



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
24 March 2009

Original: English

---

## Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

### Report of the United Nations Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities on its twenty-ninth session\*

(Vienna, 4-6 March 2009)

#### Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction . . . . .	3
II. Substantive issues considered at the Meeting. . . . .	3
A. Coordination of plans and programmes and exchange of views on current activities in the practical application of space technology and related areas . . . . .	3
B. Implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space . . . . .	5
C. Contribution of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development for the thematic cluster 2010-2011 and beyond. . . . .	6
D. Use of spatial data and activities related to the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group and the United Nations Spatial Data Infrastructure . . . . .	6
E. Participation in the process of the Group on Earth Observations. . . . .	7
F. Operational framework and good practices in the use of space-based technologies for disaster risk reduction and emergency response . . . . .	7
G. Public outreach and information exchange to promote inter-agency cooperation . . . . .	7
III. Other matters. . . . .	8
Future programme of work . . . . .	8

---

\* The present report was adopted by the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities at its twenty-ninth session, held from 4 to 6 March 2009.



Annexes

I.	List of participants at the twenty-ninth session of the United Nations Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities, held in Vienna from 4 to 6 March 2009 . . . . .	10
II.	Agenda for the twenty-ninth session of the United Nations Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities, held in Vienna from 4 to 6 March 2009 . . . . .	11
III.	Agenda for the open informal session of the United Nations Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities held in Vienna on 6 March 2009 . . . . .	12

## **I. Introduction**

1. The United Nations Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities held its twenty-ninth session at the United Nations Office at Vienna from 4 to 6 March 2009. The Meeting was hosted by the Office for Outer Space Affairs of the Secretariat and chaired by Jocelyn Fenard of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research. On 6 March, Attila Matas of the International Telecommunication Union was Acting Chairman of the Meeting, and Yolanda Berenguer of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization chaired an informal session.
2. The Meeting noted that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, at its fifty-first session, had agreed that, in accordance with the wish expressed by the Meeting at its twenty-eighth session (A/AC.105/909, para. 43), it should report directly to the Committee on work carried out by the Meeting under a new agenda item entitled "Use of space technology in the United Nations system" and that United Nations entities should be invited to inform the Committee of their space-related work.<sup>1</sup>
3. Annex I of the present report contains a list of participants and annex II contains the agenda adopted by the Meeting.

## **II. Substantive issues considered at the Meeting**

### **A. Coordination of plans and programmes and exchange of views on current activities in the practical application of space technology and related areas**

#### **1. Current and future plans of common interest, including consideration of how the activities of entities of the United Nations system in the area of space science and technology and its applications relate to their mandated programmes**

4. The Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs briefed participants on the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subsidiary bodies, bringing to their attention matters relating to inter-agency coordination.
5. The Meeting agreed that its Chairperson should participate in the fifty-second session of the Committee, in 2009, to report on the work of the Meeting.
6. Representatives of participating United Nations entities reported on their activities and plans for 2009 and 2010. Activities involving significant cooperation and coordination among the entities, as well as their plans for new activities, have been included in the report of the Secretary-General on the coordination of space-related activities within the United Nations system: directions and anticipated results for the period 2009-2010 (A/AC.105/940). All documents submitted for consideration by the Meeting are available on the website of the United Nations Coordination of Outer Space Activities (<http://www.uncosa.unvienna.org/uncosa/en/index.html>).

---

<sup>1</sup> A/63/20, paras. 69 and 305.

**2. Report of the Secretary-General on the coordination of space-related activities within the United Nations system: directions and anticipated results for the period 2009-2010**

7. The Meeting had before it a draft of the report of the Secretary-General on the coordination of space-related activities within the United Nations system: directions and anticipated results for the period 2009-2010 and agreed that the report played an important role in fostering coordination among United Nations entities, as well as new inter-agency partnerships and synergies, and that it served as a strategic tool for the United Nations to avoid duplication of effort in the use of space applications and space-related activities. The Meeting requested its secretariat, the Office for Outer Space Affairs, to facilitate the finalization of the report and to encourage the participation of United Nations entities in that preparation.

8. The Meeting reviewed and amended the draft report. It was noted that the draft report would be considered by the Committee at its fifty-second session.

9. The Meeting agreed that, in order to further streamline the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General, the secretariat of the Meeting would propose, in consultation with focal points, modifications to the guidelines for submissions containing information to be included in that report. The modified guidelines should ensure that submissions by United Nations entities specifically address coordination mechanisms and synergies to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of space-related activities of the United Nations.

