United Nations COPUOS/T.553

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Unedited transcript

553rd Meeting
Thursday, 8 June 2006, 3 p.m.
Vienna

Chairman: Mr. G. Brachet (France)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

The CHAIRMAN *(interpretation from French)*: Ladies and gentlemen, representatives, I would now like to begin our 553rd session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

This afternoon, we will continue with item 5, General Exchange of Views. Moving on to 6, Ways and Means of Maintaining Outer Space for Peaceful Purposes. Those are the two items on the agenda for this afternoon.

And I would urge all delegations that wish to make a statement on these items of the agenda to please register with the Secretariat as soon as possible because we will soon be closing these items of the agenda. In fact, we will do so at the end of this afternoon.

We will also continue with item 7, Implementation of the Recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, UNISPACE III.

And finally, if we have enough time, we will begin item 8, Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on its Forty-Third Session.

But the last item depends on the amount of time available to us at the end of the afternoon.

I would also like to remind representatives that the Group of Experts looking at the idea of creating an international body for coordinating space services for disaster management is now meeting in Room C-0713.

General exchange of views (agenda item 5)

We shall continue then with item 5.

The first speaker on my list is Burkina Faso. I give the floor then to Mr. Jean Bengaly from Burkina Faso. You have the floor Sir.

Mr. J. BENGALY (Burkina Faso) *(interpretation from French)*: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the delegation of Burkina Faso would like to warmly congratulate you for your election to chair the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

It would also like to congratulate all the members of the Bureau and assure that it is entirely available to cooperate with you and support you in your task as we are, indeed, convinced that you will know how to skilfully lead us to a successful end to our work.

My delegation would also like to acknowledge the work of the outgoing Chairman, Mr. Abiodun, and the outgoing and we would like to address our sincere thanks to them.

Further, we would like to thank the Office for Outer Space Affairs for its devotion and professionalism and we would like to encourage it to persevere in the context of implementing its mandate.

My delegation would like to present its sincere condolences to Indonesia and all other countries who have suffered natural disasters recently. The people of Burkina Faso would like to express its

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compassion and solidarity to all sister nations and sister peoples who have these conditions in their countries.

Mr. Chairman, the forty-ninth session of COPUOS offers us another opportunity to reflect on ways and means of ensuring the peaceful and equitable use of the formidable resources offered by outer space.

Significant recommendations from UNISPACE III and the World Summit of 2005 and the World Summit on Sustainable Development all are indications of the path to follow. For instance, Burkina Faso is convinced of the need to strengthen ties between our Committee and the Commission on Sustainable Development. Moreover, activities in science and space techniques are crucial and have a vital role to play in terms of meeting the objectives of the Millennium for Development.

This is why no country should stop pleading for greater dissemination of science and space technology and intensification of efforts in order to prevent militarization of space.

Mr. Chairman, my delegation calls for greater political determination by States to promote the activities of the Committee which first lead and first and foremost lead to the effective implementation of space-related treaties.

For its part, Burkina Faso hopes to be able to soon as quickly as possible ratify all of the relative legal instruments in this regard. And, thus, we would like to thank our bilateral and multi-lateral partners who have supported us in implementing a number of significant projects for development which involve the use of space techniques. The projects involve areas as significant as agriculture, the environment, telecommunications and meteorology.

For a country such as Burkina Faso, you will understand that what is at stake here is capital contribution in order to combat poverty, and in the long term, to achieve sustainable development.

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, 2007 will be very significant in the history of space activities. The milestone of the International Heliophysical Year is very important in this regard and it will also mark the fiftieth anniversary of the space age, without forgetting, of course, the fiftieth session of the Committee, the fortieth anniversary of the Treaty on Space.

We can but hope for this opportunity to serve for the international community to be able to better promote the work of the Committee, particularly in developing nations where we do not always have opportunities available to us in the areas of science and space technology.

The manifestations which commemorate these anniversaries will revolve around noble causes, such as strengthening and building capacity, transfer of technology, etc., conditions which are *sine qua non* for reducing the gap, the space gap between the North and the South. And as in the area of technology, communications and information, it is not exaggerated to state that very often the means are in the North whereas the needs are in the South and that is why we must promote international cooperation in the area of space.

Mr. Chairman, my delegation would like to call your attention to the need for better organization and better mastery of the working methodologies of our Committee. The success and quality of our deliberations depend upon it.

Mr. Chairman, the effective non-participation of some members of COPUOS in meetings has become a subject of some concern for a number of years now and we would hope that this very sensitive issue would be tackled soon and very carefully, of course.

Indeed, it is up to States whose determination to participate is not always matched by its capacity to participate and, thus, we would like to invite the Committee and the Office for Outer Space Affairs to be inspired from the experience of other United Nations bodies and do, as we know, what has been done there, to provide access to the status of members of COPUOS so that it is a free and voluntary exercise. We also hope for a better expression of solidarity and international cooperation.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN *(interpretation from French)*: Thank you very much to the representative of Burkina Faso for that statement. I would note more specifically your reference to the issue of non-participation by some countries in the work of the Committee. Please know that this is an issue that I have begun to address with the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs and we have begun to look at ways and means of encouraging greater participation on the part of States that are not often amongst us and yet who are members of the Committee. And I would like to thank you for raising that issue and, no doubt, we will find a solution.

I will now move on to the statement by Argentina and I will give the floor to Mr. Felix Menicocci.

Mr. F. MENICOCCI (Argentina) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, may I begin at the outset on behalf of my delegation extend you the warmest congratulations for being elected to chair this Committee. We are convinced that your vast experience will enable us to successfully conclude our work and you can count on full cooperation by my delegation.

We would also like to, through you, Mr. Chairman, extend our congratulations to the new Vice-Chairs, Mr. Both of Hungary and the Second Vice-Chair Mr. Tiendrebeogo of Burkina Faso.

And, of course, we would like to express our acknowledgement to all the staff. We would also like to highlight the professionalism of the Office for Outer Space Affairs and its Director, Mr. Sergio Camacho, in carrying out his work and preparing this meeting.

Mr. Chairman, we would like to add our voice to that of other delegations to express our deepest condolences to the people and Government of Indonesia for the devastating consequences of the earthquake which took place on 27 May last.

And, Mr. Chairman, Argentina would like to underscore the importance that it acknowledges in the work of this Committee and its subsidiary bodies and, thus, Argentina participates actively in each of these fora.

Mr. Chairman, our country continues to develop its Space Plan and continues to increase activities in the area of space cooperation. Along these lines, last week, an Agreement was signed between the Italian Space Agency, ASI, and the National Commission of Space Activities, CONAE, in Argentina, which provides for participation including people from Italy and Argentina in the Aquarius mission called SAC-D CONAE/NASA, and this is in addition to the Agreement in principle which was signed at the beginning of the year with the Space Agency of Canada and which will involve participation with the instrument SAC-D.

Moreover, we foresee signing in the upcoming weeks an Agreement with the French Space Agency. This will be between CONAE and CNES and we would be involved in the Aquarius mission with this instrument.

Mr. Chairman. observation of the Earth is key to our Space Plan and since that it involves development of our capacity for its application and this is one of our main objectives.

Our country, like many in our region, is vulnerable to natural disasters and this is why we would like to drive forward increasing international cooperation in this area. Argentina is a member of the International Space Charter “Natural Disasters” and the context of this is organizing, along with some other countries who are members of the Charter, a Workshop next September for training Directors of Projects in the region so that each country which suffers an emergency and, thus, activates the Charter, would have its own experts for better taking advantage of the space information that is provided to them.

