United Nations COPUOS/T.537

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Unedited transcript

537th Meeting
Thursday, 9 June 2005, 3 p.m.
Vienna

Chairman: Mr. A. A. Abiodun (Nigeria)

The meeting was called to order at 3.12 p.m.

The CHAIRMAN: Good afternoon distinguished delegates. I now declare the 537th meeting of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

As I indicated before lunch, we will continue our consideration of agenda item 4, as well as agenda item 5. Agenda item 4, of course, is General Exchange of Views, and agenda item 5 is Ways and Means of Maintaining Outer Space for Peaceful Purposes.

We will also begin our consideration of agenda item 6, Implementation of the Recommendations of UNISPACE III.

General exchange of views (agenda item 4)

As the first of our business, we start with agenda item 4 and the first speaker on my list is the distinguished Ambassador of Burkina Faso, Her Excellency Madam Damiba Beatrice (?).

Ms. D. BEATRICE (Burkina Faso) *(interpretation from French)*: Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, it goes without saying that it is a great pleasure and indeed a source of pride to us to see you in charge of the work of this Committee and my delegation has no doubt that the results of our session, given your recognized talents in terms of space and diplomacy will be excellent. We would like, as others have done, to thank His Excellency Mr. Jean Ping, President of the fifty-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly, we would like to him for having graced our meeting with his presence. And the major declaration that he made yesterday should be a source of inspiration and motivation for us all.

My delegation also welcomes the work done by Dr. Camacho and indeed the entire team of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, thanks to which this Committee is able to see through the mandate which it has been given by the General Assembly, and this goes back over half a century.

Mr. Chairman, a number of important points have been put on the agenda of this session and I would like to underline in particular our expectations in Burkina Faso when it comes to the debate on space and water and space and society. Being a _____ *(not clear)* country, and given that we are often faced with drought, Burkina Faso seeks rationally to manage its meagre water resources on a daily basis and this is why we very much wish to see space technology being used to mean that we can use this rare commodity in the best possible way. And in this regard, we have expressed interest in the pilot project, the launch of the pilot project at Lake Chad and we are looking forward to the results and we hope that they will be sufficiently conclusive for us to extend this to other catchment areas.

Burkina Faso is also one of those countries that has one of the lowest rates of schooling and this is particularly true of women and girls and I think it is important for you to note that it is a woman here representing Burkina Faso and that I am one of the minority of women that had a great deal of luck. For a number of years now, the Government of Burkina Faso has made the schooling of girls a political priority, a policy priority, and with bilateral and multilateral support from partners such as UNESCO and UNICEF,

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is seeking to ensure that women and girls have an equal opportunity to acquire schooling as do boys.

Now this is a task which is all the more difficult given that the majority of the population, especially children who need schooling, live in the countryside. One also has to take account of the fact that there are certain cultural obstacles and, Mr. Chairman and ladies and gentlemen, if you take this account, you will have a picture of how difficult it is to make sure that education is available to all in Burkina Faso and in many other African countries and countries in developing countries and one knows that they cannot be developed without education. And this is why my country subscribes to the need for our Committee to look into the opportunities that can be provided by space in this regard.

The importance of technology and space activities when it comes to the Millennium Development Goals, and more generally, when it comes to the pursuit of sustainable development, the importance of these matters are ever more clearly recognized and both the President of the General Assembly and the President of our Committee underlined these facts in their opening statements. And this leads us to believe that this domain will be properly represented in the debates and decisions to be taken at the Summit Meeting next September at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

Having said that, developing countries will not be able really to be beneficiaries unless all their partners are involved and it is, therefore, extremely important and urgent to make sure that there be true and sincere international cooperation. Cooperation of this kind is absolutely vital for countries like mine because my country does not have a satellite nor is it one of the launching States. And yet, everybody should be able to enjoy the benefits of space technology.

And given that we have been so closely involved in these matters for the last 50 years, the COPUOS deserves our sincere congratulations and encouragement and we hope that with improved and renewed working methods and increased means, that the COPUOS will be able to continue untiringly to work for the wellbeing of humanity.

Thank you for your attention. Thank you Sir.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank Her Excellency Ambassador Damiba Beatrice of Burkina Faso and I also wish to recognize that, yes, a lady addressing us. We do not have too many in this room and we are happy that you are here to represent your great country and put a finishing touch of a woman on the African face. So thank you very much.

The next speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of Bulgaria, Mr. Peytchev.

Mr. A. PEYTCHEV (Bulgaria): Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, at the outset, please allow me to join other delegations in congratulating you and the other elected officers with the successful completion of the work on the outer space reports and resolutions last October during the current fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly. I would also like to commend Dr. Sergio Camacho and the staff of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs for the good organization of the work of COPUOS.

With the support of the European Union and the European Space Agency, in January 2005, in Sofia, was held an international conference on outer space, Galileo Matters, hosted by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Transport and Communication, Mr. Nikolay Vassilev. Also recent is the work of the Bulgarian Central Laboratory for Sun-Earth System on two ESA projects, devices for measurement of the level of radiation and assessment of the effect of radiation on living cells, “Liulin” and “Biopan” respectively. Following the signing on 25 April this year of the agreement for accession Bulgaria and Romania to the European Union and knowing well the high standards in the European Union and ESA, we are making serious efforts to prepare our structures and capabilities on outer space for a future status of European Cooperating State.

We do cooperate on a larger scale as well. For instance, at government level are examined such options with India. We have a joint project in geo-physics with the Bombay Geo-Physics Institute and with the Russian Federation where we work on the finalization of 12 projects. Bulgaria has agreements on outer space activities with the Czech Republic, Russ, between the academies of sciences, also works for a similar tripartite agreement with Austria and Ukraine, and also is open to prospective agreements or joint projects with partners from France, EFD, such as Corine Landcover, Podimeter, Radio Locators and Monitoring, etc.

Tomorrow in Varna opens the sub-regional four-day Scientific Conference “Space, Ecology, Security”, with the participation of scientists from the United Kingdom, Germany, Russian, Bulgaria, etc., dedicated to activities in the framework of Galileo and GMES. In the core of its agenda is the “Balkan

Satellite Project", a relatively cheap and effective sub-regional remote sensing undertaken, eventually by Turkey, Greece, FY Republic of Macedonia, Albania, Romania and Bulgaria, envisaged for the purposes of tasks and solutions in different sectors of economy and in the field of disaster reduction and management. The initial project is based on the "Progress" launcher. Additional support and expertise for the completion of this project, however, is sought at present.

I would like to inform you about an important administrative change in outer space management at national level. A Government Act, to become effective next month, provides for the establishment of an intergovernmental body on space activities, co-chaired by the Minister for Transport and Communications and the President of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, which has to formulate national strategy and policies and will be able to follow and assist their implementation, both in space research and applications. It will have an Operative Bureau and a Scientific Council, acting on a permanent basis. The contacts point of the new body will be announced to all delegations and authorities through the Office for Outer Space Affairs.

Mr. Chairman, on 19 October 2004, in the United Nations Headquarters in New York was held a special event, the High Level Round Table on Space Technologies and Applications for Development Purposes, honoured by the President of the fifty-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly. My delegation is of the view that we should not be discouraged by the humble attendance of this event, which, in fact, was an excellent and timely idea. With more support from COPUOS members and international organizations, a special outer space event should be held again during the sixtieth session. We are confident that it will be a success, if it is even more visibly linked with the key issues on the agenda of the Millennium + 5 Summit in New York, 14 to 16 September, and of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe, Hiogo, Japan.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much distinguished representative of Bulgaria for your statement.

And I now invite Mr. Müller, the distinguished representative of Germany, to address the house.

Mr. K.-U. MÜLLER (Germany): Thank you Mr. Chairman. First of all, my delegation would like to thank you for the work that you accomplished during your chairmanship of the Committee on Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and your wise guidance through this session.

Secondly, my delegation would like to commend the Office for Outer Space Affairs and foremost its Director, Sergio Camacho, for organizing and preparing this session as well as the last meetings of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the Legal Subcommittee.

My delegation would like to thank Dr. Doetsch for his presentation. As well as the French delegation, we are convinced that his recommendations should be taken into account during the forthcoming work of COPUOS and its Subcommittees.

Mr. Chairman, my delegation would like to note some of last year's highlights of German contributions to international space activities.

Germany is deeply involved in disaster early warning and management. My delegation would like to recall that the United Nations International Workshop Conference on the Use of Space Technology for Disaster Management was hosted by the German Aerospace Centre, DLR, in Munich in October 2004. Germany will invite to the Third International Early Warning Conference in Bonn in early 2006 and Germany contributes to the establishment of a tsunami early warning system in the Indian Ocean, coordinated by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO. My delegation would, in this respect, like to mention that the Centre for Satellite-Based Crisis Information of the German Aerospace Centre provided first data and images to the United Nations and to relief agencies shortly after this disaster of global dimension. We are grateful that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee gave us the opportunity to present these activities during its last session. Delegations interest in more information may approach my delegation.

Mr. Chairman, some might have the impression that Mars might be better explored by spacecraft than Earth. German scientists developed the High-Resolution Stereo Camera onboard of the ESA spacecraft Mars Express. Results of this mission fascinate scientists as well as the general public.

The first landing of a spacecraft on Saturn's moon, Titan, met even more attention and general acclaim. We congratulate all scientists involved to make the Cassini-Huygens mission a joint and successful European and Transatlantic programme.

Let me return, Mr. Chairman, to Earth's solid ground. The German Space Operation Centre underwent its first crucial test for missions to the ISS successfully, when it handled the recent ENEIDE mission's flight on behalf of ESA.

My delegation acknowledges the importance of science and space sciences for the detection and protection of the common heritage of mankind. Hence, it is my pleasure and privilege to note that German scientists will contribute to the forthcoming Workshop on Space and Archaeology.

Further, I would like to announce that the German Aerospace Centre will present their School Labs during agenda point 10, Space and Society.

And finally, I would like to draw your attention to a German presentation during agenda point 11, Space and Water, which underlines the importance attached to water management by my Government.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you Mr. Müller of Germany for your kind words addressed to the Chair and for your statement on behalf of Germany.

I now give the floor to Mr. Dzubenko of the Russian Federation to address the floor, to address the house.

Mr. P. G. DZUBENKO (Russian Federation) *(interpretation from Russian)*: Thank you Sir. At the outset, Sir, allow me to again congratulate you upon your chairing of our meeting to wish you every success in your work, for your successes will be our successes and we remain convinced that under your skilful leadership, we will be able to achieve progress on a whole set of very important problems which remain before our Committee.

Sir, the Russian Federation champions the development of constructive dialogue on all issues of international cooperation in the study and use of outer space and underscores the role of our Committee which must play its role in this field. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space is the soundest tried and tested forum for the discussion and we know this based on precedent for the solution of the most pressing issues in the field of space cooperation which are of common interest to all States regardless of the level of their involvement in specific space activity.

