

United Nations



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Important Notice

Non-Delegates

In order to attend the Symposium, please register by submitting your name to the Office for Outer Space Affairs in advance and present this invitation together with an appropriate identification document at the entrance of the Vienna International Centre.

**SYMPOSIUM ON
“SPACE AND WATER”**

Organized by the

UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR OUTER SPACE AFFAIRS

in cooperation with

INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL MAPPING AND RESEARCH (AUSTRIA)

**Monday
11 June 2007
16:00**

Conference Room III
Building C
Vienna International Centre

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On the occasion of the 50th session of the
United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Symposium on Space and Water

More than a billion people lack access to safe drinking water, and each year polluted water contributes to the death of about 15 million children under age five. The demand for water has increased sevenfold as the world population tripled. Rapid economic growth and development throughout the globe has had its toll on the world's water resources. Human activities have an enormous impact on the global water resources in terms of availability, quality and sustainability. The effects of such global environmental challenges as global warming, melting glaciers, frequent draughts and drastic floods exacerbate water resources issues even further.

Water is an essential life-sustaining element of the Earth, and without water there can be no life on the planet. The international community recognises the urgency of water resources management for human security and sustainable development of humankind. Access to clean, secure and sustainable water is also one of the top priorities of the United Nations Organisation. Every three years the United Nations World Water Development Report makes an overall review of the state of the world's fresh water resources and provides decision-makers with the tools to implement sustainable use of water. The 2006 Report recognises that in recent years, water resources management has greatly benefited from the powerful assessment tools provided by remote sensing and earth observation satellite systems. Since the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development in 1992, over 100 new satellite sensors for sustainable development have been put into operation. Remote sensing is used for the provision of simple qualitative observations, the mapping and detecting features of hydrological importance and the direct estimation of hydrological parameters and water quality. The United Nations has made the enhancement of the capacity of countries to use and benefit from remote sensing technologies a key focus for many space-related activities.

Since 2003, "Space and water" has been an agenda item of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS). In 2006, the Committee agreed that a Symposium on space and water should be held during its 50th session in 2007. The Symposium aims to explore the role of space technology applications in addressing global challenges to the world's water resources and discuss most adequate strategies/tools to ensure wider access to safe, clean and sustainable water with the view of providing decision-makers with space-derived tools to implement sustainable use of water. The Symposium provides an excellent opportunity for Members of the Committee to explore technical opportunities arising from space technology for water management, outline achievements in the international water resources cooperation, and review international activities fostering the application of space technology in water resources management.

Programme of the Symposium

- 16:00 *Opening remarks by Moderator*
Mr. L. Beckel, European Academy of Sciences and Arts
- 16:05 *Space-based Data and Inter-jurisdictional Water Resources Management*
Amb. W. Lichem, Austria
- 16:25 *Space and Water for Life*
Ms. Y. Berenguer, Earth Observation Section, UNESCO
- 16:45 *Role of Space-based Systems for Water Resources Management*
Dr K. Radhakrishnan, ISRO, India
- 17:05 *Advances in Systemic Observations of Surface Water and Marine Environment in Africa*
Dr. A. Belward, GEMU, European Commission
- 17:25 *Nigerian Perspective on Space and Water Resources Management*
Mr. J. Chabo, Federal Ministry of Water Resources, Nigeria
- 17:45 *Latin American Perspective on the Use of Space Technology for Water Resources Management*
Amb. C. Arevalo, Colombia
- 17:50 *Discussion*
- 17:55 *Conclusions*