In the context of the Italian-Argentine system of satellites for emergency management, SIASGE, CONAE recently signed a Declaration of Intention with the Italian Space Agency with the view to converting the Institute of High Space Studies in the Province of Córdoba, in Argentina, into a Centre of Excellence for the entire region of Latin America and it would be dedicated specially to the management of disasters.

In this context, and given the possibility of creating an international entity for coordinating the means to improve the efficiency of space services in the service of disaster management, DMISCO, Argentina has offered to contribute to this initiative by providing information which comes from space, as well as by providing training courses.

With regard to health applications, Argentina continues with the tele-epidemiology project with the French Space Agency, CNES, in order to monitor Dengue fever in the region and we hope that we will be able to expand this to all of Latin America very soon.

Mr. Chairman, we would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Ecuador for the upcoming hosting of the Fifth Space Conference of the Americas, in Quito, in July. We would like to wish them every success for it and assure them of our cooperation to this end.

Argentina attaches particular importance to implementing regional projects using space information. And for this reason, our country will participate with a number of proposals with regard to emergencies, tele-epidemiology and the protection of heritage sites.

Mr. Chairman, Argentina has just organized, in the City of Iguazú, in Argentina, a Workshop about the Protection of the Natural Heritage of Mankind, working with UNESCO and the European Space Agency, with a view to implementing a project for the conservation of the area and its entire eco-system, this is the City Iguazú, and working with a number of organizations in our country, in Brazil and organizations which are non-governmental organizations in Paraguay.

Argentina is fully aware of the importance of extending the benefits of space activities to all States and is thus committed to sharing with all countries of the region, the human resources and means available to it, to optimize socio-economic development of all peoples.

In this context, my delegation welcomes with pleasure the initiative presented by Brazil to introduce a new item on the agenda of COPUOS with a view to creating national capacity to use geo-space data. Argentina fully shares the reasoning behind this initiative and views it as a good way to drive forward development, based on correct application of space information. And this is why, Mr. Chairman, my delegation wishes to express its full endorsement of Brazil's proposal and hopes that this will be favourably viewed by the Committee.

To conclude our remarks, Mr. Chairman, we would like to mention that Argentina assumed in November 2005, the Presidency of the Committee of Earth Observation Satellites, CEOS, and actively participates in GEO, the Group of Earth Observation. These are international initiatives set forth for global systems of observation of the Earth.

Thank you Sir.

The CHAIRMAN *(interpretation from French)*: Thank you for your statement, Mr. Menicocci, for Argentina. That was a very complete statement and very interesting information about the space activities underway in your country which, indeed, are remarkable. I would also like to thank you for telling us about the activities that you have underway in partnership with other countries and throughout Latin America. And we would like to congratulate you on assuming the Presidency of CEOS. As you know, I am personally attached to that system and, after Brazil a few years ago, that chair that now Argentina has taken up Presidency for a year. And I also know that you played a very significant role in the Board of Directors for the Charter for Space and Natural Disasters. And I also know that you presided over that for one year. So congratulations for your commitment at an international level in all of these areas.

And with regard to the Brazilian proposal that you endorsed, I think that, no doubt, we will be coming back to that issue later in this session.

I would propose now, distinguished delegates, that we move on to the statement of Pakistan and I now give the floor to Mr. Siraj. You have the floor Sir.

Mr. A. H. SIRAJ (Pakistan): Mr. Chairman and distinguished delegates, it is my privilege to make a statement, on behalf of the Pakistan delegation, at this forty-ninth session of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

My delegation extends to you, Mr. Chairman, and the First and Second Vice-Chairmen, our heartiest congratulations on your election to the Bureau.

I would also take this opportunity to thank and congratulate the ex-Chairman, Dr. Ade Abiodun, for having so ably conducted the affairs of the Committee in the last two years.

Mr. Chairman, my delegation is greatly appreciative of the efforts that have so far been made by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, as well as by the Legal Subcommittee, in resolving the various problems and issues, many of them being of a complex nature. The Committee is also fortunate to be assisted by Dr. B. N. Suresh, Chairman of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, and Ambassador González Aninat, Chairman of the Legal Subcommittee, respectively. My delegation would like to convey our deep appreciation to these two distinguished personalities for their outstanding work in the respective Subcommittees.

Mr. Chairman, the last one year has had more than its share of natural disasters. The people and the Government of Pakistan are deeply saddened by the recent earthquake calamity in Indonesia and my delegation offers our heartfelt condolences to the people and Government of Indonesia. The northern parts of Pakistan suffered a devastating earthquake in October last year. The scale of destruction and the number of lives lost were unparalleled in the history of Pakistan. I wish to take this opportunity to thank the international community for their tremendous human, financial and material support. I also wish to bring on record the prompt access to satellite remote sensing

data provided by the International Charters "Space and Major Disasters" to us soon after the earthquake.

Mr. Chairman, in order to promote and encourage the use of space technology and its peaceful applications, the Government of Pakistan has been very generous in providing two transponders on Pakistan's communication satellite, PAKSAT-1, to the virtual university. Recently, Pakistan's Space Agency, SUPARCO, has initiated a VSAT-based tele-medicine pilot project, using PAKSAT-1 transponder bandwidth, to provide cost-effective health care and tele-medicine facilities to the people in rural areas of Pakistan. Tele-medicine education training is also being contemplated. At present, two hospitals are engaged in tele-medicine using terrestrial communications systems. SUPARCO is working with these hospitals to expand their reach through satellite communications to those areas which do not have terrestrial communications systems. Additionally, SUPARCO has offered free-of-cost bandwidth for tele-medicine to hospitals.

Agriculture is the mainstay of Pakistan's economy. Accurate and timely crop estimation has always been difficult in Pakistan. Satellite remote sensing data can greatly assist in crop estimation. The Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock has, in collaboration with SUPARCO, recently completed a pilot project on cotton crop estimation. The results have been very encouraging. The scope of the project has now been expanded to include wheat and other crops.

Similarly, SUPARCO has undertaken a variety of programmes relating to natural resource management and environmental surveying, satellite meteorology and atmospheric pollution monitoring. A number of pilot projects for Government and other agencies in the private sector have been undertaken. Some of the projects undertaken in the last one year include: aquaculture development in coastal areas; assessment of mangrove forests along the coast of Pakistan; launching of vehicle tracking and fleet management services; baseline study and survey of flood plain areas; establishment of geo database, hardware, software and tracking system for monitoring watercourses; environmental impact assessment for public and private sector organizations; seasonal study of aerosol optical thickness and cloud cover over Pakistan; study of impact of global warming on water resources and adaptation measures for management; land use map of Pakistan; and providing data, training and assistance to the National Highways Authority, gas distribution companies, telecommunications companies and urban planners.

In order to further promote the use of space, the Government has approved the launching of a communications satellite and two remote sensing satellites. The communications satellite is planned to be launched in the year 2009.

Mr. Chairman, before I end, I wish to reiterate Pakistan's commitment to the peaceful use of outer space. Pakistan has been an active member of the United Nations COPUOS and is a signatory of the five United Nations Treaties and Principles on Outer Space. As a founder member of Asia-Pacific Multi-lateral Cooperation on Space Technology and Applications, AP-MCSTA, it is also one of the first countries to have signed membership of the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization, which, as you know, has evolved from the AP-MCSTA.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman and the distinguished delegates for your attention.

The CHAIRMAN *(interpretation from French)*: Thank you very much Sir for your statement and for detailing Pakistan's space activities for our benefit and space applications in your country. I was struck, Sir, by the scale of Pakistan's space programme and took note of what you just mentioned with regards to the approval by the Government of a launching of a communications satellite and two remote sensing satellites. Pakistan is an active member of this Committee and has been so for a number of years now and I have very happy memories of relations that I have had with representatives of the delegation in the past. Thank you very much, therefore, for your statement.