It is for this reason that we have called, and continue to call, for stepped-up discussion on the issue of preserving outer space for peaceful purposes, discussion within the framework of our Committee.

We all know that the Vienna Declaration adopted during the course of the UNSPACE III Conference identified as one of its most complex tasks the need to preserve outer space for peaceful purposes. Unfortunately, in our view, of late, the last few years, the Committee has not devoted sufficient attention to the discussion of this topic, I mean the topic of the ways and means to uphold the regime of the peaceful use of outer space for exclusively peaceful purposes. We would like to reiterate our position which is that the weaponization of outer space, the very concept of the use of force in outer space and the possibility of using force in outer space, will undermine the regime of the peaceful use of outer space and the whole system of international security, including, of course, the mechanisms of non-proliferation. We must fully understand the fact that if we do not put an end within the framework of our Committee to such a development, I mean the weaponization of outer space, then in the near future near-Earth space orbits can become an area for confrontation and arms race. We are convinced that this runs counter to the interests of both the Russian Federation and the whole of the international community.

Here I would like to very briefly refer to the fact that sometimes the issue is raised regarding the fact that these problems fall or examined within the framework of the Geneva Conference on Disarmament. We believe that there is no duplication here, I mean between the work of our Committee and that of the Geneva Conference. Both these fora deal with different yet at some point somewhat similar issues and as far as we are aware currently, the Geneva Conference is considering a very important initiative targeted at the de-weaponization of outer space. And within the framework of this initiative, there are a whole set of political and legal problems, including, for example, the delimitation of outer space and the definition of a space object and so forth which, as far as I am aware, _____ *(not clear)*, as far as I am aware, this Conference is ready to share its knowledge information practice with our Committee and its ready to utilize any definitions which we might develop.

This is why I would like to simply state that there is no duplication here and our Committee can play its very significant role on these issues.

Sir, the Outer Space Committee has done a great deal for the development of international legal instruments targeted at regulating space activities. We all know and are familiar with the five existing documents, four of which are of a universal nature. They were all developed within the framework of this Committee. In our view, this is a unique example of cooperation and compromise which manifested itself, first and foremost, in the fact that from its very inception the Committee has reached its decisions on the basis of compromise, consensus, but in doing this, has managed to develop significant, effective, and as I said previously, universal norms, principles, standards for the space activities of the various States.

The changes of the last few years in the nature, of course in the legal nature is what I mean, of both the participants and forms of space activities, which we are all well familiar with, speaks to the necessity for the further development of an international legal basis for space activities. And it is in this context, and here that we back, the further progress in the field of space law, what I mean here is for the development of a comprehensive convention on international space law.

Within the framework of the development of such a convention, we can find generally acceptable solutions to issues which, thus far, were not or have not been resolved in our Committee. For example, the delimitation and definition of outer space, as I have said previously, an issue which is pressing in a number of fora, at this present time, is a really practical issue, as well as manmade pollution of outer space which we have discussed over the past few years within the framework of our Committee and problems which, in our view, must be resolved within the framework of a comprehensive standard for space law, a comprehensive standard which could be formulated in a new comprehensive instrument which will be a legal instrument.

There is also the protection of intellectual property and a number of other problems which you are all familiar with.

Such a convention could be based on existing standards and principles adopted within the framework of the General Assembly. We could combine them and codify them. But, of course, we have to continue to develop international law which, in our view, might even be an easier step to take if it is done in a comprehensive way.

As far as the methods for the organization for the development of such a potential new convention, we, for example, could propose an approach which would allow us to examine all aspects of the utilization of outer space, a context of a single whole whose result could become a carefully balanced text which would take into account the interests of all States active in outer space. And in this I would like to add a text which would facilitate things which would not hamper space activities.

We have every reason to believe that our Committee is the most appropriate forum for the development of such a new document. It is the United Nations and within its framework, our Subcommittee, in fact, our Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. We have the necessary potential which would allow us to ensure the successful utilization of space technologies, to promote sustainable development, the resolution of global problems of environmental pollution, overcoming natural disasters, which is a very important direction of work as far as we are concerned, and the sound management of natural resources, of course.

We call upon all States to support this initiative, to support the potential work of the Committee in this field and those representatives who voiced certain concerns regarding this, we appeal to them to return to this issue and, if necessary, we should engage in further deliberations and we cherish the hope that, in the near future, we would be able to begin practical work on this issue, Sir.

We welcome the activities of the Committee on the significant topic which is the use of nuclear power sources in outer space and the problem of manmade space pollution with space debris. In our view, that which was developed within the framework of the coordinating organization which unites 11 State Agencies, I am referring to the document entitled “The Guiding Principles on Reducing Pollution in the Near-Earth Orbital Space” could be disseminated within the framework of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, and it could play a very positive role in developing mechanisms to resolve this issue which has become a global one. At the same time, we should remember that this process will require a solution of a broad spectrum of technical issues. In this respect, we welcome the work and decision regarding the beginning of work on a new technical document on space debris within the framework of the Working Group established for this purpose.

We support, along with all the other co-sponsors of these drafting rules which should serve as the basis for the new document.

Sir, we can but be pleased by the active discussion which occurred at the last session of the Legal Subcommittee on a whole set of issues.

The interest in international space law, as we saw, is increasing. We welcome the decision to, at the next session of the Legal Subcommittee, discuss a draft questionnaire, which is extremely important in our issue, a draft questionnaire on the further ways to develop space law. This was developed by Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Russia and a number of other States.

I would also like to note the useful productive discussion on the issue of the usefulness of the United Nations fulfilling its oversight function on the draft Protocol on Mobile Space Property, the Cape Town Convention on International Guarantees in respect of mobile equipment. I would like to note here that, despite the great amount of work that has been carried out by the intersessional group, as far as the preparation of the report to the Legal Subcommittee is concerned, the discussion which took place during the session of the Subcommittee itself, clearly showed that opinions regarding this, at this present stage, remained divergent, and sometimes, in fact, they are diametrically opposed. It seems to us here that at this session of the Committee, we probably will not be able to make any progress here, any progress beyond that which is already contained in the report of the Subcommittee and which clearly reflects the divergent points of view.

It seems to us that it would be logical to give us the necessary time to develop the Protocol on Space Equipment, especially those provisions which are related to the definition or the determination of the oversight body which would act as the Registrar of space objects and equipment. I do not want to here reiterate the doubts which we voiced at the Legal Subcommittee regarding the United Nations' potential as far as fulfilling this role is concerned. And I am thinking here, of course, of the role which our Committee can carry out here. Our doubts are well known. At this stage, I would merely want to underscore that these are doubts. This is not our final position. But what we do believe most firmly is that these doubts have to be addressed and once they have been, then we can submit a draft resolution to the General Assembly, one which would take into account all those doubts, both of a legal and financial nature related to this issue.

This is why we believe that the discussion during our session of the Committee of the draft resolution to be submitted to the General Assembly will probably not be productive. It seems to us that the issue requires additional consideration, additional discussion within the framework of the Legal Subcommittee.

I would like to add here it should take into account the great amount of experience in this field which a number of other specialized United Nations agencies possess. Here I am referring, of course, of the IADC and ICAO.

Mr. President, I conclude. Our side attaches great significance to international cooperation in the field of outer space, *inter alia*, in the field of space science and space studies. In this respect, I would like to inform you that, prior to the International Year of Heliophysics, which will take place in the year 2007, the Institute for Space Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, intends to, in 2007, in the City of Tarussa, convene an International Seminar on the Utilization of Space Applications and Space Methodologies for the study of problems related to human health and the potential negative impacts of the use of universal micro-satellite platforms.

We invite all interested delegations, as well as the United Nations Committee on Space, to participate in this very interesting event.

I thank you Sir.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Dzubenko, thank you very much for your statement on behalf of the Russian Federation.

The next speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of the Royal Kingdom of Thailand, Mr. Somkiati Ariyapruchya. You have the floor Sir.

Mr. S. ARIYAPRUCHYA (Thailand): Mr. Chairman, at the outset, let me say how pleased we are to see you on the Chair. On behalf of Thailand, I would like to express our profound appreciation for the warm words of welcome to Thailand from you and from the COPUOS members to the membership of this august body, the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Thailand is now attending the COPUOS meeting as a full member for the first time. I said a year ago to this Committee when Thailand was applying to be a member, that Thailand was ready and willing to be a good, active and cooperative member of COPUUS. Thailand would explore ways and means of how to enhance even further our contribution to the international community of COPUOS.

We have been doing what we said. After our entry into COPUOS, we sent strong delegations to participate in the deliberations of both the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the Legal Subcommittee, whose useful recommendations are now under consideration of this Committee.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and the relevant Chairmen of the two Subcommittees for the leadership and guidance, as well as the Director, Sergio Camacho, and his staff's tireless efforts in providing excellent assistance to our work.

Mr. Chairman, we have an interesting agenda before us. We will have to examine the many and useful recommendations of the two Subcommittees as well as to consider additional items. My delegation welcomes your opening statement outlining your vision and plan regarding the management of this session of the Committee and beyond. I would like to assure you of Thailand's full cooperation in ensuring the effective and fruitful outcome of our work.

Mr. Chairman, as space science and technology are expanding and advancing rapidly, they also offer wider and more effective possibilities as instruments for enhancing human development and human security. The vital task of this Committee is to devise ways and means to harness those possibilities to improve the daily life of human beings around the globe, how these possibilities can help meet the Millennium Development Goals and help fulfil the recommendations of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. In this connection, we are happy that considerable progress has been made regarding the implementation of UNISPACE III recommendations. The special presentation this morning of Mr. Karl Doetsch, Chairman of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee during its thirty-eighth to fortieth session, who had been instrumental in establishing a mechanism for implementing the recommendations of UNISPACE III, on how we can move forward in this regard in the science and technical aspects, therefore merited our careful consideration.

Mr. Chairman, the tsunami tidal waves that ravaged the Andaman Sea and the Indian Ocean shorelines at the end of December last year focused world attention once more on the huge scale that natural disasters could cause in terms of damages to human lives, properties and infrastructures. Space-based technology, through high- and low-resolution satellite data from satellites, along with GIS technology, can play an important role in the monitoring and management, mitigation and recovery efforts of tsunami-affected areas. The Geo-Informatics and Space Technology Development Agency, or GISTDA, of Thailand has been using data from satellites, such as Landsat, IRS, Spot-5, RADARSAT, IKONOS and QUICKBIRD for such a purpose. GISTDA has set up the Satellite Imagery-Based Information Centre for Tsunami Recovery. A special Powerpoint presentation of GISTDA's work and experiences in this regard will be presented to the Committee next Monday morning during the consideration of Item 7, Consideration of the Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee.

My delegation is pleased that an Ad Hoc Expert Group was established by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its forty-second session in accordance with the recommendation of the General Assembly resolution 59/2 to conduct a study on the possibility of creating an international entity to provide for coordination and the means of optimizing the effectiveness of space-based services for use in disaster management and that the Subcommittee had endorsed its terms of reference and work plan. Thailand is a member of the Ad Hoc Expert Group.