**3. Preparation of a report on initiatives and applications for space-related inter-agency cooperation**

10. The Meeting endorsed a draft report on the theme "Use of space technology for sustainable development in Africa", prepared, as agreed at the twenty-eighth session of the Meeting, by the Office for Outer Space Affairs in cooperation with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and in consultation with other United Nations entities. The Meeting proposed that the draft report should be strengthened by including recommendations that would promote the use of space technology and applications for sustainable development in Africa. The Meeting agreed that, once it had been finalized, in consultation with Meeting focal points, the report would be submitted to the Committee at its fifty-second session and presented to the Third African Leadership Conference on Space Science and Technology for Sustainable Development, to be held in Algeria in late 2009.

11. The Meeting recalled the invitation by the Committee for United Nations entities to submit annual reports on specific themes and agreed to consider proposals for the preparation of such reports at its thirtieth session, in 2010.

**4. Means of strengthening further inter-agency coordination and cooperation in space-related activities**

12. The Meeting agreed that United Nations entities should continue to make efforts to enhance further inter-agency coordination and cooperation in the context of the key issues identified at its twenty-eighth session (A/AC.105/909, para. 14) and contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the coordination of space-related activities within the United Nations system: directions and anticipated results for the period 2009-2010 (A/AC.105/940).

13. The Meeting noted that, in its resolution 63/90 the General Assembly had welcomed the increased efforts to strengthen further the Meeting as the central United Nations mechanism for building partnerships and coordinating space-related activities. The Meeting also noted that, in the same resolution, the Assembly had encouraged entities of the United Nations system to participate fully in the work of the Meeting, urging them to continue to examine, in cooperation with the Committee, how space science and technology and their applications could contribute to implementing the United Nations Millennium Declaration (Assembly resolution 55/2) on the development agenda, particularly in the areas relating to, inter alia, food security and increasing opportunities for education.

14. The Meeting also noted that, in its resolution 63/90, the General Assembly had noted with satisfaction that the open informal meetings, held in conjunction with the annual sessions of the Meeting and in which representatives of member States and observers in the Committee participated, provided a constructive mechanism for an active dialogue between the entities of the United Nations system and member States and observers in the Committee.

15. The Meeting agreed to continue pursuing efforts to establish a link with the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination in view of the increasing role that space technology and its applications had in the work of the United Nations.

16. The Meeting noted with concern the continued absence of a number of representatives from major United Nations entities and programmes and encouraged the secretariat to continue its efforts to involve those entities in the Meeting.

## **B. Implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space**

17. The Office for Outer Space Affairs briefed the Meeting on progress achieved in the implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III). The Meeting noted that entities of the United Nations system would be invited to report on those activities that contributed to the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III that still remained to be addressed and that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee would, at its forty-seventh session, in 2010, take that information into account in considering the way forward with regard to the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III.

18. The Meeting took note of the work of the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems (ICG), which had been established as a result of UNISPACE III, the ICG Providers Forum and the Office for Outer Space Affairs, in its role as executive secretariat of ICG. The Meeting noted that there were opportunities for building partnerships between United Nations entities and ICG, taking into account the increasing importance of Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) applications for the benefit of humankind, in particular the use of GNSS receivers (land or space-based) for meteorology and climate monitoring. The Meeting also noted that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee had agreed, at its

forty-sixth session, to consider, beginning at its forty-seventh session, a new agenda item entitled “International Space Weather Initiative”.

**C. Contribution of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development for the thematic cluster 2010-2011 and beyond**

19. The Meeting took note of the outline prepared by the Office for Outer Space Affairs on the contribution of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development for the thematic cluster 2010-2011 and agreed that the Office should contact relevant United Nations entities with the aim of including in the report activities carried out by such entities, corresponding to the themes to be addressed by the Commission. In that regard, the Meeting noted that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee had, at its forty-sixth session, agreed that, in view of the cross-cutting nature of those and other themes addressed by the Commission under previous thematic clusters, the Committee should contribute to the thematic cluster 2010-2011 by targeting the following overarching issues: the role of space in transport; the use of space technology in sustainable resource management; and space solutions for sustainable consumption and production.

