



## INFORMATION NOTE

### United Nations/Austria/European Space Agency Symposium on Small Satellite Programmes for Sustainable Development

8 – 11 September 2009, Graz, Austria

#### 1. Introduction

The United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, the Government of Austria and the European Space Agency (ESA) are jointly organizing in 2009-2011 the third series of three consecutive symposia to promote the use of space technology and its applications in support of activities to carry out the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002.

This symposium is the sixteenth in the series of meetings jointly organised by the Office for Outer Space Affairs, under the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, and by the Government of Austria, the State of Styria and the City of Graz, since 1994. Parts of these meetings were organized as series of 3 symposia that considered a particular theme. The first series held from 2003 to 2005 focused on water-related issues, while the second series of symposia held from 2006 to 2008 was dedicated to the Earth's atmosphere.

The current series of symposia aims to enhance access to space applications tools for sustainable development through building indigenous institutional capabilities in basic space technology. The present symposium will be held in Graz, Austria from 8 to 11 September 2009 and will focus on "Small satellite programmes for sustainable development".

The Symposium will be hosted and co-sponsored by the Government of Austria (Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs and Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology), the State of Styria and the City of Graz and by the European Space Agency (ESA).

#### 2. Background

A frequently used definition of sustainable development is "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own need.". At the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD)\*, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in 2002 (also known as the "Johannesburg Summit"), more than one hundred Heads of States and Governments reaffirmed their strong commitment to the full implementation of Agenda 21†, which was adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. They also committed themselves to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration‡.

---

\* A/CONF.199/20,

† A/CONF.151/26 (Vol. I-III, Corrections)

‡ A/RES/55/2

At the same time, the resolution entitled “Space Millennium: Vienna Declaration for Space and Human Development”<sup>§</sup>, which was adopted by the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III) in 1999, contains a strategy for enhancing the use of space science and technology to contribute to the solutions of major global issues. In particular, the Declaration notes the benefits and applications of space technologies in addressing the challenges to sustainable development, and the effectiveness of space instruments for dealing with the challenges posed by the pollution of the environment and depletion of natural resources.

The Office for Outer Space Affairs, with the support of the Government of Austria and ESA, is organizing the next series of symposia from 2009 to 2011 to consider how the existing space technology-based tools, infrastructures, services and solutions could contribute to and strengthen the capacities of developing countries and countries with economies in transition as means of providing specific solutions to address known problems.

There are various trends worldwide indicating a growing interest in space technology:

- Increasing number of countries setting up space programmes or strengthening their space activities, including developing countries.
- Increasing number of countries domestically developing or procuring satellites, which drives demand for indigenous capacity in space technology.
- A trend towards commercial-off-the-shelf components for small satellites and miniaturisation of consumer technology which enable technology development of small satellites to be conducted with relatively modest infrastructures and affordable cost.

Indeed, developing an indigenous capacity in basic space technology can help to shift a country’s focus from being a passive user or recipient of space services to becoming a more active player and preferred cooperation partner for space activities.

### **3. Objectives and Outcomes**

The goal of the current series of three symposia is to enhance access to space applications for sustainable development through building capacity in basic space technology to support some of the actions called for in the WSSD Plan of Implementation. The primary objectives of the Symposium in 2009 are to review the utility of small satellites and to harness accumulated experience in small satellite development for the purpose of conceptualising national small satellite development programmes. The specific objectives of the Symposium are:

- (i) Promote ongoing relevant national, regional and global initiatives related to demonstrated capabilities of small satellite technology as means of providing specific solutions to address development issues;
- (ii) Promote international cooperation in basic space technology development between and among countries at all levels of development, with a particular focus on supporting developing countries through capacity building activities in small satellite technology development.
- (iii) Assist countries wishing to develop and use small satellite technology and to benefit from the spin-offs of such technology development to have appropriate access to the relevant information and means (e.g. information exchange, databases, cooperation opportunities with the private sector).

---

<sup>§</sup> A/RES/54/68

- (iv) Contribute to the development of indigenous capabilities in small satellite technology in the participants' institutions and to building up a critical mass of professionals.

Having attended this symposium, the participants will gain:

- (i) Understanding of the WSSD framework in the context of sustainable development and the capabilities of the relevant space technology based tools, solutions and information resources to be applied in decision-making processes;
- (ii) Understanding of national, international and regional strategies, programmes and projects to promote use of small satellite technology for sustainable development;
- (iii) Knowledge of small satellite technology based tools, solutions and informational resources for sustainable development, and how to utilize existing or establish new functional partnerships to promote the operational use of small satellites;
- (iv) Knowledge and skill to implement national plans for small satellite programmes.