Thailand is also active in the GEOSS process. Last month, Thailand was elected one of the members of the GEO Board to oversee the new organization's work.

Mr. Chairman, Thailand has strong commitment to the development and promotion of space technology for peaceful uses, to enhance human development and human security. Over the years, our capacity in space technology has greatly strengthened and expanded in areas such as Earth observation, communications, satellite design and construction. Such development is ignited by our firm determination that begins at home. His Majesty the King of Thailand has initiated many projects and been actively working to improve the standard of living of the Thai people by using space technology. His Majesty has applied remote sensing and GIS mapping mechanism in illicit crops monitoring and promoted crops substitution programmes to generate incomes for those who live in the areas where opium used to be planted. Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn has followed His Majesty's guidance and thus has applied the same technology in her own initiated projects for the land use and disaster prevention purposes.

A project for distant learning through satellites was launched at Wang Klai Kangwon School in 1995 to honour and celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of His Majesty's accession to the throne. Now, Klai Kangwon School is providing distance-learning courses to over 3,000 schools in Thailand. Through

web-based information, e-learning is provided to people who have access to computers all over the world. This project is in line with His Majesty's remarks that "life-long education will benefit both individuals and the country as a whole."

Thai government agencies are increasingly aware of the benefits of using space technology to assist in their work. GISTDA is working closely with them. Now, Earth observation system images, along with GIS data, are being used increasingly the Government's efforts to combat illicit drug trafficking, to help in reforestation efforts, to aid in urban planning and, of course, in agricultural development and water management.

Mr. Chairman, Thailand has continued to intensify its constructive cooperation network with many countries, such as France, India, Japan, Russia, ASEAN countries, with regard to space-related activities, both on bilateral and regional levels, in the fields of space science, space technology, Earth monitoring, remote sensing and joint scientific research. We wish to expand the list as we move into the future.

Thailand views that exchange of experiences and best practices under the framework of North-South and South-South cooperation can reinforce multilateral efforts in promoting sustainable development through the effective application of peaceful uses of space technology. For example, in September 2003, Thailand the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs had organized an international workshop concerning satellite data applications for the benefit of developing countries in Asia and the Pacific. Thailand, through GISTDA, is now in consultation with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, or ESCAP, as regards the organizing of an Expert Group Meeting on Disaster Management for the Asian and Pacific Countries to take place at the end of July this year in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Mr. Chairman, last but not least, we are happy to announce that Thailand's effort in satellite development is forging ahead with the construction of the first Thai Earth observation satellite named THEOS, Thailand Earth Observation Satellite, which will be fully owned and operated by GISTDA under the cooperation between Thailand and France. It is scheduled to be launched in mid-2007. It has two remote sensing instruments, panchromatic with ground sampling distance of two metres and swath width of 22 kilometres, and multispectral with ground sampling distance of 15 metres and swath width of 90 metres. It will provide geo-referenced image products for applications in cartography, land use, agricultural monitoring, forest resources assessment, forest fire monitoring, flood risk management and national security.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ariyapruchya, thank you very much for your statement on behalf of the Kingdom of Thailand. I noted in your statement you spoke about the forthcoming Disaster Management Programme in Chiang Mai. As you recollected, in Chiang Mai last November, your Asian Association of Remote Sensing, under the auspices of GISTDA celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of that Organization. What was unique about that particular conference was that, to the best of my knowledge, it was the first time I witnessed the effort of the remote sensing community in Asia to work together to develop a satellite known as RYSAT(?). And RYSAT is not supposed to be a government satellite but a satellite to be put together by all the scientists of Asia and, for me, this is what I call knowledge-sharing in the field of remote sensing and I hope this initiative, started in Thailand, will help not only the Asian community but would be a symbol that other regions would be able to emulate in the future. So thank you very much for your statement.

Now I would like to invite the distinguished representative of the United States of America to address the Committee. Mr. Ken Hodgkins, you have floor.

Mr. K. HODGKINS (United States of America): Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, once again it is a pleasure for the United States delegation to see you in the Chair. We look forward to working with you to ensure a successful outcome for this session. I would also like to express our deep appreciation to the staff of the Office for Outer Space Affairs for their superb work over the past year and to welcome Libya and Thailand as new members of the Committee.

Before turning to the work of the Committee for this session, I would like to comment briefly about recent developments in the United States that bear significantly on our space programme.

NASA is reorganizing and moving forward to implement the United States space exploration vision. There have been three international conferences, two in Washington and one in Orlando, Florida, that were carried out to enhance global understanding of the vision and to encourage international collaboration.

Also during the past year, President Bush signed a new national policy for space-based positioning, navigation and timing programmes, augmentations and related activities. This policy supersedes the national policy related to the United States Global Positioning System that was in effect since 1996.

In implementing this policy, the United States will provide on a continuous basis, civil space-based positioning and timing services free of direct user fees through the GPS system and its augmentations and provide open, free access to information necessary to develop and build equipment to use these services.

The United States will improve the performance of positioning and timing services for users worldwide.

The United States will encourage foreign development of positioning, navigation and timing services and systems based on GPS.

The United States will also seek to ensure that foreign systems are interoperable with the civil services of GPS in order to benefit civil, commercial and scientific users worldwide.

And finally, the United States will promote the use of United States positioning and timing services and capabilities for applications at the Federal, State and local levels to the maximum extent practical.

President Bush also recently signed a new national policy for space transportation programmes and activities to ensure the United States' ability to maintain access to and use space for United States national and homeland security, civil, scientific and commercial purposes. This policy superseded the policy in this regard that had been in effect since 1994. Under the new policy, the United States Government has been directed to ensure the availability of space transportation capabilities necessary to provide reliable and affordable space access, including access to, transport through, and return from space.

The United States Government has also been directed to develop space transportation capabilities to enable human exploration beyond low-Earth orbit.

And finally, the United States Government has been directed to sustain a development programme for next-generation space transportation capabilities that improve the reliability, responsiveness and cost of access to and return from space.

Regarding international developments, we are very pleased to note that at the Third Earth Observation Summit in Brussels, Belgium, in February, participating member countries and international organizations endorsed a 10-year Implementation Plan for the Global Earth Observation System of Systems, or otherwise known as GEOSS, and established a permanent Group on Earth Observations, GEO. The United States will participate in the implementation of GEOSS as the Earth's environment continues to be of vital interest in providing data and information to support research and operational applications that actively benefit all aspects of society.

Mr. Chairman, once again our agenda for this session of COPUOS holds the promise of producing useful results on a number of important topics. We expect that there will be an extremely interesting exchange of views on the spin-off benefits of space exploration and on strengthening the role of COPUOS in promoting international cooperation so as to ensure that outer space is maintained for peaceful purposes.

My delegation is pleased to note that the Committee will be considering again this year an item dealing with space and society with a special emphasis on education. This will be an excellent opportunity for delegations to share information on national and international efforts to demonstrate to the general public how space activities could enrich their daily lives.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, we would like to congratulate Mr. Niklas Hedman of Sweden for his superb leadership in preparing the report to the fifty-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly on the implementation of UNISPACE III.

We are pleased with the comprehensive report on the review of the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III, including a Plan of Action consisting of a set of concrete proposals by the Committee for specific actions to be undertaken in further implementing those recommendations. We support the Plan of Action and intend to work at the national and international level to ensure that as many of the recommendations as possible are fulfilled. We were particularly pleased with the unique contribution that the Action Teams made to these efforts. Under the voluntary leadership of Governments, this innovative mechanism has allowed the participation of governmental and non-governmental entities in the follow-up to UNISPACE III while preserving the pivotal role of Member States.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of the United States, Mr. Ken Hodgkins, for his statement and wish you and your country much success in your space exploration vision.

The next speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of Portugal, Mr. Filipe Santos.

Mr. F. D. SANTOS (Portugal): Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, on behalf of my delegation I wish first to express our satisfaction on seeing you as Chairman of the forty-eighth session of this Committee and to reiterate my Government's full commitment and cooperation in achieving its goals.

I would also like to express our recognition for the excellent professional work performed by the Office for Outer Space Affairs and in particular to Mr. Sergio Camacho in support of the activities of COPUOS.

The Portuguese delegation also wishes to express its warm welcome to Libya and Thailand on being new members of this Committee and its confidence that they will make important contributions to our work.

Portugal is strongly committed to the peaceful uses of outer space and in particular to the development of science and technology in the field of space. We believe that a more equitable and focused application of space science and technology is very important to address the growing concerns about world global problems and to attain sustainable development. I am referring in particular to our common goals and objectives that have synergies with the goals and objectives of recent global conferences, conventions and protocols of the United Nations system, such as the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, the United Nations Millennium Declaration, the World Summit on the Information Society, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol.

The Portuguese delegation is pleased that the United Nations General Assembly has endorsed the Plan of Action proposed by this Committee on the implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. My delegation has participated actively in the review of this implementation process and fully supports its conclusions and the road map that has been agreed for the development of further space capabilities to advance human development. We fully support the current initiatives for the enhancement of the coordination of space-based services for use in disaster management which we consider to be a particularly important area for developing countries.

As regards space-related activities in Portugal, during 2004, I would like to report the elaboration and approval by the Government of a National Research and Development Space Strategy. This Plan of Action involves the active participation of industry, scientific and technological research institutions and universities. It is also designed to promote and develop cooperation at international level and particularly with the space-related international organizations in which Portugal is a member, namely ESA, EUMETSAT and ESO. A Space Office was established in 2004 within the Ministry of Science and Higher Education to develop the National Research and Development Space Strategy. The activities of this Office are supported by a National Space Advisory Council that represents the various public and private agents of the space sector. The Office has special responsibilities as regards the implementation of industrial and educational liaison offices functions and the organization of outreaching activities.

Particular attention was given in 2004 to the continuing development of telecommunication technologies, navigational systems, onboard data systems and space systems software.

As regards Earth observation, Portugal is currently participating in the development of the Land SAF project of EUMETSAT and is also developing various projects to prevent and combat forest fires. One of them, "Premfire" is undertaken by the private sector with support from a governmental institute and under an ESA contract.

Another active sector is the development of instrumentation, particularly in astrophysics, geo-physics and oceanography. As examples, I would like to mention the construction of an infrared camera for the ESO VLT telescope, contracted by ESA, which will be important for the observation of proto-_____(?) discs and to learn more about exo(?)-solar planets. I would also like to mention an infrared atmospheric sounding interferometer for the EUMETSAT/METOP and an L-band microwave imaging radiometer for the SMOS mission.

As regards matters concerning the Legal Subcommittee of COPUOS, I would like to mention that we have responded to the Questionnaire on Legal

Problems Concerning Space Objects in November of last year.

Portugal was represented in the two last meetings of the Space Assets Protocol to the Cape Town Convention and has expressed the opinion that the United Nations, through COPUOS, should be the Supervisory Authority on the registration system and the future Space Protocol.