And we will now turn our attention to the statement to be made by Thailand and, without further ado, I give the floor to Mr. Ariyapruchya. You have the floor Sir.

Mr. S. ARIYAPRUCHYA (Thailand): Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, at the outset, let me say how pleased we are to see you on the podium as Chairman of this prestigious Committee. We would like to offer you our heartfelt congratulations on your election to this very important position. Your involvement and expertise in space affairs are well known. We are confident that, under your able leadership and wise guidance derived from long association with space affairs, the work of this Committee for the next two years will be successful. Your speech on the first day of our meeting is comprehensive and thought-provoking. It outlines important issues under the mandate of this Committee

to which we must in the next several days dedicate ourselves.

Our congratulations also go to the other members of the Bureau as well as the recently appointed Chairman of the Legal Subcommittee and the Chairman of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee.

Mr. Chairman, the past two years have seen significant progress in many issues of our Committee's work, despite the inherent difficulties and complexities of the issues involved. In this connection, we would like to thank the immediate past COPUOS Chairman, Dr. Adigun Ade Abiodun of Nigeria, for his dedication and efforts and indeed his patience when the subject matters provide difficult to solve. His speech, reviewing the achievements of the past two years under his chairmanship as well as the problem areas, is a good basis for all of us to work on.

As usual, our able Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, Mr. Sergio Camacho-Lara, gave a clear picture of how the Office for Outer Space Affairs has been carrying out its mandate over the year. We would like to thank him and his able staff for the good work achieved and also for the good arrangements of this meeting.

Mr. Chairman, Thailand has been admitted as member of this august body in 2004. Since then, we have been actively participating in this Committee's work, as well as the work of its Subcommittees and the various Working Groups. We have sent strong delegations to all these meetings. We will continue to do our utmost to cooperate with the Bureau and other delegations to ensure the success of this session and the future sessions of the Committee.

Mr. Chairman, this year is a happy and joyous year for Thailand and her people as it marks the sixtieth anniversary of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej's accession to the throne. In this connection, Mr. Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, paid an official visit to Thailand and on 26 May 2006, presented to His Majesty, the United Nations Development Programme, UNDP, "Human Development Lifetime Achievement Award", in recognition of His Majesty's dedication and life-long works in contribution to the development and better livelihood of the Thai people. This year is the first time that such a special lifetime achievement award is initiated and His Majesty became the first recipient to receive the newly-created distinction.

His Majesty the King has worked tirelessly to improve the well-being of the people of Thailand. Indeed, His Majesty has been the great inspiration for Thailand to harness space technology for social and economic development of her people. His Majesty has applied a remote sensing and GIS mapping mechanism in illicit crops monitoring and promoted crop 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 stance learning through satellites was launched at Wang Klaikangwon School in 1995 to honour and celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of His Majesty's accession to the throne. Now, 10 years later, Klaikangwon School is providing effective 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".

Mr. Chairman, to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of His Majesty's accession to the throne, GISTDA will organize the International Conference on Space Technology and Geo-Informatics 2006 in parallel with the International Conference on Mapping and Geo-Informatics 2006, during 5 to 8 November 2006 in Pattaya. I think all of you know Pattaya quite well. All COPUOS delegates are invited to participate in this meeting. Further information could be obtained from the GISTDA website.

Mr. Chairman, we remain convinced that space technology can bring immense benefits to human development. We also believe that through international cooperation, more benefits will be achieved in a shorter period of time. It is a win-win situation for all concerned. Thus, we attach great importance to the intensification of our cooperation with like-minded countries and would like to share with your our cooperative space activities in the past year.

In the area of communication satellite, iPSTAR, the broadband satellite, was successfully launched in August 2005 to serve the need of high-speed Internet and telecommunications of the Asia-Pacific region. The satellite also provides other services such as tele-education, tele-health and

telecommunication for disaster mitigation. The ThaiCom-5 or ThaiCom-3R satellite was launched in May this year.

Mr. Chairman, in the area of Earth observation, 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 schedule 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 multi-spectral 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.

In this connection, we would like to invite delegates to view our THEOS posters exhibition at the lobby in front of this meeting room.

As regards satellite applications, Thailand applies imagery from both optical and radar satellites in the management of forestry, agriculture, water resources, environment, urban planning, illicit crop monitoring and control, and disaster management. In the area of forest applications, satellite images covering the forest area of the whole country were provided to provincial governors to monitor and evaluate the forest area. The details of forest application in Thailand will be presented to you during the Symposium on Forestry Management to be held on the framework of this meeting on 12 June.

As regards space education, the Institute of Space Knowledge Development was established in 2005 as a part of the Geo-Informatics and Space Technology Development Agency of GISTDA, in short, to serve the needs of human resource development, especially in remote sensing and GIS applications. More than 20 short training courses were conducted during the past 12 months, both in Bangkok and in the provinces. In addition, the National Astronomical Research Institute has also been established under the Ministry of Science and Technology. Space knowledge and activities have also been promoted and publicized through seminars, exhibitions, website, publication and other special events such as Science and Technology Week to raise public awareness.

Regarding international cooperation, Thailand has intensified her cooperation with both international organizations and bilaterally with various countries. Thailand has actively participated in the activities in the framework of the Group on Earth Observation, GEO, in the capacity of Executive Committee Member. We have also cooperated closely with the ESCAP Regional Space Application Programme for Sustainable Development, the Asia-Pacific Remote Sensing Agency Forum, and the Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific, as well as the newly formed organization, the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization or APSCO.

In the area of disaster mitigation, Thailand has conducted a number of activities, together with various international organizations. In July 2005, Thailand, in cooperation with the United Nations ESCAP and the French Embassy, organized the Meeting of Experts on Space Applications for Disaster Management in Chiangmai Province. In addition, in the near future, during 27 to 28 June, Thailand will, jointly with the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency, JAXA, and ESCAP, organize the Second Joint Project Team Meeting for establishing the Disaster Management Support System in the Asia-Pacific Region in Bangkok, within the framework of the Sentinel-Asia Project initiated by Japan. Thailand will also host The Space Law Conference from 1 to 4 August 2006 in Bangkok. As regards bilateral cooperation, we continued to intensify our cooperation with France, Japan, China, Russia and Canada. In 2005, GISTDA signed an MOU with the United States Geological Survey, as well as with the Remote Sensing Centre of Viet Nam.

Mr. Chairman, since we met last year, there have been significant achievements in space technology by various countries, such as the United States, Russian, China, Japan and India. In this connection, we would like to congratulate them all for their achievements. In this connection, we would like also to convey our congratulations to Japan on the successful launch of the ALOS satellite early this year.

Unfortunately, the past year also brought with it natural disasters, earthquakes, flash floods, mudslides and forest fires in the various parts of the world. Most recently, there was an earthquake in the island of Java, Indonesia. My delegation wishes to take this opportunity to express our deepest condolences and sincere sympathy to the Government and the people of Indonesia, as well as the affected families, for the loss of many lives.

We are also grateful for the sympathetic words expressed at this meeting by some delegations to Thailand on the recent flood in the North of Thailand causing damages and loss of lives. We are grateful to ALOS for sharing with us in a timely manner, satellite imagery of the affected region.

Mr. Chairman, natural disasters cause great damages and loss of many lives. We must try to harness space technology to mitigate their disastrous effects. In this regard, our Committee's work in the area of disaster management is very important. 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. My delegation looks forward to the deliberation in the next few days of this meeting on this matter, Disaster Management International Space Coordination, or DMISCO.