**D. Use of spatial data and activities related to the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group and the United Nations Spatial Data Infrastructure**

20. The Meeting noted that, in February 2009 the Office for Outer Space Affairs and ECA had started to co-chair the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group (UNGIWG). A representative of the Office for Outer Space Affairs briefed the Meeting on the results of the ninth meeting of UNGIWG, held in Vienna from 5 to 7 November 2008. It was noted that UNGIWG had continued to implement and promote the United Nations Spatial Data Infrastructure, a major inter-agency effort involving UNGIWG member agencies, Governments, non-governmental organizations and partners from the private sector. The Meeting noted that the United Nations Spatial Data Infrastructure had been brought to the attention of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and had been acknowledged by the Chief Information Technology Officer of the Secretariat in his information technology master plan.

21. The Meeting noted that the Committee would evaluate, at its fifty-second session, those activities carried out by entities of the United Nations system on international cooperation in promoting the use of space-derived geospatial data for sustainable development and that the Committee would consider ways and means of highlighting the links between those activities and of giving such activities greater international recognition. The Meeting encouraged UNGIWG and United Nations entities to present information on activities undertaken within the United Nations system directly related to the use of space-derived geospatial information for sustainable development. That information would be taken into account by the Committee in preparing a report containing recommendations on ways and means of

fostering international cooperation with a view to developing national infrastructure for the use of space-derived geospatial data.

#### **E. Participation in the process of the Group on Earth Observations**

22. The Meeting noted that, following a request made at its twenty-eighth session, the Office for Outer Space Affairs, as secretariat of the Meeting, had approached the World Meteorological Organization with a view to clarifying the terms of reference of the Inter-agency Coordination and Planning Committee (ICPC).

23. The Meeting took note of those terms of reference and agreed that the Office for Outer Space Affairs should contact ICPC to ensure coordination and exchange of information between ICPC and other United Nations entities contributing to the tasks identified by the Group on Earth Observations (GEO).

24. The Meeting also noted that the Office for Outer Space Affairs would prepare, for consideration at its thirtieth session, in 2010, a table summarizing the involvement of United Nations entities in GEO activities. The information contained in that table would be used to enhance further the participation of United Nations entities in the implementation of the Global Earth Observation System of Systems.

#### **F. Operational framework and good practices in the use of space-based technologies for disaster risk reduction and emergency response**

25. A representative of the Office for Outer Space Affairs provided the Meeting with information on developments regarding the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER). The Meeting took note of the work carried out in the framework of UN-SPIDER in 2008, including outreach activities, technical advisory support to Member States and the development of a knowledge portal. The Meeting noted the establishment of the UN-SPIDER office in Bonn and the work done towards formalizing the network of regional support offices, in which the following States were currently participating: Algeria, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Nigeria, Pakistan, Romania, South Africa and Ukraine.

#### **G. Public outreach and information exchange to promote inter-agency cooperation**

26. A representative of the Office for Outer Space Affairs briefed the Meeting on the current status of the website of the United Nations Coordination of Outer Space Activities (<http://www.uncosa.unvienna.org/>). The Meeting agreed that the website should continue to be enhanced and that Meeting focal points should continue to provide the Office, on a regular basis, with updated information on their space-related programmes and activities, including on relevant websites and upcoming activities, for posting on the website.

27. The Meeting discussed the usefulness of the inter-agency Web discussion board (<http://www.itu.int/jive/index.jspa?categoryID=176>). Noting that few people were using it, the Meeting agreed to suspend the discussion board and to consider, at its future sessions, the use of ad hoc mechanisms and tools to facilitate the work of the Meeting and improve communication among participants between sessions.

28. The Meeting recalled its decision, taken at its twenty-eighth session, to review the brochure entitled “Space solutions for the world’s problems: how the United Nations family uses space technology for achieving development goals” at its thirtieth session, in 2010.

29. The Meeting considered further means of reaching out to the public and exchanging information. With a view to enhancing awareness of the space-related activities of United Nations entities, the Meeting agreed to distribute widely the report of the Secretary-General on the coordination of space-related activities within the United Nations system by making use of the relevant mailing lists of organizations and programmes.