Finally, I would like to express our support for the drafting of a comprehensive convention on international space law.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Santos, thank you very much for your statement on behalf of Portugal and the Chair wishes to wish you and your country much success in the implementation of your National Research and Development Space Strategy.

The next speaker on my list is Mr. Sayus, the distinguished representative of Argentina. You have the floor Sir.

Mr. S. SAYUS (Argentina) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. I would like to start by congratulating you on presiding over this Commission once again and I would like to assure you, Sir, that you will have support from my delegation in achieving everything that stands before this Commission.

Mr. Chairman, I would also like to note the excellent work that has been done by the Chair and the Bureaux over the last and we would also like to welcome Libya and Thailand as new members of this Committee.

In addition, we subscribe to the statement made by the Bolivian Ambassador on behalf of the GRULAC Group.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to give you a review of the main activities in this area that have been undertaken by Argentina in 2004, by way of completing the information that our country has already provided COPUOS with in our national report. The Córdoba Earth Station, which is at the _____(?) Space Station, has continued to operate normally during 2004 and has carried out follow-up telemetry and the management of the Argentinian satellite, SAC-C. The Earth Station has equipment which means that it can receive data transmitted by the following satellites: LandSat-5TM and 7-ETM Terra Modis(?), EO1, SAC-C, ERS-1 and 2. There is one RADARSAT-SAR, NOOA, Orbview and GOES.

The tasks of controlled planning and a command development for SAC-C has been pursued. This is the satellite that was launched on 21 November 2000 and this has continued until the present day. And in this way, via the ARG Server project, images are being produced for agriculture use and via the GEO Server project, in it is produced for geological use and all of these images are available on the website of the CNAE.

Mr. Chairman, the Argentinian Earth Observation Satellite, SAC-C, has completed its fourth successful year in orbit and this was the case on 21 November 2004 and this is the satellite that was designed by the CNAE and built jointly with the Argentian enterprise INVA(?). The SAC-C provides images and data from the entire national territory from neighbouring, as well as images from the rest of the world, and this information is given to Argentinian companies working in the agricultural and education areas. The images and data that we get of the surface of Argentina are used in the following areas: agriculture, the environment, management of disasters, epidemiology. During 2004, the SAC-C satellite continued to be part of the Morning Constellation of Earth observation satellites, made up of SAC-C, Terra, LandSat and EO-1 from the United States.

The various and continuous information from the satellites from this Constellation is very useful when it comes to management and monitoring of disasters such as fires, floods, and for many different kinds of applications.

I know would like to talk about the SAOCOM(?) satellite mission where Argentina's main payload is a microwave sensor. An observation using sensors, microwave sensors in particular, is interesting because this task can be carried out independently of Sun rays and it is not affected by the presence of clouds.

In 2004, the construction of SAOCOM-1(?) continued with a polarimetric(?) synthetic aperture radar in L-band as its main instrument and this is going to be put into orbit as of 2007.

These satellites, the SAOCOM(?) satellites will become part of the Italian-Argentine satellite set-up, together with the Italian constellation SKYMED COSMO which is managed by ASI, Italy. And this set of satellites will mean that we will be able to get very

clear and up-to-date information on fires, floods, eruptions, earthquakes, avalanches and landslides. In addition, during 2004 simulation software and processing software was developed for the airborne SAR and we built interface units of various modules and analyzed interfaces for use in airplanes. The Earth(?) SARAT(?) started its initial tests in March of 2005.

I would now like to turn my attention to the SAC-D Aquarius mission which is a joint _____(?) and NASA mission and this also involves the Italian Space Agency and the French Space Agency. The aim of this mission is to measure the salinity, the salt content of the sea from space and to detect high-temperature points on the Earth and to measure the concentration of marine ice, especially in the Antarctic. In addition, we intend to look at the changes that have been caused by man in the environment and we intend to launch this programme in 2008.

As regards the communications satellite, the updating of the Space Plan 2004-2015 includes the development of communication satellites, both in terms of design and construction on the basis of major developments which have taken place in Argentina in this regard. In 2004 we undertook a technical analysis and a feasibility study of said satellites.

The SARE mission uses very high-technology satellites with specific applications. They can appropriate and timely information when it comes to monitoring rapidly changing effects when, for instance, there is a fire in a mountain region or when we have floods in coastal regions.

Mr. Chairman, it is well-known that information systems involve the processing and transmission of use of information which is gathered in space as well as computer and tele-computer developments using information which has been obtained in space. In 2004, we continued to develop joint projects and, in terms of disaster management and the area of health, great advances have been achieved.

As regards disaster management, last year we continued the processing of images and also developed various projects to which could be applied in various disaster situations, natural disasters that is, and in particular, we wish to make sure that we have water monitoring of the Salador(?) Basin and of floods in the Chako(?) region.

As regards health, while seeking not to exclude other applications, we have concentrated on panoramic epidemiology. Here we are talking about a new instrument for use in the area of health. And in 2004, the Gulich Institute started the development of multi-disciplinary programmes in order to provide early warning in terms of health.

With regards to access to space, it is important to make sure that we keep to what is required by the National Space Plan in 2004, the Mario Gulich Institute organized multi-disciplinary activities with the participation of national and international experts.

Mr. Chairman, with regards to international cooperation, I should like to underline the following points.

We have signed a Space Cooperation Agreement with the Chinese Space Agency, the CNSA. In addition, we have signed three specific documents with the Algerian Space Agency. We have also signed two specific documents with the United States when it comes to cooperation in the SAC-D Aquarius project, and the campaign for the Antarctic AMSREC Ice Project. And finally, together with Italy, we have provide 18 stipends for the improvement of the professional level of our specialists.

And I would like to tell you about the activities now for 2005.

In May, a Decree was signed to prolong the National Space Plan which stretches from 2004 to 2015. In addition, a Seminar for the Uses of Satellite Data, which is an Inter-American initiative, took place in Buenos Aires on 2 and 3 June. This was organized by the CNOA(?) and also the National Administration for the Ocean and the Air from the United States. And between the 9 and 13 September 2004, we intend to organize a Workshop for Basic Science and this is going to be done under the auspices of the United Nations and Argentina.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Sayus, thank you very much for your statement on behalf of Argentina and where the Chair wishes you and your country much success in the implementation of your National Space Plan for the year 2004 to 2015.

And that brings me next to our next speaker, Mr. Da Cunha Oliveira of Brazil. You have the floor Sir.

Mr. C. E. DA CUNHA OLIVEIRA (Brazil): Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, at the very outset, allow me to convey my appreciation

for seeing you chairing this session. Your experience combines and not only that of an Expert of Outer Space Affairs but also that of a diplomat truly at ease with the treatment of these issues on the multilateral level. The fact that you are a representative of a developing country and a country, I must say, that has taken important steps towards the development of its space capabilities, also brings to your chairmanship a prospective that is most welcome by my delegation ant that would certainly contribute to the achievement of fruitful discussions during the current session of this Committee.

Mr. Chairman, allow me to recall in a very brief manner the most important elements that have been already mentioned by my delegation in the previous sessions of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and of the Legal Subcommittee.

On those occasions, my delegation provided information on recent scientific and legal developments of the Brazilian Space Programme. We highlighted the existing links between the use of space-related technologies and the attainment of higher levels of human development and security. Such links, I must say, have been tragically illustrated by the events that took place in the Indian Ocean in December 2004. We underlined the role of international cooperation for developing space capabilities and for disseminating their benefits in a larger number of countries and we committed ourselves to attain that end. We reiterated our support to the role played in that particular regard by the United Nations through the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, its Subcommittees and the Office for Outer Space Affairs.

This, notwithstanding, we called for more concrete steps by the international community to spread the benefits associated with the use of space technologies, particularly to developing countries, and to implement the decisions and recommendations taken in that regard at UNISPACE III and its follow-up meetings.

Last, but not least, we underscored the importance of international space law to promote a sustained, peaceful and non-discriminatory use of outer space.

This has been, in a nutshell, the guidelines of my country before this Committee, guidelines that my delegation will continue to stand up for during the current session. More specific remarks will be made by my delegation on the other agenda items.

Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much Mr. Da Cunha Oliveira of Brazil for your statement.

And the next speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of Malaysia, Professor Mazlan Othman, the Director-General of the Malaysian Space Agency.

She's not there? She has stepped out. OK. We will call her when she gets back.

While we are waiting for her, I hope my next speaker is ready, and that is the distinguished Ambassador of Iran, Ambassador Shafti.

Please, if you allow me, I will go back to the earlier speaker? Professor Mazlan, you were not here when we introduced you. I did not look at your podium. I am very sorry for that. You have the floor Madam.

Ms. M. OTHMAN (Malaysia): I am very sorry Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, I would like to join other Member States in expressing our delegation's great pleasure at seeing you in the Chair, and Colombia and Iran as First Vice-Chairman and Second Vice-Chairman, respectively.

We would also like to welcome warmly Libya and our neighbour Thailand to this Committee.

We would also like to express our deep appreciation of the dedication and efforts of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, under the able leadership of Dr. Sergio Camacho-Lara. We would like to put on record our appreciation to Ms. Takemi Chiku for the outstanding work she did, particularly in moving the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, my delegation would like to highlight that the December 2004 tsunami reached Malaysian shores, a fact not so widely known, but was the nation's biggest natural disaster, killing 68 people and causing millions of dollars of damage to property. Three children are missing, presumed dead, and the fishermen, most affected by the event and also socio-economically the poorest sector of Malaysian society, have not fully recovered from the physical and psychological effects. The sea-to-space cluster of departments in the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation, which includes the Space Agency, the Meteorological Services, the Remote Sensing Centre, and the Ocean Directorate, have been charged with the task of setting up a national

early warning system, which includes increasing the current number of tidal gauges and seismometers and enhancing the public communications system.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, in May 2005, we completed the construction of the Mission Control Centre building, and two antennas, one for TTOC and one for receiving images, will be installed in July. By the end of 2005, we hope the Centre will be fully functioning in anticipation of the launch of our Earth observation satellite RazakSAT in early 2006.

We have also been requested by SARE Space Centre to assist them in the command and control of the Galileo Test Bed.

The construction of space science labs, workshops and an Assembly Integration and Test Facility will begin in the next few months.

With regard to educational activities, we continue to implement our highly popular education and outreach programmes for schools and the public with emphasis on rural areas.

In addition to those science and technology-related activities, the Space Agency is in the process of formulating a national space policy and an Outer Space Act that will allow us to eventually accede to the United Nations treaties and conventions. Extensive and intensive consultations with stakeholders are ongoing and we hope to complete the process at the end of 2006.

Our delegation will provide more information under the relevant agenda items.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much Professor Mazlan Othman for that statement and also you actually corrected my comments this morning because I did not include Malaysia in the list of countries that suffered from the tsunami disaster. But what is more important, of course, is the fact that in your statement you have indicated the lessons your country has learned and the steps you are taking to prepare, hopefully not another tsunami, but in case any one comes forward, you will be prepared to address it. Thank you very much.