Mr. Chairman, since becoming a member of COPUOS two years ago, Thailand has also taken keen interests in the work of the Legal Subcommittee. We are now in the process of reviewing our possible participation in various United Nations treaties regarding space activities.

Thailand is already a Party to the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, and the Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space. We are now in the process of studying the pros and cons, ways and means, of acceding to the Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects, and the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space.

Mr. Chairman, my delegation will give contributions to other agenda items, namely items 8 and 9, at an appropriate time.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN *(interpretation from French)*: I should like to thank you Sir for your presentation which was very detailed and informed us about Thailand's space activities and Thailand's space applications. For many years now, it has been a pleasure for me to cooperate with those in charge of space activities and applications in Thailand. And I would like to pay particular tribute to Dr. Seditu(?) sitting behind you and with whom we have many happy memories. So congratulations on the major work which is underway in terms of space applications and training activities in Thailand. And it is a pleasure for me to note that how the Princess is continuing to pay very visible interest to this area. I am sure that is an excellent fact. Thank you once again and given that Thailand is also a relatively new member of this Committee, I should like to underline how happy all the members of the Committee are to see you participating actively in our discussions.

We shall now turn our attention to the statement to be made on behalf of Germany and without further ado, I will give the floor to Mr. Karl-Ulrich Müller.

Mr. K.-U. MÜLLER (Germany): Thank you Mr. Chairman. The German delegation congratulates you to your election. It is my pleasure and privilege to note that the German space community has enjoyed close links with you in the past and we are looking forward to another period of close cooperation with you in your new function.

The German delegation would like to extend its congratulations to the other new Officers of COPUOS but the German delegation will not forget to express its gratitude for the outstanding work done by the outgoing Officers, first of all to the former Chairman, Dr. Abiodun from Nigeria.

And last but not least, my delegation would like to commend the Office and its Director, Sergio Camacho-Lara, for the outstanding work done and expected by all the delegations here.

The German delegation would further like to use this opportunity to convey its deepest condolences and sympathy to the Indonesian Government and people in the aftermath of the recent devastating earthquake in Java.

Mr. Chairman, I am most grateful to the heads of delegations who highlighted already some of Germany's space activities so I might be tempted to stop here. But as you know, German space activities are embedded to a large extent in the joint European activities with ESA and the European Union. Germany hosted the Ministerial Council of ESA in early December last year and we consider the outcome of

this ESA Council to be a major success for our European space activities.

In this context, Germany would like to stress the importance it attached to the European Programme for Global Monitoring for Environment and Security, GMES. This Programme strengthens not only cooperation within Europe but will contribute to international cooperation in Earth observation.

Another important example of European and international cooperation is the Global Satellite Navigation System, GALILEO. We note with satisfaction that beyond the ESA and European Union member States, further nations are actively participating in this project.

The ESA missions, Mars Express and Venus Express, are continuously transmitting fascinating data about our two neighbouring planets. Examples of the scientific results of Mars Express, produced by the German-made high-resolution stereo camera, are to be seen in the Rotunda of this building. Delegations will find the invitations for the official opening of the exhibition and the following reception hosted by the German delegation on Monday, 12 June, in their pigeon holes.

ESA makes substantial contributions to the ISS. The Columbus-Module was sent on its way from Rimes to the United States last month. Please allow me to note that Thomas Reiter, the next European astronaut on his way to the ISS, was a European cosmonaut on the Russian MIR Station.

Now let me get back to the German interest in Earth observation and its applications. Apart from GMES, Germany is actively involved in the GEO process and Germany will launch its first national radar satellite, TerraSAR-X, in October this year.

Mr. Chairman, disaster early warning, mitigation and management remain German priorities. Germany hosted the Third International Early Warning Conference, in Bonn, in March this year. This Conference touched space applications as well. Germany cooperates intensively in the building a regional Tsunami Early Warning System for the Indian Ocean together with Indonesia. This system is based on land- and sea-based Earth observation devices. These devices will be complemented by a space segment.

This delegation considers that the proposed entity DMISCO is instrumental to bridge the gap between the space community and the disaster management community and will benefit all nations.

We all learned, as other delegations here already stated, disasters do not wait. Hence, Germany proposes the rapid implementation of DMISCO. My Government submitted its offer to host DMISCO in Bonn to the Office for Outer Space Affairs and my delegation distributed this offer to the delegations present.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN *(interpretation from French)*: Thank you Mr. Müller for that statement. I have had the pleasure of working with colleagues involved in space activities in Germany for a number of years and I share with you the satisfaction of receiving all your country's efforts become a reality and lead to scientific results and both scientific, industrial and other applications success. Thank you for your contribution. We will be very pleased to go to the inauguration of the exhibit at the end of Monday afternoon, that is an exhibit that is in the Rotunda.

We will now move on to the statement of Venezuela and Ms. Nuris Orihuela will be making the statement for Venezuela.

Ms. N. ORIHUELA (Venezuela) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Thank you Mr. Chairman. The delegation of Venezuela would like to congratulate the Chairman, the Secretary and members of the Bureau and we would like to state for the record the following.

The delegation of Venezuela ratifies its attachment to the basic principle of the peaceful use of space and rejects the militarization of outer space and further reaffirms the need for the equitable access of all countries to geostationary orbits.

With regard to the activities of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, we are making headway in developing a programme called VeneSat-1. This programme will lead to the launching of a telecommunications satellite for governmental use. This platform is aimed at mobilizing telecommunications traffic for State agencies. It is further geared to linking emergency networks and providing for television and radio broadcasts which are cultural in nature and favouring community organizations and the consolidation of social programmes in tele-medicine and tele-education.

At the end of this year, the Venezuelan Centre for Remote Sensing will go into operation. This is a Centre for capturing satellite images that will then be distributed, free of charge, to the various Ministries, to State-owned businesses and to national universities.

Both programmes have sub-programmes which are geared to training human talent which will facilitate the massive use of aerospace technology as a tool for taking decisions and to be used as a resource for research and development for our country as a whole.

And finally, we would like to report that the legislative agenda for this year includes the creation, by law, of the Venezuelan Space Agency, which is a body which will constitute institutional replacement of the current Venezuelan Space Centre.

Thank you very much Sir.

The CHAIRMAN *(interpretation from French)*: Thank you to Dr. Orihuela for your presentation of the plans and activities underway in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in the area of space. And, indeed, I think that we can wish you every success from the Committee, especially with regard to the establishment of this new Venezuelan Space Agency. So, once again, I would like to thank you.

And we will now move on to Ecuador, Ambassador Morejón-Almeida. You have the floor Sir.

Mr. B. MOREJÓN-ALMEIDA (Ecuador) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. As this is the first time that my delegation is taking the floor, I would like to begin, if I may, by conveying to you on behalf of the Ecuadorian State, our warmest congratulations for taking the chairmanship of this Commission. We wish you every success and we are convinced that under your skilled leadership, this session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, will continue working in the context of understanding and cooperation which have characterized the conclusions and discussions of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies.

Mr. Chairman, you represent a country which has distinguished itself by a long history of contributions to the evolution of space and the strengthening of cooperation for developing nations.

We would also like to extend our congratulations to the other members of the Bureau.

At this opportunity, Ecuador would like to convey to the Republic of Indonesia, its deepest sentiments of solidarity, despite the tragic event which took place in the country due to the earthquake and which led to human and material loss. We have a long and old friendship with Indonesia and thus we have many common interests. And thus we would like to express our profound solidarity as well with Thailand for the natural disaster for which it has been a victim lately.

