey; "Space-based Earth observations", by Barbara Ryan of the World Meteorological Organization; "Evolution of Landsat data utilization", by Lothar Beckel of the European Academy of Sciences and Arts; "International cooperation", by Gerard Brachet, chief executive officer of Spot Image from 1982 to 1994; and "Role of Landsat in revolutionizing the management of natural resources", by U. R. Rao of the Indian Space Research Organisation. A video message on the theme "Future of the Landsat programme" had been given by Anne Castle of the United States Department of the Interior, followed by a round-table discussion on the theme "Landsat and the evolution of Earth observations over the past 40 years", moderated by Sergio Camacho (Mexico) and comprising the following participants: Adigun Ade Abiodun (Nigeria), Marek Baranowski (Poland), Tamotsu Igarashi (Japan), Ahmad Al Mansoori (United Arab Emirates), Chaiyan Maolanont (Thailand) and Félix C. Menicocci (Argentina).

23. The Committee also noted with appreciation the exhibition held at the Vienna International Centre during the present session on the theme “Fortieth anniversary of the Landsat programme and the evolution of worldwide remote sensing from space”, contributions to which had been made by the following countries: Austria, Canada, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Pakistan and United States.

24. The Committee expressed its gratitude to the Government of China for the donation of a Beidou navigation satellite model to the permanent exhibition of the Office for Outer Space Affairs at the Vienna International Centre.

25. The Committee heard the following presentations:

- (a) “Japanese international cooperation”, by the representative of Japan;
- (b) “RISAT-1”, by the representative of India.

26. The Committee noted with appreciation the successful completion of the 62nd International Astronautical Congress, held in Cape Town, South Africa, from 3 to 7 October 2011. The Committee noted with satisfaction that the 63rd International Astronautical Congress would be hosted by the Government of Italy and held in Naples from 1 to 5 October 2012.

27. The Committee welcomed with appreciation the publications “Space Matters” (ST/SPACE/45) and “Messages from Space Explorers to Future Generations” published by the Office for Outer Space Affairs (available on the website of the Office). The Committee noted that “Space Matters” provided an overview of the work of the Office for Outer Space Affairs while at the same time illustrating the vital contributions that space science and technology make towards the betterment of humanity, and that “Messages from Space Explorers to Future Generations” contained a compilation of messages from astronauts and cosmonauts to the next generation of space explorers.

G. Adoption of the report of the Committee

28. After considering the various items before it, the Committee, at its [...] meeting, on [...] June 2012, adopted its report to the General Assembly containing the recommendations and decisions set out below.

Chapter II

Recommendations and decisions

A. Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes

29. In accordance with paragraph 19 of General Assembly resolution 66/71, the Committee continued its consideration, as a matter of priority, of ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes.

30. The representatives of Brazil, Indonesia, Japan, the Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, 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 other member States, the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Group of African States and the representative of Ecuador on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, and the representative of France together with the observer for the European Union made statements on behalf of the European Union.

31. The Committee heard the following presentations under this item:

(a) “Space Security Index 2012”, by the representative of Canada;

(b) “International cooperation among the international space station partners and Japan’s contribution and activities”, by the representative of Japan.

32. The Committee agreed that, through its work in the scientific, technical and legal fields, as well as through the promotion of international dialogue and the exchange of information on various topics related to the exploration and use of outer space, it had a fundamental role to play in ensuring that outer space was maintained for peaceful purposes.

33. The Committee emphasized that international, regional and interregional cooperation and coordination in the field of space activities were essential to strengthen the peaceful uses of outer space and to assist States in the development of their space capabilities, and agreed that, during its consideration of ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes, the Committee should continue to consider ways to promote international, regional and interregional cooperation and the role that space technology could play in the implementation of the recommendations of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.¹

34. The Committee noted with appreciation that the fourth African Leadership Conference on Space Science and Technology for Sustainable Development, on the theme “Building a shared vision for space in Africa”, had been hosted by the Government of Kenya and held in Mombasa from 26 to 28 September 2011. The Committee noted with satisfaction various outcomes of the Conference, reflected in the Mombasa Declaration adopted at the Conference, such as the reaffirmation of developing space technologies and related activities for African countries, implementation of the African Resource Management satellite constellation, the establishment of an integrated regional disaster management system in coordination with the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER) and its regional support offices in Africa, and the call for the accession of African countries to the United Nations treaties on outer space.

35. The Committee noted with satisfaction that the eighteenth session of the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum, with the main theme “A regional collaboration for tomorrow’s environment”, had been held in Singapore from 6 to 9 December 2011. The nineteenth session of the Forum would be jointly organized by the Government of Malaysia and the Government of Japan and would be held in Kuala Lumpur from 11 to 14 December 2012.

¹ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum).