Now, my friend from Iran, the distinguished Ambassador Shafti, of the Iranian Space Agency. Sir, you have the floor.

Mr. H. SHAFTI (Islamic Republic of Iran): Thank you. Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, it is a valuable and pleasant opportunity to participate once more in our annual meeting of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Using the opportunity, along with several other esteemed delegates, and on behalf of my delegation, I wish to express our full satisfaction and gratitude for your extensive effort which made the last session and its outcome a success. We are confident that your conduct, wisdom and rich experience will make the forty-eighth session a full success too.

We wish also to commend Dr. Sergio Camacho-Lara and his able staff for their continuous efforts both behind the scene and on the scene.

We would like also to welcome Libya and Thailand in our Committee.

Mr. Chairman, my country, as a founding member of COPUOS, firmly believes in dialogues and global efforts towards improving in human development, humanity security and welfare.

Serious concerns like natural disasters, diminishing of natural resources, poverty, disease, illiteracy, deprivation and indeed a series of not only natural but also manmade disasters continue to be the greatest threat against humanity, hence the need for effective and imminent action is felt more than ever before.

Our commitment and collaboration is a vital necessity to pay our contribution effectively. We hope that our association in COPUOS serves towards our commitment and collaboration and each year we meet, we all feel adequate progress towards achieving our mutual goals has been reached.

While on this subject, Mr. Chairman, I wish to join you in thanking Dr. Karl Doetsch for his presentation and indeed his up to the point emphasis on the necessity to establish a vision, a vision beyond what it is to what it should be. As Dr. Doetsch, yourself and a number of colleagues pointed out, it will, of course, serve the purpose of effective dealing with future challenges if all members' viewpoints could be collected, as requirements are often diverse and priorities are often different.

Mr. Chairman, on the subject of the implementation of the recommendations of the United Nations Third International Conference on Space Applications, UNISPACE III, we completely support fulfilment of these recommendations and are prepared

to step forward in this connection, based on our capabilities and potentials.

We continue to support the work of the Action Teams established by COPUOS members for the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III. Wide participation and co-chairing the Action Team on Develop a Worldwide Strategy on Environmental Monitoring is part of the contribution of the Islamic Republic of Iran in this connection. This is going to be further continued by the contribution and participation in the activities of the Working Group on Disaster Management, particularly in the DMISCO programme.

Mr. Chairman, we welcome the action taken by calling the decision of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space at its forty-seventh session in organizing in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO, and the Institute for Global Mapping and Research of Austria Symposium on Space and Archaeology. My country, with thousands of years history of Persian Civilization is amongst leading potentials for research in this field and will be pleased to cooperate in this respect.

We also welcome UNESCO's work in legal and ethical linkages and moral issues in space achievement and feel that we should cooperate closely with UNESCO in this important matter.

Mr. Chairman, our peaceful purposes cannot accommodate militarizing or use of weapons in space. My country strongly believes that space, as a mankind heritage, should remain clean of any threat against humanity.

Mr. Chairman, as far as the agenda item Space and Society is concerned, we previously expressed our appreciation with a reservation that such a broad term could be used more widely, clearly wider than education. Our suggestion to refer the matter for consideration is still valid and as suggested, my country will be prepared and pleased to participate in such consideration defining the subtitles under space and society.

Mr. Chairman, using the privilege of this opportunity, my delegation would like to bring to the kind attention of the Chair and distinguished delegates, a brief summary of some of the actions taken by the Iranian Space Agency since our last year meeting.

At the international level, and in line with the capacity-building and sustainable development plans of the country, the Iranian Space Agency, in cooperation with the Office for Outer Space Affairs, has established the Secretariat of the Regional Task Force. This also includes an electronic database for expertise and knowledge-sharing related to disaster management. The action was made following the decisions of the Regional Workshop on the Use of Space Technology for Environmental Security, Disaster Rehabilitation and Sustainable Development, held from 8 to 12 May 2004 in Tehran, and organized jointly by the Iranian Space Agency and the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs.

Last April, in conjunction with the Office for Outer Space Affairs, we sent a number of letters to selected institutions and administrations around the world describing the importance and role of the Task Force. Since then a number of international institutions have shown interest to join this Task Force for data and knowledge-sharing on environmental protection, disaster rehabilitation and management, as well as sustainable development. We are still open to new members.

Mr. Chairman, while on the subject of international cooperation, the Iranian Space Agency also last year, in cooperation with the Inter-Islamic Network on Space Sciences and Technology, ISNET, and with the support of the Islamic Development Bank, organized the International Seminar on Satellite Technology Applications in Communications and Remote Sensing, from 9 to 15 October 2004. This Seminar, like the latter, provided the forum for engineers, scientists, researchers and planners of the Organization of Islamic Conference, OIC, for the Member States to present their views, discuss new trends and developments and exchange experience in the state-of-the art technology in the areas relevant to the subject of the Seminar.

Mr. Chairman, concerning regional cooperation, the Asia-Pacific region is one of the most disaster-prone regions historically, subject to more than 75 per cent of tragic events. However, the Asia-Pacific region has also a high potential and capacity in synergical benefiting of the privileges of space science and technology for rapid development of their nations. In this connection, with the cooperation of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission in Asia and the Pacific, from 6 to 7 September 2005, the Iranian Space Agency will host in Isfahan, the Eleventh Intergovernmental Consultative Committee, ICC, Meeting of the ESCAP Regional Programme on Space Applications in Asia-Pacific, RESAP. This important meeting will be preceded by two back-to-back Eleventh Meeting of the RESAP Working Group on

Remote Sensing and Geographical Information System and the Tenth Meeting of Meteorological Satellites and Hazard Monitoring that will be held from 3 to 5 September 2005.

One of the important issues that the ICC Meeting will work out is the issue of the establishment of the Centre for Informed Disaster Management in Iran. Establishment of such a Centre in Iran will provide the possibility for benefiting the existing sources and potential in the Asia-Pacific region to support the people and countries of the region in the event of the incidence of the major disasters.

Mr. Chairman, considering the role of space law as a prerequisite for international cooperation and activities, we have planned for a national symposium in November 2005 this year to gather the latest proceedings and expertise in this field. We believe the importance of space law will be more recognized and appreciated, along with further development of application of space technology. However, space law, even though seems somehow lagging behind, still has room to be more appreciated in international law, particularly at academic level, more spread by ratification and more exercised by the members.

Mr. Chairman, our activities helping capacity-building as a prerequisite for sustainable development at national level included a number of seminars in the last 12 months with the subjects of "Space and Water Resources Management", Space and Environment" and "Space and Disaster Management", all hosted by the Iranian Space Agency with the cooperation of the most reputable Iranian universities and research centres and the participation of several experts, scientists and specialists. Furthermore, the Iranian Space Agency has now entered discussions with aerospace engineering faculties to enrich the syllabuses on space and emphasizing the research work on space.

Mr. Chairman, the Iranian Space Agency last year, that is in its first year of establishment, included its plans in the country's five-year plan, commencing 21 March 2005. As part of this plan and as its specific details appeared in our report to the forty-second Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, a number of communication, remote sensing and research satellites have been foreseen to be launched during our five-year plan. Furthermore, a plan for 20 years' vision is in its final stage to be submitted to the Government in the near future.

Mr. Chairman, we consider that Space Week can play an important role in public awareness. As it appears on the United Nations report on Space Week 2004, the Iranian Space Agency included in its last programme for the Space Week to the young generation, from early childhood to university students, with a very positive feedback.

Mr. Chairman, curiosity, beauty and glory of space are still the source of endless fascination for humanity and in particularly the young generation. We should not deprive the young generation from this great source of fascination. To enter the gate of awareness, this fascination attraction can be a very inviting and encouraging passageway.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I wish to conclude my comments by reiterating the hope that we all succeed in demonstrating that space is a mankind heritage with great potential to benefit all human beings regardless of their technical capabilities. There is no reason why it should not be so if we all use outer space for peaceful purposes.

I thank you Sir.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much your Excellency, Mr. Shafti of Iran, for your statement and on behalf of your country. I have noted in particular your effort to get the country to get itself involved in establishing some expertise in space law as a prerequisite to doing something tangible in the field of space and science technology itself. So good luck to your efforts.

The next speaker on my list is the distinguished Ambassador from Colombia and our First Vice-Chairman, Ambassador Arevalo. You have the floor Sir.

Mr. C. AREVALO YEPES (Colombia) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Thank you Sir. I should like to reiterate my appreciation for the painstaking work which you have carried out. Firstly, as, in my capacity rather, as Head of the Colombian delegation, we would like to associate ourselves with the declaration of GRULAC read to us by the Ambassador of Bolivia. Of course, it would remiss of us not to wish a hearty welcome to Libya and Bolivia(?) (Thailand?) upon their joining our Committee.

We were fortunate enough, Sir, to have had the President of the General Assembly with us this morning who shared with us the gist of the main elements of the United Nations reforms. His report was also transmitted to us and I should like here to support what was stated by the Ambassador of Austria in this field. It behoves us to analyze the way in which

we are to order the subjects and topics examined by our Committee and our Subcommittees.

I should like to remind you what the Secretary-General stated concerning international cooperation. Firstly, the triangle made up of peace, stability and development, and then what he said, a perverse(?) triangle and I use his words here, a triangle with difficult elements, complicated elements like under-development, crime, transnational crime and terrorism. And this is one of the greatest challenges facing the United Nations. These are not static triangles. These are constantly moving, evolving spirals. The positive triangle is counter-balanced by the three major evils facing us and this includes terrorism and transnational organized crime. There are, however, a number of fundamental elements here and specifically development.

We have examined the problems. At the basis of this problem of development, the concept of development requires the immobilization(?), marshalling of significant resources, as well as significant international cooperation and enhanced international assistance. This is why we must create the necessary internal and external conditions which would ensure sustainable development. States are responsible for their own development. However, their sacrifices can undermine the prospects for many generations and this can happen all the more so if there is no support from outside.

In the case of Colombia, a country with medium income, which has not benefited a great deal from the process of globalization, 600 million individuals throughout the world live on less than $2 a day and the vast majority of these are children. They do not have the privilege of enjoying school enrolment. These mid-level income States require assistance to resolve structural problems and to meet the challenge of recurring problems which result from the international financial system throughout the world. International cooperation for development which is needed for the States is not only financial in nature, it is technical in nature as well which will enable us to enhance the national capacity of these States and which enables these States to have their populations, their citizens participate actively in the process of development. However, scientific and technical transfers are necessary to secure these evolutions and it is here that space science and space technology can play a significant role. This is why we believe, Sir, that the key point, as Dr. Sergio Camacho said so rightly, is to remain active and involved in this process of discussion which will take place within the framework of the General Assembly in September. Not only for the individual statements but also, I must state here, a number of Latin American delegations believe this here, we have discussed this informally, we believe that we must ask ourselves the concrete question of working out how space science and space technology can contribute in achieving the Millennium Development Goals which are fundamental, basic objectives as far as development is concerned.