Moreover, my delegation would like to most particularly thank Dr. Sergio Camacho for his commendable and very professional way of working and heading the Office for Outer Space Affairs. And we would like to thank the Secretariat for their dedicated efforts in preparing this session.

It is a pleasure to recall here an anniversary which marked a milestone in the evolution of the space age which was the space mission of Yuri Gagarin and the pioneer mission of the United States with the first man to orbit the Earth.

Truly, it is a source of pleasure for me and for my delegation to note the variety of subjects on the agenda for this session. This variety shows the wide range of the work of COPUOS and indicates further the positive balance in terms of management by the Subcommittees, both in the scientific and technical arenas and in the legal arenas, and the very skilful leadership of them which will now take place under Mr. Suresh of India and Ambassador Raimundo González of Chile, respectively.

Ecuador, once again, would like to reaffirm the importance of a full application of UNISPACE III recommendations and thus we are particularly pleased to note the headway made in this regard with action which seeks to promote the benefits of research and space activities and make sure that they have a positive impact on the quality of life of mankind as a whole, through international cooperation. And in this spirit, Ecuador fully agrees with one of the conclusions of the report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee in that the application of UNISPACE III recommendations will help developing nations to meet certain challenges. And there arises the importance of industrialized nations putting together their resources to make it possible for developing nations to initiate programmes for space applications so that they may lead to the progress of these States.

Mr. Chairman, it is a pleasure to note here that for the goals of 2005 and the activities of the United Nations Space Technology Applications and

Programme, we note that they have been implemented in a satisfactory manner, in keeping with the report presented by the Expert in this regard, Madam Alice Lee.

In this context, Ecuador takes note of document A/AC.105/872 and also notes with satisfaction the contribution of COPUOS to the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development with regard to the thematic group for the cycle application 2006-2007.

The use of space for the benefit of sustainable development is a priority for my country. Indeed, we understand that this is one of the major thrusts for development of human beings and, thus, it is well-known that Ecuador is crossed by one of the largest mountain chains of the world, the Andes, and this means in turn that there is a potential danger for natural disaster, since 80 per cent of the volcanoes in these mountains are active.

Moreover, the phenomena "El Niño", which causes considerable losses in material and in terms of human losses, is something to be considered. And, thus, my country would like to firmly support the implementation of a world system for disaster management and mitigation, rescue and prevention, in the event of a natural disaster, as recommended in the Declaration of Vienna and an international programme for earlier warning. This is vital for my country.

In the field of tele-medicine, based on space applications, Ecuador shows great interest in this topic because it believes that there are many advantages to distance-medicine in terms of fighting epidemics and pandemics. Ecuador has vast non-urban and remote areas in our country and, thus, distance-medicine or tele-medicine can be very useful. At each rainy season, my country is affected on a yearly basis by a number of diseases which spread throughout the country such as Dengue Fever, Malaria, Cholera and Haemorraghic Dengue.

Mr. Chairman, with regard to the access and equitable use of the geostationary orbit, I must reiterate at this time that this is a priority for the Ecuadorian State. And, thus, my country, once again, would like to affirm that this is a limited natural resource and should be made accessible on a priority basis to all countries, especially developing nations, especially those with a specific geographic position who wish to use outer space for common interests.

In this context, it is appropriate to point out that Ecuador has contributed significantly to the evolution of international space law and that the issue that I am referring to is of vital importance for the Ecuadorian State, taking into account, furthermore, that domestic legislation has reflected it in its recent legal developments and the Government, at a national level, assigns the highest priority to this issue.

Thus, it is vital that we maintain this as an area of reflection around the regulations that will make it possible to ensure the equitable access and use of this natural limited resource without discarding the possible adoption of an international *sui generic* regime applicable to the orbit and which would attend to the needs and interests of developing nations with a specific geographic situation, particularly in keeping with Article 44 of the founding ITU documents reformed in Minneapolis in 1998. We also recognize consequently the competence of COPUOS to examine the legal and political issues around this.

And, thus, Ecuador hopes, with great interest, that the conclusions of the Office for Outer Space Affairs project, working jointly with Colombia, will lead to an impact in terms of the history of the use of the orbit.

It is also very important to seriously assume the responsibility, that as we have done, for hosting the Fifth Space Conference of the Americas, in Quito, from 25 to 28 July, and this is a further demonstration of our commitment to the principle of international cooperation. It is our firm proposal to work jointly with other States, international organizations and bodies and non-governmental organizations in order to seek to promote the well-being of all mankind to the peaceful and efficient use of outer space.

And, thus, my delegation believes that it is appropriate at this time to first highlight our profound gratitude to Dr. Sergio Camacho, Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, for his very generous support, particularly with regard to his excellent professional contribution as we saw during his official mission in Quito, between 23 and 24 March of this year. His very worthy efforts and assistance has made it possible for the National Preparatory Committee for the Space Conference of the Americas to go more deeply into the substantive issues of the agenda of this international event.

Likewise, my country wishes to convey its special acknowledge and recognition to the sister nation of Chile for the very successful holding of the Preparatory Meeting for the Space Conference of the Americas, which was held in Chile, Santiago de Chile, between 28 and 29 March of this year. The results of

this very important international meeting have been of great benefit for the American continent because it attached priority as a key subject to the development of international space law, including other issues.

The Preparatory Meeting approved a Declaration which identifies space applications in favour of security and sustainable development of mankind. These are issues which will be analyzed in the Quito Conference and include distance-education, tele-medicine, prevention and mitigation of natural disasters, environmental protection and protection of cultural heritage.

The Santiago Declaration emphasized the need of strengthening Space Conferences of the Americas and it highlighted the relevance of the International Group of Experts as an important body for the Conferences in terms of providing consultations.

Likewise, it indicated the need for strengthening interregional dialogue with other continents with regard to space-related applications and initiatives.

My country has asked me to express at this time its gratitude to Ambassador Raimundo González, President of the International Group of Experts of the Space Conference of the Americas, who officially visited Ecuador from 18 to 24 May of 2006, with the view to maintaining ties with and holding meetings with high-level officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and delegations of the national institutions which are part of the National Preparatory Committee for the Conference of the Americas. This working visit was extremely useful to us in preparing the thematic agenda of the Fifth Space Conference of the Americas.

Mr. Chairman, with regard to headway made in preparing the Space Conference of the Americas, I am very pleased to report to the Committee the following.

27 April 2006, the Pro Tempore Secretariat of the Space Conference of the Americas was passed to Ecuador from Colombia, who did excellent work when it was responsible for this important work. The achievements during Colombia's management are clearly very important contribution to the consolidation of legal mechanisms, mechanisms for cooperation and coordination of space activities in the region. And, thus, Ecuador wishes to express its profound gratitude for cooperation that Colombia so generously offered us.

This has made it possible for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to have very complete information with regard to the organization used for the Fourth Conference of the Americas. Also with regard to operational instruments that have been established for complying with the mandate and the programmes that have been implemented and those that are planned in terms of organization and logistics in the future.

The Fifth Space Conference of the Americas is geared to examining and assessing issues arising from regional cooperation for security and human development and, thus, the main themes are: development of space law; distance-education and access to knowledge; tele-medicine and rural health; environment conservation and protection of cultural heritage; and prevention and mitigation of natural disasters.

The Fifth Space Conference of the Americas will assign a very important role to the participation of the private sector so that the private sector, working together with various space agencies and institutions of participating nations, may participate and be involved in designing and providing instrumentation for different programmes and projects which may be the outcome of this Conference.