#### **4. Programme**

The programme of this year's Symposium will primarily focus on small satellite mission design. Presentations will include case studies of successful applications of small satellite technology that provide cost-effective solutions and essential information for planning and implementing programmes or projects related to sustainable development. The Symposium will also feature presentations on utility of small satellites for capacity building, establishing a small satellite programme in the context of policy, planning and implementation, and launching opportunities for small satellites. Hands on activity on mission design will be scheduled in the programme.

Sufficient time will be set aside for presentations by participants on their relevant activities and for discussions among participants to identify the priority areas of possible follow-up actions as well as for examining possible partnerships that could be established or strengthened.

#### **5. Dates and Location**

The Symposium will be held in Graz, Austria, at the Space Research Institute of the Austrian Academy of Sciences **from 8 to 11 September 2009**. All selected and invited participants will receive an information package with details on board and lodging and other local arrangements.

#### **6. Language of the Symposium**

Applicants must have a good working knowledge of English, which will be the only language of the Symposium.

## 7. Qualifications and Requirements for Participation in the Symposium

Applicants must be in managerial, decision-making or professional positions within governmental or research institutions with responsibilities for carrying out programmes or projects in the areas of space technology and applications. We are looking for applicants who work in space or small satellite technology-related institutions, environment agencies, universities, academic communities or companies that carry out activities that could support programmes or projects concerned with the small satellite technology. Individuals who have started or are involved in small satellite technology-related application projects or outreach activities in their institutions as well as women carrying out any of the above responsibilities are particularly encouraged to apply.

Applicants are encouraged to become familiar with the WSSD Plan of Implementation and with the recommendations of UNISPACE III. Specifically, all applicants will be asked to prepare short presentations on their professional work related to the Symposium theme prior to their arrival in Graz. The presentations will be delivered as part of the Symposium programme. The presentations may also include ideas on how to implement particular recommendations, or proposals for starting launching new initiatives or for further enhancing ongoing or planned small satellite projects and programmes. Applicants are also expected to actively contribute to the preparation of the Symposium's conclusions and recommendations, which will be published by the United Nations in the form of a report.

Please note, that in order to ensure continuity of this series of symposia and to achieve its overall objectives, *selected participants will be requested to submit to OOSA a report on a progress in implementing proposed plans for a small satellite programme in six months after the Symposium.*

## 8. Deadline for Submission of Applications

The **original** of the completed application form, properly endorsed by applicant's government/institution, should be directly submitted to:

Office for Outer Space Affairs  
United Nations Office at Vienna  
Vienna International Centre  
P.O. BOX 500  
A-1400 Vienna, AUSTRIA  
Phone: (+43-1) 26060- 4948

to reach the Office **no later than Monday 06 July 2009.**

To accelerate processing of your application, you should also email to [unpsa@unvienna.org](mailto:unpsa@unvienna.org), or fax an advance copy directly to the Office for Outer Space Affairs, United Nations Office at Vienna, fax: (+43-1)-26060-5830. Only complete applications, with all the requested information and signatures, will be considered.

## 9. Selection of Participants

Participants will be selected by the co-sponsors of the Symposium on a competitive basis from those who meet the qualifications indicated in section 7 above. The selection will be based on the information provided in the application form. Selected participants will be notified in due course.

## **10. Financial Arrangements**

Within the limited funds available to the co-sponsors, a number of selected participants from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, who have expressed the need for financial support, will be offered financial support to attend the Symposium. Funded participants will be provided with a round-trip air ticket between their international airports of departure and Graz, Austria, and daily subsistence allowances to cover board and lodging for the duration of the Symposium. Any cost associated with en-route expenses or any changes made to the air ticket must be borne by the participants.

Due to the limited availability of financial support, participants and their nominating organizations are strongly encouraged to find additional sources of sponsorship to allow them to attend the Symposium. In the past, nominating organizations have often provided for air-travel of participants while the co-sponsors of the Symposium covered all other expenses.

## **11. Life and Health Insurance**

The co-sponsors will not assume any responsibility for life and major health insurance, nor for expenses related to medical treatment or accidental events. This will be the responsibility of each selected participant or of the nominating institution.

## **12. Points of Contact**

For the submission of nominations for attendance and funding, please contact **Ms. Ayoni Oyenehin**, United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, at the above address and fax number, or at the following e-mail address: **Ayoni.Oyenehin@unvienna.org**.

For information regarding the agenda and programme of the Symposium as well as co-sponsorship, please contact **Mr. Sergei Chernikov**, at: Sergei.Chernikov@unvienna.org; Tel: +43-1-26060-4948: or **Mr. Levent Canturk**, at: Levent.Canturk@unvienna.org; Tel: +43-1-26060-5748.

The focal point of the local organizer is **Ms. Elke Zenz**, (Joanneum Research) who can be contacted regarding local arrangements at: Elke.Zenz@joanneum.at; Tel: +43 316 876 1256; Fax: +43 316 8769 1256).