We believe that this can be a contribution to institutional development and innovation and which could lead to COPUOS playing a major role. This is far more important than the political discussions and statements which we hear at the General Assembly. You, Sir, know the General Assembly very well. You know that this is often the case.

And this is a proposal which we put to you. We believe this to be important. And we believe that we can word this, or implement this in a very specific way.

Sir, there is another topic which is important, one which is before us at this very moment and I will start by addressing a topic which perhaps seems to be a side topic but it is extremely important, Space and Education. It seems to us that we are undertaking a great many efforts in collaboration with UNESCO and I seize the opportunity here to thank UNESCO. We believe that UNESCO collaborates in a most outstanding way with us and it seems to us furthermore that the small model projects, as contained in the Plan of Action on Education can have an impact and we must continue to work in this direction.

I listened with a great deal of interest to the statements made by France and Japan in this respect and we are well aware that in Chile an event, supported by UNESCO will be organized in the near future and we support this step for we believe that this will be very important for succeeding generations, succeeding generations which will have to have the necessary skills and abilities to thrive in globalization.

This morning Dr. Doetsch spoke to us of the long-term vision of COPUOS. This is capital, in our view, capital importance.

I turn now to the topics within the purview of the Legal Subcommittee. We believe, Sir, that the basic issue here is to work out how we can contribute by using specific instruments, and this is something which Colombia did in the past, using an instrument on the saturation of the geostationary orbit, and in doing this, we were supported by Ecuador and Indonesia. We believe that this orbit is of a physical nature and

GRULAC stated this this morning and we believe that the orbit is a natural resource. There is a risk here, thus, of saturation in space and this orbit should be accessible to all States, regardless of their present space capabilities. There should be a fair sharing of the geostationary orbit and we should take into account the specific needs of developing States. Here the word "assistance" means assistance. This is in Spanish although there is no exact translation of this word, but there is a paragraph on the support. The translation in English does not exactly reflect what we wish to say in Spanish. In English, it really would be equivalent to saying "dependent upon", so with the support of the ITU.

We would like to reaffirm our belief that international space law is a genuine challenge facing the international community. The Legal Subcommittee has a key role to play in this field. It has to draw up new agreements which meet the emerging needs and interests of developing States.

We have always believed that it was important to reaffirm the need to ensure that international legal norms and United Nations norms on outer space prevail and that this is more important than norms of private law. We would like to reaffirm this here now Sir.

I should like to make a comment, Sir, on the topic of space and archaeology. It is a very interesting item on our agenda. We can better understand the cultural heritage of a population. We have now at our disposal a tool which the pioneers in this field did not have at their disposal. I am referring here to satellite imagery. This is a valuable tool to allow us to reconstruct our cultural heritage and we know that we can only understand our present by basing ourselves on our past.

I should like to very briefly now, Sir, present to you Colombia's report on the activities of the Provisional Secretariat to the Conference of the Americas. This is a report which was drafted in conformity with resolution 59/516. This resolution calls upon us to report on our activities. This is a report which took us six months of painstaking work to draft. It is available now and it will be distributed as a CRP document. It has not been translated into English yet but this will be done in the near future and we will disseminate it and distribute it to all the delegations.

It is five o'clock now. I will not read the whole of the document to you. I just want to underline the importance of this that we are going to be organizing the Fifth Conference of the Americas and this is a real turning point for us.

This document contains everything requested by the United Nations resolution with regard to this Conference, namely the tools obtained by the Fourth Conference, the Conventions and the Bureaux supportive of this and we have looked into the requirements of UNISPACE III and the results of the Fourth Conference where we are talking about the implementation of space technologies or the environment or education. It is my feeling that this is a tangible result when we look at the requirements of UNISPACE at the regional level.

As regards cooperation, here the Secretariat has requested that a body be set up in each Latin American country and this body would be in response for the coordination in keeping with the Cartagena Declaration. We have established coooperation and coordination programmes when it comes to disaster management and disaster mitigation .

The Canadian delegation mentioned the multi-national Andes Project, the aim of which is to improve the quality of life of people living in the Andes via dealing with the problems caused by earthquakes, eruptions and landslides. And in this report, we mention what has been done in various educational centres. We take up on a mention by Dr. Camacho this morning, namely the GNSS Programme in Latin America.

A number of seminars have been organized, put together by the Office for Outer Space Affairs and by the United States and others, and I am thinking of the Vienna 2002 Seminar, the Santiago de Chile Seminar and in December 2004 there was another Workshop which also took place in Vienna.

Another event of capital importance which took place in Medellin in Colombia in June 2004 aimed to share Latin America's space experiences with a number of Latin American countries that participated and we share our experience in space in that Seminar and this led to a whole series of conclusions. And the Provisional Secretariat was also involved in conferences on international space law. I am thinking of the Dutch Conference in 2002, for instance. We have also took part in a training course that took place in the Republic of Korea. That was a very interesting course. And in addition, we took part in a course organized by Brazil, which was really extremely useful.

In addition, we have worked on tele-medicine projects, in particular in the Amazon region. There is a particular tele-medicine programme which is being dealt with by a university in the region.

And this leads me to mention a number of instruments or tools available, namely the Internet page of the Provisional Secretariat. This home page mentions all the items that I have just been through and this means, and we are working in conjunction with a number of bodies and I turn to my Chilean counterpart here, this means that at the Fifth Conference in Ecuador, we will be able to draw up on all of our accumulated experience. And we know that Colombia experts will be able to make a significant contribution. And I think that we can draw on past experience and pursue our aims.

There are just a few months left for the Provisional Secretariat but I would like at this stage to thank the members of the Secretariat and the members of the Bureaux and I would particularly like to single out Dr. Camacho and Ms. Chiku because Ms. Chiku has always done remarkable work and we will miss her a great deal and, of course, there are many other members of the Secretariat whom I should single out but I would like to underline how much they have been devoted in the work and that collaboration of members of the Secretariat in the Fourth Conference was particularly useful.

I would also like to thank the European Space Agency that coordinated the Fourth Conference. And at the Fifth Conference, we look forward to the European Space Agency assisting us in Ecuador.

And we would also like to thank all those who, in whatever way, had been of assistance to us in our work and it is our hope that all these individuals and bodies will take part in the Fifth Conference in Ecuador to make sure that Conference too is a great success.

Mr. Chairman, I will not go on to item 5 of the agenda. I am going to stop here and I apologize to the interpreters for not providing a text of my statement but I did not want to read out a document. What I wanted to do was present what I had to say.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: I would like to thank our First Chairman, Ambassador Arevalo, for his statement to the Committee.

And the next speaker on my list is the Chairman of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, Ambassador Prunariou of Romania. You have the floor Sir.

Mr. D. D. PRUNARIOU (Romania): Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, let me express our satisfaction for seeing you again in the main chair of this Committee and please accept the certitude of my delegation that all meetings under your distinguished chairmanship will reach fruitful results.

Let me, Mr. Chairman, extend our congratulations to the Secretariat, in particular to Dr. Sergio Camacho, for the extensive and beneficial work they do. I would also like to convey our respect to the Chairs of the UNISPACE III Action Teams.

In today's world, we are ever more convinced that science and technology should be used to enhance human security and safety. Humankind is facing more and more threats from the global Earth and space environment, from terrorism, from deadly diseases, extreme poverty and hunger. Space technology already proved its contribution to the overall mitigation of the effects of natural disasters. Nevertheless, we should improve the mechanisms and increase the efficiency of space tools for better warning, monitoring and predicting, to a better preparedness to meet unfortunate major natural events. However, the same sense, among the most pressing problems we face today are harmonizing economic development with global warming, preventing the use of advanced technology by terrorists and controlling infectious diseases.

This broad comprehensive security concept, which goes beyond military aspects of security of States, needs for its development as a major pillar, the contribution of space activities. In our opinion, this contribution could be undertaken by maintaining both the peaceful aspect of space technology development and fostering the maintaining of outer space for peaceful purposes.

International efforts to address these problems are needed more than ever and space and security are items to be discussed again together in the frame of most significant international organizations. In particular, in the frame of the European Union, space and security were brought together in the frame of the new Research and Technology Development Framework Programme. As the delegation of my country mentioned during the latest COPUOS sessions, space is generating significant added value in the areas of security, as for: reliable information for early

warning; operational capabilities and readiness being proven by space imagery; secure and reliable communications; space based positioning and time distribution.

In my country, I am able to announce that the role of space in adding value to the security concept has been already recognized. The Romanian Space Agency is in charge since a couple of months by leading an Inter-Ministerial Committee with the definition of a programme on security scientific research and technology.

Considering the global significance of the disaster management and security aspects of space developments, I might draw to your attention the need for a growing role of the Committee and its Subcommittees, together with an adequate definition of their mechanisms in order to maintain the capability to confront with the new challenges.

Romania is continuing to develop its space activities at the national level and together with the international space community.

The Romanian Space Programme is further developed under the authority of the Romanian Space Agency and accomplished by more than 95 organizations with research, academic and industrial profiles. The five subprogrammes: space policy and infrastructure; space exploration; space applications; aerospace technology; industrial development; and spin-off run, were completed during last spring with a space technology for security action. Running presently a number of 94 projects involving more than 830 full-time equivalent professionals, the programme recorded a substantial growth during the last year. Most of the projects are completed under international cooperation. I will remind:

The contributions to international space exploration projects, as PLANCK and CLUSTER of the European Space Agency, Alpha Magnetic Spectrometer and FAST of NASA, COROT of CNES;

Development of space applications, as the ADAM precision farming model with CNES, Land Parcel Information System with the JRC of the European Commission, space tele-medicine with European and US partners, the establishment of the GNSS, Galileo Applications Centre, environmental monitoring for land degradation, floods and water management, the Land Use, Land Cover project developed with the Food and Agricultural Organization; and

Development of ground and onboard technology for space communications, navigation and a small satellite mission with industrial partners from Europe and the United States.

Romania is continuing to strengthen the cooperation in the frame of the European Space Agency towards a better integration of its space research and industry capabilities in the European programmes, as for space science, microgravity, Earth observation, telecommunications, navigation and positioning, and space engineering. Agreements and technical cooperation projects are ongoing and in preparation between the Romanian Space Agency and significant organizations, as NASA and the French Space Agency, CNES, the Russian Aerospace Federal Agency, the German Aerospace Centre, DLR, for projects directed to both science and direct applications as space technology, as for precision agriculture, environmental monitoring and tele-medicine.

A new international cooperation in space where Romania is contributing directly is the European Union Framework Programme 6, which includes space development as one of the major priorities. Romania continues the technical assistance for developing States and since last year, it is giving technical assistance to the Republic of Moldova for remote sensing applications in agriculture.

The last decade saw the formation of a new post-industrial society. The concept of power, national, multi-national or global, relies now on technology, innovation and humans as main factors of relevance. In this fabric, space activities are more and more getting a leading role in the overall development.