The Committee for Space Science and Technology of the National Committee for organizing the Fifth Space Conference of the Americas has set up a number of working groups with various entities and Ecuadorian institutions that are linked to the various thematic issues that will be examined in the context of the Fifth Space Conference of the Americas. This was done with the view to identifying defined sub-themes for the Conference and also identifying experts, at a national level, who can participate as panellists at the Conference.

The National Government of Ecuador has invited governments of the region, as well as governments from countries that are not in the region, so that they may send representatives to the Fifth Space Conference of the Americas. It is recommended that delegations be presided over, if possible, by their State Deputy Secretaries and that they be delegations which include representatives of space agencies or other competent entities in the area in each country such as educational experts or other governmental experts in the thematic areas being discussed. Ecuador has also invited a number of specialized agencies from the United Nations to participate.

On 2 June, an informative meeting was held which was presided over by the Deputy Secretary of

national sovereignty and border development of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and it included participation of the heads of diplomatic missions and delegations that would be participating in the Conference, including those located in the Americas, as well as those that would be involved from other regions or that would be participating as observers.

Finally, I just would like to indicate that the success of this august event will, no doubt, lead to a reflection of success on COPUOS and, therefore, all of our members of COPUOS and observing entities are cordially invited to participate actively in this event on the American continent.

And I would like also at this time thank a number of delegations who have spoken here and who have indicated support to my country in holding this Fifth Space Conference of the Americas.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN *(interpretation from French)*: Thank you Mr. Ambassador for your very complete presentation and I would like to especially thank you for the detailed information that you provided us on the preparations which are underway for the Fifth Space Conference of the Americas. I see that the preparations are broad and deep and that you have fully shouldered this initiative and Ecuador, after receiving also the Pro Tempore Secretariat from Colombia. I believe that I can say on behalf of all the members of this Committee that we wish you every success in Ecuador for the Fifth Space Conference of the Americas. Thank you again Mr. Ambassador.

We will now move on to Poland. I give the floor to Mr. Piotr Wolanski.

Mr. P. WOLANSKI (Poland): Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, first of all, I would like to congratulate you and both Vice-Chairmen with the election to the Chair position of this session of the COPUOS. I deeply believe that your experience, knowledge and leadership with the cooperation of the Office of COPUOS will contribute to the success of this session.

We would like also to thank you Dr. Abiodun from Nigeria for chairing the Committee for the last two years.

I would like to forward my deepest condolences to Indonesia for the loss of lives in the earthquake and to the other nations which suffered the loss of lives from the natural disasters. I hope that the work of the Committee will contribute in the future to develop more effective measures of dealing with such natural disasters.

I would like to congratulate Russia for launching the manned spacecrafts to the International Space Station and bringing astronauts safe home. I also congratulate NASA with a successful launch of new planetary missions and in the orbit of Mars and other in particular of launching the fastest spacecraft man every launched the “New Horizon” spacecraft to Pluto.

We congratulate ESA with a very successful placing of the Venus Express on orbit of Venus. We are especially proud of this mission, since part of the Planetary Fourier Spectrometer was built in Poland and we will take active part in evaluation of the data sent by the probe as we are involved in the evaluation of the data from the similar instrument placed on Mars Express.

Polish astrophysicists and scientists from the Space Research Centre participate actively in many international scientific programmes, including: INTEGRAL ESA project devoted to measure X and gamma ray deep space sources; DEMETER, a French project, aiming to study electric phenomena in the ionosphere stimulated by earthquakes; HERSCHEL, also an ESA project, to study the galaxy formation and the early Universe, large- and small-scale formation of stars, as well as planetary and cometary atmosphere; OBSTANOVKA, with the Russian Academy of Sciences, to study electro-magnetic environment of the International Space Station; and COMPASS, also with the Russian Academy of Sciences, developing of the radiospectrometer to study natural and artificial electro-magnetic emissions in the ionosphere.

Polish space physicists take part as co-partners in the NASA project IBEX of the interstellar boundary explorer.

Poland is also actively involved in the GALILEO project. In the Space Research Centre of the Polish Academy of Sciences, the “GALLOP” project was initiated. The project activities focus on: supporting research and commercial sectors in the development of GALILEO-based applications; and providing the background and support for developing of the national policy related to utilization of GALILEO services.

The Space Research Centre of the Polish Academy of Sciences is hosting the EGNOS-RIMS Station and is involved in GALILEO Time Service

Provider Prototype, which works together with a number of leading European time laboratories.

During this year, in Poland, a few workshops, seminars and conferences on space-related subjects were organized and a particular one in Krakow on microwave and radar applications with the participation of the representatives from the Italian Space Agency.

Also, the Space Research Centre organized an important international conference on Earth dynamics and reference systems, and an international workshop on "X-Ray Spectroscopy and Plasma Diagnostics from RESIK, RHESSI and SPIRIT Instruments" and co-organized the EURISY Conference on "Integration of the New European Member Countries into the GMES Programme".

The education on space is continuously widening in Poland. This includes special education programmes for the basic, high school and universities. Special programmes on space education are held at Warsaw University of Technology and other universities in Poland.

Students from Warsaw University of Technology actively participate in further student satellite programmes, including Lunar SAR imaging mission and Cube PW-SAT de-orbiting test satellite.

Finally, I would like to mention that Poland is an active partner in international cooperation and it is the final stage of negotiation with ESA, and I deeply believe that in the _____ *(not clear)*, we could join the Czech Republic, Hungary and Romania with the signing agreement with NASA and European Cooperating States.

I would like also that we will be involved next year in the special celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary of the space age in the many different activities in Poland.

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

The CHAIRMAN *(interpretation from French)*: Thank you very much Sir for your thorough statement, detailing Poland's space activities. I am delighted to note the forthcoming signature in the next few months of Poland's participation in the Cooperation Programme with the European Space Agency which will put the country in a position to participate there, in the same way as Romania and Hungary and the Czech Republic have been doing for the last couple of years. So my best wishes for your continued activities but I know personally that the Space Research Centre in Poland has been very active and has at its disposal a remarkable scientific and research network. Congratulations on that.

Still under item 5 of our agenda, we will now turn our attention to the statement to be made by Canada and I give the floor to Mr. John Barrett.

Mr. J. BARRETT (Canada) *(interpretation from French)* Thank you Mr. Chairman. *(Continued in English)* Mr. Chairman, Canada would like to congratulate you on assuming the chairmanship of COPUOS for the next two years and we are confident that you will put your extensive experience in the space sector to good use and anticipate many positive developments over the next two years under your leadership.

Canada would also like to express its profound appreciation to your predecessor, Dr. Ade Abiodun of Nigeria, for his able leadership over the past two years and we will miss his deft handling of COPUOS debate.

Canada also wishes to congratulate Dr. Elöd Both of Hungary on his election as First Vice-Chairman and Mr. Paul Tiendrebeogo of Burkina Faso to the office of Second Vice-Chairman of COPUOS for 2006 and 2007.

Mr. Chairman, if I may, I would like to first address the recent earthquake in Central Java, Indonesia. And on behalf of the Canadian Government and Canadian people, I extend our sympathy to the families and friends of those who lost their lives and those communities ravaged by this dreadful act of nature.

Foreign Minister MacKay personally delivered Canada's condolences to the Government of Indonesia on the day of the earthquake and expressed Canada's readiness to asst in emergency help and reconstruction.

Of particularly interest to this audience, the Canadian government has provided, as part of its assistance, RADARSAT-1 imagery of the earthquake's effects under the International Charter on Space and Major Disasters. And as of 1 June, a total of 2,002 image acquisitions have been delivered in support of disaster management operations in Indonesia.