### **III. Other matters**

#### **Future programme of work**

30. The Meeting agreed on the following provisional agenda for its thirtieth session, to be held in 2010:

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Coordination of plans and programmes and exchange of views on current activities on the practical application of space technology and related areas:
  - (a) Current and future plans of common interest, including consideration of how the activities of entities of the United Nations system in the area of space science and technology and its applications relate to their mandated programmes;
  - (b) Report of the Secretary-General on the coordination of space-related activities within the United Nations system: directions and anticipated results for the period 2010-2011;
  - (c) Preparation of a report on initiatives and applications for space-related inter-agency cooperation;
  - (d) Means of strengthening further inter-agency coordination and cooperation in space-related activities, including public outreach and information exchange to promote inter-agency cooperation.
4. Implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

5. Use of spatial data and activities related to the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group and the United Nations Spatial Data Infrastructure.
  6. Participation in the process of the Group on Earth Observations.
  7. Operational framework and good practices in the use of space-based technologies for disaster risk reduction and emergency response.
  8. Other matters.
31. The Meeting also agreed that the theme of its open informal session in 2010 would be “Space technology for emergency communications” and that efforts would be made to invite relevant non-governmental organizations.
32. Recalling its agreement that the venue of the annual sessions should alternate between Vienna and other cities, the Meeting noted with appreciation that its thirtieth session would be hosted by the International Telecommunication Union in Geneva from 8 to 12 March 2010. The Meeting also noted that the open informal session should be held in the afternoon of the last day of the session.

## Annex I

### List of participants at the twenty-ninth session of the United Nations Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities, held in Vienna from 4 to 6 March 2009

*Chairperson:* J. Fenard (United Nations Institute for Training and Research)

*Secretary:* N. Hedman (Office for Outer Space Affairs)

*Assistant secretaries:* W. Balogh (Office for Outer Space Affairs)  
J. Gazyev (Office for Outer Space Affairs)  
S. Vivanco (Office for Outer Space Affairs)

#### *United Nations Secretariat*

Office for Outer Space Affairs	M. Othman H. Haubold D. Stevens L. Czarán S. Chernikov
--------------------------------	--

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime	C. Bussink M. Raithelhuber
--	-------------------------------

#### *United Nations programmes and funds*

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	L. St.-Pierre
---	---------------

United Nations Institute for Training and Research/United Nations Operational Satellite Applications Programme	J. Fenard
--	-----------

#### *Specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system*

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	Y. Berenguer
--	--------------

International Telecommunication Union	A. Matas
---------------------------------------	----------

World Meteorological Organization	J. Lafeuille
-----------------------------------	--------------

International Atomic Energy Agency	D. Delattre
------------------------------------	-------------

---

## Annex II

### **Agenda for the twenty-ninth session of the United Nations Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities, held in Vienna from 4 to 6 March 2009**

1. Opening of the session.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Coordination of plans and programmes and exchange of views on current activities in the practical application of space technology and related areas:
  - (a) Current and future plans of common interest, including consideration of how the activities of organizations of the United Nations system in the area of space science and technology and its applications relate to their mandated programmes;
  - (b) Report of the Secretary-General on the coordination of space-related activities within the United Nations system: directions and anticipated results for the period 2009-2010;
  - (c) Preparation of a report on initiatives and applications for space-related inter-agency cooperation;
  - (d) Means of strengthening further inter-agency coordination and cooperation in space-related activities.
4. Implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.
5. Contribution of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development for the thematic cluster for 2010-2011 and beyond.
6. Use of spatial data and activities related to the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group and the United Nations Spatial Data Infrastructure.
7. Participation in the process of the Group on Earth Observations.
8. Operational framework and good practices in the use of space-based technologies for disaster risk reduction and emergency response.
9. Public outreach and information exchange to promote inter-agency cooperation.
10. Other matters.

### Annex III

## **Agenda for the open informal session of the United Nations Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities held in Vienna on 6 March 2009**

### **Theme: “Space-related activities of United Nations entities in Africa”**

Introductory remarks	Acting chairperson of the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities
Introduction of participants	All participants
Presentations on space-related activities of United Nations entities in Africa:	
Activities of the Office for Outer Space Affairs for the benefit of Africa	Office for Outer Space Affairs
Connect Africa Summit and follow-up activities	International Telecommunication Union
Remote sensing tools for cannabis plant crop monitoring in Africa	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
Global Information System (GIS) coverage and applications in support of operations of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Africa	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Activities supported by the World Meteorological Organization in Africa	World Meteorological Organization
Water resource management in Africa	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
Discussions among United Nations entities and member States of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and concluding remarks	

---