In this view, space programmes are able to play three major roles: drivers for the technology advancement, by taking some of the attributes of the military research and technology programmes; generators and keepers of security, through the unique capabilities to join in the same approach the items of defence, environment and global view; infrastructure and goals for a better life of the citizen, by the emerging global space applications for the day-by-day life and by the permanent active extension of the sphere of knowledge of humankind; and as a horizontal effect, the space programmes contribute substantially to a lasting improvement of the international cooperation, for both States and citizens levels.

Mr. Chairman, concerning the fifth and sixth items of the agenda, the opinion of my delegation is that we should concentrate our efforts to contribute to an efficient follow-up of the UNISPACE III

recommendations in taking into consideration the appropriate local and regional capabilities and needs. The outstanding work pursued by the Action Teams should e naturally followed by the definition and implementation of the action plans, containing specific goals, means and tasks. Romania is ready to further contribute, support and accomplish specific projects to be defined as follow-up of the work of the Action Teams.

I would like to recall that Romania co-organized during 2003 the United Nations/Romania/European Space Agency Regional Workshop on the Use of Space Technology for Disaster Management in Europe and that some of the recommendations of the Workshop generated projects, as for the integrated space applications targeted to the Danube and Danube Delta, already financed by the Romanian Space Agency.

Mr. Chairman, I am asking for permission to reiterate the fact that Romania, a country with tradition and development in the field of space science, aerospace technology and space applications, will continue to give the space activities a driving role in the fields of national science, technology and development.

Mr. Chairman, my delegation will ask you for taking the floor during the specific items of the agenda we might be able to be concerned.

Thank you Mr. Chairman and distinguished delegates for your attention.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank our Chairman of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, Ambassador Prunariou, for his statement.

That is the last delegation on my list to request time to speak on agenda item 4.

Do I have any other delegation wishing to take the floor on agenda item 4?

I see none.

Distinguished delegates, as you are aware, the European Space Policy Institute applied for a permanent observer status with the Committee. The information relating to its application is contained in CRP.6 and have been circulated during the forty-second session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. This question will be addressed later in our current session under agenda item 13, Other Matters. But in the meantime, and with your consent, I would like to give the floor to the representative of the European Space Policy Institute for a brief statement to the Committee.

Do we have the consent of the house?

Any objection?

I see none.

The representative of the European Space Policy Institute, you have the floor.

Mr. M. E. JAKOB (European Space Policy Institute): Thank you Mr. Chairman. Dear Chairman, dear Member States representatives and delegates, as a non-governmental organization, the European Space Policy Institute, ESPI, values the privilege to have the opportunity to address the instance of the United Nations where space affairs are discussed. The present request was already submitted in a previous document to the Scientific and Technical as well as to the Legal Subcommittee of COPUOS and we would like to use this given opportunity to reaffirm our plea.

The European Space Policy Institute, ESPI, has formally applied to have the permanent status of observer at COPUOS. A respective letter with documentation has been deposited with the Chair of COPUOS and was circulated as a CRP. It is an opportunity for ESPI to attend these meetings since it offers the possibility to be aware of the current issues and the way they are addressed by United Nations Member States.

At ESPI, we think that the mutual information and involvement in space activities in the world and in Europe, for example, with the new European governance, the newest European Community members and the new projects, such as Galileo and GMES, could form a good independent interface between United Nations Member States, institutions and organizations to work on a common goal in space activities throughout Europe and the world. In this view, ESPI applied also for observer status within ECOSOC.

The creation of the European Space Policy Institute, ESPI – Europäisches Institut für Weltraumpolitik – was decided at the ESA Council of December 2002. The Institute is a legal entity since 26 November 2003. The aim of this entry is:

To become a European think thank on space policy; and

Disseminate space awareness among the public and among opinion leaders as decision makers as well.

ESPI is an independent organization. It will seek funding from diverse sources. Presently, the Institute is funded by the European Space Agency, ESA, and the Federal Republic of Austria, through the Austrian Research Promotion Agency FFG, Aeronautics and Space Agency. Funding and participation in the form of grants or projects, is also open to national, intranational and multi-national institutions, companies and NGOs.

The quality of the personalities on ESPI's Steering Committee proves our serious interest in space activities. To name a few: Dr. Allgeier, former Director-General of the EU Commission, Dr. Azcarraga, Director of Space Department at SENER in Spain, Dr. Carl Bildt, former Prime Minster of Sweden, Pierre Busquin, former Commissary to Research of the EU Commission, Peter Creola, former Head of the Swiss delegation at the ESA Council, Ambassador Dr. Peter Jankowitsch, past Chair of COPUOS, Professor D. Lebeau, former President of CNES, the French Space Agency, Mr. Mennicken, former Director of DARA and Professor Dr. Rubbia, Nobel Prize Laureate in Physics, President of the Italian ENEA.

The Secretariat of ESPI is composed of the elected Secretary-General, the CEO is Dr. Serge Plattard, former Director of International Relations of CNES, in charge since 1 September 2004 and Michel Jakob, previously ESPI contact person at FFG ASA, now acting as elected Treasurer. Both had the honour to be delegates for their respective countries at COPUOS in the past.

The Institute will also gladly inform COPUOS and its Subcommittees of ESPI's activities throughout the web page www.espi.or.at.

As a start, in 2005, ESPI, in its think thank role, is producing reports on European space policy issues and also on the role of Europe in proposing original solutions to issues of worldwide interest, for example, bridging the digital divide, space and security and the role of space for guaranteeing long-term sustainability on Earth.

ESPI would welcome a request by the Subcommittees or COPUOS itself to conduct a study under their auspices.

ESPI wants to thank the Austrian party as host country for the warm welcome and the local support. Also thanks ESA and the Member States for their efforts in creating this new independent institution devoted to space policy.

ESPI will foreseeably host a series of workshops and a conference in partnership with the Austrian Ministry of Innovation and Technology and the FFG during the 2006 Austrian EU Presidency.

ESPI expects to receive a positive appreciation as already received from the ESA and EU Member States throughout the decision process of creating ESPI.

And ESPI thanks in advance the delegations in helping to grant the status of observer in these various Committees of COPUOS and also at ECOSOC>

Thank you very much for your attention.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. Jakob, thank you very much for your statement.

Distinguished delegates, if you flash our mind back to the beginning of this session since we started yesterday, you will notice that we have been doing something that Karl Doetsch _____(?) to this morning in his presentation, focusing on our mandate and this particular agenda item, Exchange of Views, brings to a sharper focus what each country has been doing in that area. Specifically, I just want to talk about only two to round up this particular agenda item.

This Committee is called the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the mandate, therefore, is to focus on how to use space peacefully, through, in particular, international cooperation. My appeal to all of you, let us keep it that way because that is what we have been talking about.

Secondly, our friend and colleague from Iran when he was speaking, he spoke about international cooperation and the efforts of his own country to get into that level. And when he spoke about international cooperation, he emphasized knowledge-sharing. And when Portugal spoke, Portugal spoke about the development of space strategy in the country and I would like to allow Portugal to be an effective participant in what I call the space enterprise.

Question. Are we actually promoting international cooperation? I gave an example, a very small one within this year, about RYSAT(?), where all the scientists from the Asian countries have decided to collectively work together and build one satellite

because they eat a lot of rice in Asia, you know that. So they set up, felt they need a RYSAT(?) for all of them and, therefore, it will serve the interest of other countries.

As we are speaking, I tried to make a little point but for myself, to look at what we have on the ground today. If we talk seriously about international cooperation, we look at _____ *(not clear)*, we look at the Disaster Shelter, the RYSAT(?) programme in Asia, the SERBUS(?) programme between China and Brazil, Galileo of ESA, where India and China are going to be participants. We have the Space Conference of the Americas. In Africa we now have ARMS between Nigeria, Algeria and South Africa. We have ESA itself as an international programme, with all as much various activities. And then Argentina is collaborating with Italy, with China, with the European Union, with NASA. And as we look at our efforts on implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III, we are talking about this international entity dealing with the GNSS, as well as the disaster monitoring system. Then we have the Space Station. And finally, you have the Global Earth Observation System of Systems and, above all, you have the various space exploration projects that cover scientific, astronomical and deep-space research efforts.

If we can reinforce these type of programmes to the best of our abilities, I would like to believe that we would not have time to think of using space for anything else other than peaceful purposes because all the things are articulated or listed here. They do nothing more than focus on how to use space for peaceful exploration.

I am very happy that all of you are here and you have a meaningful contribution to this agenda item. It has been a very beautiful input and let us work very hard because that is our mandate, to keep space as peaceful as human intellect can make it and to work collaborative between the strong and the weak for the benefit of humanity. I thank all of you.

Having said that, distinguished delegates, that is the end of agenda item 4 for today. I have a request for one speaker tomorrow on the same item and, therefore, my intention is to close our debate on agenda item 4 tomorrow morning after that one speaker would have spoken on agenda item 4.

That being the case, is there any comment on agenda item 4?

Thank you very much.

We shall, therefore, continue our deliberations this afternoon.

Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes (agenda item 5)

I would like us to now begin our consideration of agenda item 5, Ways and Means of Maintaining Outer Space for Peaceful Purposes.

And the first speaker on my list is Ukraine represented by the distinguished representative Mr. Voloshenyuk. You have the floor Sir.

Mr. V. VOLOSHENYUK (Ukraine): Thank you Mr. Chairman. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the GUAM countries, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. First of all, allow me to warmly welcome you as the Chairman of the COPUOS and sure that you would find our constructive support to make the outcome of deliberations productive.

I would like to express our appreciation to you for your introductory statement providing us with further insight on the recent COPUOS developments.

Mr. Chairman, the Committee, through its work in the scientific and technical and legal fields has a fundamental role to play in ensuring that outer space is maintained for peaceful purposes.

It is the intention of the GUAM countries to discuss openly the further development of international space law.

The current international space law has served as a good guide for State in the exploration and use of space since the start of the Space Age. However, with the commercialization of space activity, the diversification in the types of activity and arrival on the scene of new subjects, it no longer entirely fulfils it regulatory functions.

We should proceed from a general discussion to a well-structured and organized process that could lead to substantial results.

The following steps, in our view, should be taken in preparation for the drafting of a comprehensive United Nations convention on space law:

The item should be included in the agenda of the Legal Subcommittee;

An outline of the instrument should be drafted;

The legislative experience amassed in drafting the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea should be studied;

An inventory of existing provisions in international and national space law should be made and used as a basis for the future instrument; and

At the same time, the process of ratification of and accession to the current treaties by those States not yet Parties to them should not be halted.

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion, I would like to extend once again the full support of GUAM to the Committee in its highly responsible work on maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes.

GUAM hopes that governments and international organizations will continue to support these efforts directed at strengthening the international cooperation for the peaceful exploration and uses of outer space.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of Ukraine for that statement on behalf of GUAM countries.