36. The Committee also noted with satisfaction that the fifth meeting of the Council of the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization (APSCO) had been held in Beijing on 8 September 2011 and that a space law and policy forum would be held in Beijing from 19 to 21 June 2012.

37. The Committee further noted with satisfaction that the Government of Mexico had assumed the pro tempore secretariat of the Sixth Space Conference of the Americas for the period 2011-2013, that under the Pachuca Declaration a consultative group on space technology had been established comprising representatives of space-related governmental entities in the region, and that preparations were being made for a meeting of heads of space agencies, to be held in July 2012, which would provide further impetus to the implementation of the recommendations of the Conference.

38. The Committee noted the positive role that bilateral and multilateral agreements played in promoting common space exploration objectives and cooperative and complementary space exploration missions.

39. The view was expressed that the Committee played a unique role by providing a forum for discussions between the increasingly large number of States involved in space activities that encouraged collaborative processes and consensus-building in an increasingly fragile and threatened domain — outer space — which had become integral to almost every State's infrastructure.

40. The view was expressed that the Committee played an increasingly large role in the field of global security as it considered the use of space systems for disaster management and cosmic threats.

41. Some delegations expressed the view that it was necessary to ensure greater security in outer space through the development and implementation of measures for transparency and confidence-building.

42. Some delegations expressed the view that the existing legal regime with respect to outer space was not adequate to prevent the placement of weapons in outer space and address issues related to the space environment and that it was important to further develop international space law in order to maintain outer space for peaceful purposes. In that regard, those delegations were of the view that in order to ensure that outer space was used peacefully and prevent its militarization, the elaboration of a special binding international legal instrument was necessary.

43. The view was expressed that any agreement on a concept of right to self-defence in outer space might ultimately legitimize the militarization of outer space.

44. Some delegations expressed the view that, in order to maintain the peaceful nature of space activities and prevent the placement of weapons in outer space, it was essential for the Committee to enhance its cooperation and coordination with other bodies and mechanisms of the United Nations system such as the First Committee of the General Assembly and the Conference on Disarmament.

45. The view was expressed that the Committee had been created exclusively to promote international cooperation with respect to the peaceful uses of outer space and that disarmament issues were more appropriately dealt with in other forums such as the First Committee of the General Assembly and the Conference on

Disarmament. In that connection, that delegation was of the view that no actions by the Committee were needed regarding the weaponization of outer space and that there was no scarcity of appropriate multilateral mechanisms in which disarmament could be discussed.

46. The Committee noted that UNIDIR had organized a meeting on the development of the international code of conduct in outer space, held in Vienna on 5 June 2012, and that an expert meeting would be held in New York in October 2012, open to the participation of all States Members of the United Nations, with a view to adopting the code in 2013. The Committee also noted that at the meeting held in Vienna, UNIDIR had officially launched its project on facilitating the process for the development of an international code of conduct for outer space activities, which was aimed at facilitating the dissemination of information and the exchange of views with respect to the concept of the draft international code of conduct.

47. Some delegations expressed the view that the draft international code of conduct included transparency and confidence-building measures and reflected a comprehensive approach to safety and security in outer space guided by the following principles: freedom of access to space for all for peaceful purposes; preservation of the security and integrity of space objects in orbit; and due consideration for the legitimate security and defence interests of States.

48. The view was expressed that the Committee should keep abreast of new initiatives relating to activities in outer space and react to them, when appropriate, especially to activities not in line with the United Nations treaties and principles on outer space or the Committee's goal of neutralizing threats posed to the sustainability of outer space activities. In that connection, that delegation was of the view that the Committee should ensure that all new concepts and schemes aimed at providing security in outer space and for space operations should be developed responsibly and conform with international law.

49. The view was expressed that consideration of the topic of the long-term sustainability of outer space activities enabled the international community to find multifaceted solutions, as the exchange of information on the situation in outer space built confidence among States, and such confidence would become feasible once States had attained a common vision with respect to the legitimacy of various types of space activities, including activities relating to national security.

50. The Committee noted that the General Assembly, in paragraph 2 of its resolution 65/68, had requested the Secretary-General to establish, on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, a group of governmental experts to conduct a study, commencing in 2012, on outer space transparency and confidence-building measures.

51. The view was expressed that the Working Group on the Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee should establish connections with the group of governmental experts established pursuant to Assembly resolution 65/68, as well as with the Conference on Disarmament and the forum provided by the process of considering the draft international code of conduct on outer space activities.

52. The view was expressed that while the draft international code of conduct on outer space activities served as a possible confidence-building measure, such an initiative, in order to be legitimate, should take place in the framework of the group of governmental experts mentioned above, the Conference on Disarmament or the Legal Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

53. The view was expressed that the matters relating to ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes should be considered in the context of and in conjunction with other agenda items of the Committee and its Subcommittees.

54. The Committee recommended that, at its fifty-sixth session, in 2013, consideration of the item on ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes should be continued, on a priority basis.