Mr. Chairman, Canada is particularly interested in the agenda for the COPUOS Plenary this

year. We look forward to discussion of the Office for Outer Space Affairs' paper on the future role and activities of COPUOS.

Canada is also pleased to confirm that Mr. Jim Hamilton of the Canadian Centre for Communications Research will co-Chair, with the World Health Organization, the COPUOS Working Group on Tele-Medicine. This is a worthwhile effort to bring medical assistance to persons and communities currently without on-site medical personnel. It is another example of the benefits that space applications can bring. And we will have a short statement later in the meeting under this agenda item.

Mr. Chairman, Canada is also pleased that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee Debris Mitigation Working Group was able to complete its Work Plan deliverables ahead of schedule and to present its final recommendations to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee earlier this year. We aim to complete our consultations in support of these guidelines in time for the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee 2007 meeting, in order to enable their referral to the 2007 Plenary and we hope that other delegations to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee 2007 will be in a similar position.

As we are all increasingly aware, the annual rise in space debris continues. Without serious efforts to mitigate its production, space debris is set to become a major danger to the safe operation of space assets. While mitigating the production of space debris is a major step forward, our continued long-term access to space depends upon the global community devising the means to control and reduce the space debris population, in order to decrease the likelihood of collisions.

Canada was heartened to see that the proposed United Nations Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines resulted from a successful multi-lateral negotiation process and we see much to commend in the method of delegating the recommendation of best practices to a Working Group of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, on the basis of available technical information, including from a body such as the IADC. This approach has proven its effectiveness in addressing specific needs to enhance the safety of satellites and space assets. It is an approach that could usefully serve COPUOS in the future.

Mr. Chairman, the increasing commercialization of space activities poses unique interpretation and implementation challenges to the international legal framework governing such activities.

Canada strongly supports the United Nations conventions on outer space and welcomes initiatives aimed at strengthening them. Discussions in the Working Group on Registration Practices of States and International Organizations are particularly relevant in this respect and Canada trust that they will culminate in a set of best practices that will ensure the full and effective implementation of the Registration Convention and, thus, ultimately contribute to building a more secure and accessible space environment.

Mr. Chairman, Canada believes that COPUOS and its Subcommittees have a central role to play in responding to the challenges and opportunities posed by the international community's increased reliance on outer space.

The work of COPUOS could be optimized by enhancing dialogue between the various United Nations bodies with an interest in outer space, including the International Telecommunications Union, the Conference no Disarmament, and the United Nations General Assembly, particularly its First and Fourth Committees. The United Nations Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities is a useful coordination forum and consideration could be given to strengthening dialogue through it on issues of common interest.

COPUOS could also benefit from a consideration of how it and its Subcommittees can continue to respond in an effective and proactive manner to the evolving needs of the international community in outer space. In this context, we look forward to receiving the report of the Office for Outer Space Affairs on the future role and activities of the Committee and to discussing it under agenda item 14.

Mr. Chairman, Canada is pleased to advise COPUOS member States of activities which took place over the past year in the space area.

Under the European Space Agency's TIGER initiative, the Canadian Space Agency is now funding two new projects.

The first new project is the World Conservation Union project which involves remote sensing and geographic information system applications in integrated river basin management in the Zambezi Delta and Medium Limpopo Basin.

And the second new project is the development of an integrated decision-aid system for water resource management in the Sous-Massa Basin in Morocco. The project will be based on a geographic information system, satellite data and other data, such as geology, land use, land cover and topography.

Turning to other activities, the Nile River Awareness Kit, produced by a Canadian company, was officially launched in Cairo in the presence of the Egyptian Ministers of Environment and of Water and Irrigation. This project comprises an interactive CD-ROM exploring four thematic topics: river science, people and the river, governance, and environmental management. It has been developed at the specific request of the end-user partners, in this case, the Nile Trans-boundary Environmental Action Project, which forms part of the Nile Basin Initiative.

The Canadian Space Agency also contributed to a Conference on "Remote Sensing Across the Great Lakes: Observations, Monitoring and Action", which was held 4 to 6 April 2006, in Rochester, New York. Over the last decade, the Canadian Space Agency has been involved in the support of scientific initiatives, demonstration projects and operational activities related to the monitoring and study of the North American Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River area.

28 April 2006 marked the successful launch of NASA's CloudSat satellite. The Canadian Space Agency provided a crucial high-power technological component for the cloud radar onboard CloudSat. This will help researchers improve weather forecasting in the future and better understand climate change.

This concludes our statement, Mr. Chairman, and the round-up of Canadian activities in the space area over the past year.

The Canadian delegation will make statements later in this meeting under the appropriate agenda items on matters relating to the remote sensing of the Earth, the mitigation of space debris, the spin-off benefits of space technology, the International Heliophysical Year in 2007, space and education, space water, and, finally, under other matters, the future role and activities of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN *(interpretation from French)*: Thank you very much, Sir, for your statement and might I thank you in addition for the very encouraging remarks you made with regards to the excellent work done by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee with regards to space debris which is a vital issue, of course. Thank you as well for the detail you gave us with regards to Canada's space activities, especially the new activities which have appeared in the last year. I am delighted to note that Canada is still a major figure in terms of development applications and I am particularly struck by the examples you gave in Africa. Sir, we very much look forward to the contribution to be made by Canada on the various other items on the agenda where I know you intend to take the floor. Thank you very much Sir.

We have two further statements on the list of speakers under item 5 of the agenda, General Exchange of Views. Firstly, Switzerland. Before I do so, I see a question from Chile.

Mr. R. GONZÁLEZ ANINAT (Chile) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Thank you Mr. Chairman. In the context of the general exchange of views, which does not always really reflect an actual exchange of views, usually it is, despite the enormous efforts of the chairmanship to try and promote a more active and dynamic discussion of the various issues raised by delegations. Having said that, I would say anyway, notwithstanding this, that we should attempt to listen to the various statements and discern some of the issues that are reflected and repeated throughout some of these statements. And I will not be going through this in a systematic, organized or Cartesian manner, I will be a little bit more Latin about it and more disorganized in my remarks.

But I would like to begin by saying that I find it rather odd that, despite the significant effort in the direction of cooperation and solidarity, as that undertaken in such a large and effective way by Ecuador to hold the Fifth Space Conference of the Americas, despite that, not all countries have even referred to this significant event. And I think that, given this sort of topic, we should have a single position which should be that of supporting a sister nation, such as Ecuador, and we should put all of our efforts into using that opportunity to continue creating models for international cooperation. I recall the fact that in a statement of the distinguished Ambassador of Ecuador, reference was made to, amongst other things, nothing less than an interregional dialogue within the American continent. And the purpose of that was to establish a minimum amount of international cooperation and establish common ground in order to meet the challenges and problems of the Millennium.

This Conference then, the Conference of the Americas, reflects the Millennium Declaration as well

as UNISPACE recommendations and we should look at it in that context. And if we carefully look at it, we will see that, at a regional level, it replicates the Action Groups created by UNISPACE III, the Task Forces, rather, of UNISPACE III.

And in that regard, I would also like to compliment the distinguished delegation of Argentina for their efforts undertaken in the area of health and space technology.

A number of countries have indicated important events such as the conclusion of an agreement with a university in Chile, between Argentina and Chile, is one such example. And I think we should note some of the main technological instruments that are available to us, to help us overcome poverty, to overcome social exclusion, and by way of the same instruments, we can create more inclusive societies.