The next speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of the United States, Mr. Ken Hodgkins. Sir, you have the floor.

Mr. K. HODGKINS (United States of America): Thank you Mr. Chairman. My delegation once again welcomes the opportunity address specific measures for maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes. This agenda item was first taken up by the Committee at its twenty-eighth session in 1985. Since that time we have seen highly positive developments in the work of the Committee and in the world's peaceful exploration and use of outer space.

Today, there is an unprecedented level of international cooperation in space. The United States has a long and successful history of civil space cooperation with other partners. Since its formation, NASA has concluded over 4,000 agreements with over 100 nations and international organizations. And the level of new cooperation is rising each year.

During the past year alone, NASA had 80 new international agreements entered into force with other government and non-governmental entities. The number of nations investing in space activities has also steadily grown and we now have a significant private sector presence in outer space.

Since our last meeting, the United States has entered into several bilateral ventures that will produce significant ventures in the use of outer space for peaceful purposes. The United States-India Conference on Space Science, Applications and Commerce was held 21 to 25 June 2004 in Bangalore, India. The event attracted over 500 representatives from government, industry and academia to discuss current and future cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space. The United States and India agreed to use the results of this Conference to strengthen and expand cooperation in the use of space technology to advance scientific knowledge to improve the quality of life in both countries and to support sustainable development.

On 26 June 2004, the United States and the European Union reached an agreement covering their satellite navigation services. The "Agreement on the Promotion, Provision and Use of Galileo and GPS Satellite-Based Navigation Systems and Related Applications" paves the way for an eventual doubling of satellites that will broadcast a common civil signal worldwide, thereby promoting better and more comprehensive services for all users.

And on 10 December 2004, the Untied States and the Russian Federation released a joint statement on the United States GPS and Russian GLONASS systems. The two sides reaffirmed their commitment to provide the GPS and GLONASS civil signals on a continuous worldwide bases, free of direct user fees. It was also agreed that the United States and Russian will work together to maintain radio frequency compatibility and promote interoperability between the two systems for the benefit of the global user community.

Now, Mr. Chairman, in light of these developments and the accomplishments of COPUOS, my delegation remains unconvinced of the need for action to be taken by this Committee regarding matters relating to the militarization of outer space. There is no scarcity of appropriate multilateral mechanisms where disarmament matters can be and are appropriately being discussed. COPUOS is not and should not become one of them. It was not created to deal with disarmament. Over four decades ago, the United States and 19 other States submitted resolution 1348, which established the Ad Hoc Committee on the

Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The resolution marked a significant step forward for the world community in that it established COPUOS as the only standing body of the General Assembly to consider international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space. At the time, the concept, one we believe is still valid today, was to establish COPUOS as the body of the General Assembly concerned exclusively with promoting international cooperation in the uses of space. It was clear that there would be entirely independent effort to deal with disarmament issues. These would include fora such as the First Committee of the General Assembly and the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

COPUOS has played a notable role in advancing space cooperation and provides a unique forum for the exchange of information among developed and developing countries on the latest developments in the us and exploration of outer space. In our view, there are tangible opportunities to enhance international cooperation in keeping with the Committee's mandate. Our consideration of the ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes has produced measurable results in the revitalization of COPUOS. Under this item, Member States concluded that re-enforcing international cooperation in space implies the need for the Committee to improve the form of its work. This has been reflected in the restructured agendas of the Scientific and Technical and Legal Subcommittees, the unique organizational aspects of UNISPACE III, the addition of new items to the agenda of COPUOS concerning spin-off benefits of space and space and society and space and water and the consideration of developments in the international satellite-aided search and rescue programme known as COSPAS-SARSAT.

An indication of the success of our efforts to revitalize COPUOS is the growing relevance of our Committee's work to the international community more generally, as shown in part by the steady increase in the number of other intergovernmental organizations, as well as NGOS and private firms, that seek participation in the Committee's work and in the number of new Member States that have joined the Committee. This is an extremely positive development. The presence of non-governmental entities and the willingness of experts to make special presentations have enriched the Committee and its Subcommittees and the ultimate success in implementing the recommendations of UNISPACE III will depend heavily on their continued involvement. The Secretary-General has urged a greater role for civil society in the work of the United Nations. We should take this seriously and seek ways to strengthen the contribution of non-governmental entities.

Mr. Chairman, reviewing ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes is a priority for my delegation and there are multiple options for accomplishing this worthy goal. We would suggest several candidates for consideration. Paragraph 22 of resolution 59/116, adopted by the General Assembly last December, notes with satisfaction that the Government of Ecuador is considering hosting the Fifth Conference of the Americas, the last one having been hosted in 2002 by the Government of Chile. We understand that the Government of Ecuador has taken the decision to host that Conference in July of 2006. We also understand that the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs and the Pro Tempore Secretariat for the Conference of the Americas are collaborating to promote joint activities. We should use this agenda item to explore ways to promote regional and interregional cooperation based on the experience of the Space Conferences of the Americas.

Another area that could yield positive results would be consideration of the role that space technology could play in the implementation of recommendations emerging from the World Summit on Sustainable Development. From our perspective, the Summit successfully demonstrated space technology's utility in advancing sustainable development. As a result, we know that 12 specific references were incorporated into the WSSD Plan of Implementation to the valuable role observations from space have in assisting us to understand better the Earth and its systems.

As a follow-up to WSSD, the United States is also working through CEOS to undertake a number of activities and special events to address priority areas focused on education and training, water resources management and use of geographic information tools. There certainly are synergies between some of the recommendations of WSSD and some of those of UNISPACE III that could be developed within the context of COPUOS under this item dealing with ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank you Sir, Mr. Ken Hodgkins of the United States for your statement.

And the next speaker on my list is Dr. Suresh of India.

Mr. B. N. SURESH (India): Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the applications programmes utilizing space assets have demonstrated their viability over the last four decades in terms of providing benefits to society. Some of the segments in the services like intercontinental telecommunications, TV broadcasting, including direct-to-home services, VSAT networks and applications involving navigation satellites have all grown into profitable commercial ventures. In fact, the revenues of services and ground segment put together constitute 85 per cent of the worldwide total revenues of space business.

Due to uneven development of various countries across the world, the developing countries face a number of challenges for their national development. In fact, the issues like eradication of poverty, eradication of illiteracy and elimination of gender bias had been the agenda topics for major United Nations conferences recently. The World Summit on Sustainable Development prescribed a Plan of Action to reduce the poverty in the developing countries and also recognized the role of utilization of space systems for the developmental process.

The space systems today are in a position to provide services to the developing countries to tackle some of these challenges. For example, the Space Programme in India is applications-driven and is oriented towards national development. These application programmes involve remote sensing, communication and meteorological satellites. We are of the opinion that many developing countries can utilize space technologies and space assets to meet their national developmental challenges.

On the other hand, the various activities of the space field provide great commercial opportunities to the developed countries. Large segments of satellite manufacturing, launch services and navigation satellite systems are controlled by a few large aerospace companies of the developed countries. Though a few developing countries have also achieved the technical capabilities in almost all sectors of space activities, they are not a match in the commercial front to the developed countries and their aerospace companies.

Mr. Chairman, thus, today, all the countries, whether they are developed or developing countries, have a stake in the space field and its various sectors of activities. In this context, any disruption in the functioning of space assets, whether intentional or accidental, will disturb the balance in this key sector.

Hence, the Indian delegation is of the view that active promotion of utilization of space for national development is in the interest of all the countries. The respect for the safety and security of space assets and capabilities of all countries, without any threat of denial of access to space, is the bottom line for all of us to preserve and prosper together. The Indian delegation expects our Committee to contribute to this goal through the promotion of international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space and by discouraging any other alternate uses.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank you Dr. Suresh for your statement.

I understand that the distinguished Ambassador of Colombia has asked for the floor to seek a clarification or make a clarification, whichever. You have the floor Sir.

Mr. C. AREVALO YEPES (Colombia) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Yes, thank you. Yes, Mr. Chairman, I simply wanted to reply to the distinguished delegate of the United States. I think that through involuntary omission, there is no mention of the Fourth Conference of the Americas that took place, it was mentioned as having taken place in Colombia as opposed to Chile and when I was presenting the report by Colombia on the activities of the Provisional Secretariat, I pointed out, I did not want to read through a 16-page document in its entirety, the Fifth Conference will take place in Ecuador but the most recent Conference and this is the topic which has been mentioned very often. I just wanted to point out that this Conference took place in Colombia and not in Chile, from the 14 to 17 May 2002 and I felt that it was necessary for me to clarify that point.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Ambassador of Colombia for his statement.

Mr. Ken Hodgkins, you have the floor Sir.

Mr. K. HODGKINS (United States of America): Thank you Mr. Chairman. I do not want to prolong the discussion here. In fact, my written statement did note that it was Colombia that had held the Fourth Session. I mentioned Chile just as a test to see if our distinguished colleague from Chile was still in the room but obviously he is not. So my test failed.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: Distinguished delegates, according to the two clocks in front of me it's six o'clock but I understand Colombia is still asking for the floor. OK.

Mr. C. AREVALO YEPES (Colombia) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Yes, I entirely agree. It is a shame that Chile was not here to react. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: Distinguished delegates, I would now like to adjourn this meeting of the Committee but before doing so, I would like to inform delegates of our schedule of work for tomorrow morning. We will reconvene promptly at 10.00 a.m. Please be prompt. At that time, we will resume and conclude our consideration of agenda item 4, General Exchange of Views. We will also continue and hopefully conclude our consideration of agenda item 5, Ways and Means of Maintaining Outer Space for Peaceful Purposes.

We will then begin our consideration of agenda item 6, Implementation of the Recommendations of UNISPACE III, and as well we will begin the consideration of agenda item 7, Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on its Forty-Second Session.

Time permitting, we will also begin consideration of agenda item 8, Report of the Legal Subcommittee on its Forty-Fourth Session.

We will also hear one presentation by the representative of Japan at that time tomorrow.

I would also like to use this opportunity to inform delegates that Action Team 1 will meet from 9.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon tomorrow in Conference Room VII. And the Secretariat has advised me that members of Action Team 11, that is Sustainable Development, if they have time, they might want to listen in to that debate in Action Team 1.

So that for tomorrow is the schedule of our work.

Distinguished delegates and representatives, do you have any questions on this schedule of work for tomorrow?

I see none. That means that is agreed.

But before I adjourn this meeting, let me also take this opportunity to remind you to check your desk or your pocket to see that you have the invitation from India there. That invitation asks all of you to attend the official opening of the "India in Space" exhibition in the Rotunda on the ground floor of Building 'C' at 6.15 p.m., that is in the next 12 minutes. I am sure as you passed the Rotunda you saw the preparation for the opening ceremony. This will be followed by a reception hosted by the delegation of India in the Mozart Room of the VIC Restaurant.

If there are questions, this meeting is adjourned until tomorrow morning at 10.00 a.m. Thank you.

The meeting closed at 6.03 p.m.