If I may, we could talk about citizen societies. There are societies where people do not even have the status of true citizens and yet, notwithstanding this, we have the technology available to us to overcome these kinds of obstacles, for example, to provide education and medicine to remote rural areas. We have the technology for that. And I have heard a number of statements made by countries but not much reference to this.

And then there is one country for which we have a great deal of respect and we hold very dear and further it has a long history in this Committee and for a long time now they have been fighting for specific interests, such as the geostationary orbit and we believe that the geostationary orbit is a main issue. It is not one that will renounce in terms of substance, it cannot be removed from the agenda. That is clear. It is one that we have to continue discussing. It is almost as if we were thinking about removing from the agenda and, again, I also think that this would be unacceptable because it is an important issue, one of the other substantive issues of the agenda.

But this geostationary orbit is a legal issue. A number of countries wish to have access to space technology and the geostationary orbit. And yet, I am wondering, are those countries prepared to look at other issues such as space debris? What if we were to remove space debris? It is just as important as geostationary orbits. So we hear people discuss issues like this, discuss the scientific nature of these issues. That is all fine and well but we need to move to action. We need to move to the development of laws that will make it possible for developing countries to deploy the only defence they have, which is the rule of law, so that they can work towards their legitimate aspirations in this area.

With regard to the future of the Committee, which was referred to by the distinguished delegate of Canada, I have to say that we have some serious doubts with regard to that. If we look at the role that was given to us by Professor Karl Doetsch, at some point of time, and compared to now, we have a very futuristic approach, a very sophistic approach in terms of technology and I say with full respect, my country is not in a position to be able to take this on. Of course, we are available to look at the idea with time and calmly and see how it might be put in place but clearly what we wish to see is the role of the Secretariat to continue to summarize what has been discussed on past occasions. Unless Canada takes as its own the role that was proposed, which, of course,, they have the sovereign right to do that, I think we are going to need to discuss some of the problems of the infection and viruses that seem to be spreading throughout this room causing coughing and other problems but that is an aside.

We come back to the subject at hand. We cannot seriously, and I am being serious here, we cannot seriously consider the future of the Committee when there are a significant number of developing nations, at least half the room, which systematically, and I repeat that, systematically we can all see it, so there is no point in denying it, systematically do not attend the meetings. There are countries that systematically, at least when I was the Chair of the Committee, I almost want to use the word “accosted” me but that is probably the wrong word with other connotations, but they expressed their desire to be full members at the time that I was the Chair. And I have to say that if we are going to look at the future work of the Committee, what we also have to do is take this into account, this non-participation. And that is the possible removal of some members from the Committee, members who, over a period of time, have not attended x number of sessions. I do not think it makes any sense at all to continue fooling ourselves, pretending that there is a membership here which is not actually reflected. And I think that if we do that, it undermines the most vital element of this Committee, which is international cooperation.

And finally, I would end my remarks by referring again to the Conference of Quito and the subject of the Quito Conference. It is not a random event. This is an event which promotes international cooperation and working together and it was approved by consensus. And I think in that context, it is very

important that this Committee practically tackle issues of international cooperation and if there are countries that do not wish to cooperate, well, that is fine, let us just be transparent about it, let us say it aloud, they do not want to come the meetings, that is fine, they do not have to attend the meetings. Countries might have their own interest, their own development or other agendas. That can be clear. But we should not tolerate this level of absence, or indifference is the word to use to describe it, because it does not promote an appropriate climate for productive cooperation.

Thank you Sir.

The CHAIRMAN *(interpretation from French)*: Thank you very much Ambassador for your statement and comments. I took careful note, Ambassador, of all the points on which you touched which will put us in a position to take note of them in our debate on the future role of the Committee, because this is something which is going to come up later on in our session. And I feel it is important for us to cover all the questions which have arisen and they are not seen as the same kind of priority by developing countries that are interested in the day to day development of space applications for development, as compared with countries who have much more advanced space research and involved in the exploration of the solar system and planets and so on. And it is the differences of point of view, differences of approach, that cause the difficulties for us but also constitute the wealth of our debate and I think that this is important to take into account when we discuss the role of the Committee in future.

If I might add, I would like to suggest that we now listen to the statement to be made by the Swiss delegation and I give the floor to Mr. Peter Knopf and I can see him at his place now.

Mr. P. KNOPF (Switzerland): Distinguished delegates, first the Swiss delegation congratulates Gérard Brachet as elected Chairman of COPUOS, wishing him, of course, a lot of success during his chairmanship.

Switzerland is observer in COPUOS since the UNISPACE III Conference in 1999 in Vienna and contributed also to the Workshop “Remote Sensing in the Service of Sustainable Development in Mountain Areas”, held in November 2004, in Kathmandu, and planned and co-financed by ESA, Austria, Switzerland and the Office for Outer Space Affairs, together with the Regional Institute for Mountain Development in the Himalaya-Hindukush region, ICIMOD. In March 2006, ESA offered a training workshop as follow-up of the 2004 Workshop in Kathmandu, again about SAR technologies and the educational software package “Eduspace”, available with Himalaya space data.

As many of you know, the Swiss Space Agency was until now, in fact, the European Space Agency, ESA, in which our space policy was realized by corresponding Swiss participation in ESA programmes. Switzerland is also member State in EUMETSAT and participates also in EUTELSAT. Further, Switzerland participates in the ESA-EU initiative GALILEO navigation satellite system to be implemented actually. A first satellite is already in orbit with Swiss atomic clocks onboard which function well and with high precision. Further, Switzerland participates also in the ESA-EU programme Global Monitoring for Environment and Security, which is also in the implementation phase with three or probably four fast-track services in land, sea and atmosphere monitoring, as well as disaster management and humanitarian aid.

Since the end of the 1990s, the Confederation has a competence in space policy which is decided by our Federal Council. Whole, the Swiss space policy is actually revisited in view of the fast-changing space activities globally and some suggestions to our Federal Council are formulated by our Commission Fédérale pour les Affaires Spatiales. One suggestion is that Switzerland should become a member State of COPUOS because of new and planned space activities in a fast-developing frame of global space activities. My hierarch in the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs supports this membership. So we are working on this and hope for a welcome by the member States in COPUOS probably still this year.

We plan to combine this COPUOS membership of Switzerland with an offer of hosting operational parts of the Disaster Management International Space Coordination Organization, DMISCO, in Geneva, while the political and coordination part would remain at the Office for Outer Space Affairs in Vienna. We thought that such a solution of a decentralized DMISCO could be reasonable because a lot of international and United Nations organizations, as well as NGOs active in disaster management and humanitarian relief, are located in Geneva. This solution could then also facilitate the coordination function of DMISCO with main users. We, therefore, sent a proposal for such a DMISCO solution, which is, of course, subject to the decisions taken in COPUOS as well as final discussions of the Swiss Administration.

The discussions held in the Ad Hoc Expert Group on implementation of DMISCO showed major necessity of modifications of our offer, complementary to other offers which have to be harmonized further. Switzerland, and I state this here officially, remains open to contribute to the implementation, I would rather say as soon implementation, of DMISCO with a strong headquarter in the Office for Outer Space Affairs and regional offices in the regions as it was implicitly proposed, for instance, by China. I think we need this decentralized solution.

Thank you for your attention.

The CHAIRMAN *(interpretation from French)*: I would like to thank you very much Sir for your statement on behalf of the Swiss delegation. Thank you very much for the proposals that Switzerland has made by way of supporting the DMISCO initiative. I am convinced that Switzerland will continue to be an important participant in debate on this initiative.

We will now turn our attention to a statement to be made by an observer organization, namely the European Space Policy Institute. And I think understand that we are going to hear a statement from Mr. Pierre Henri Pisani, to be followed by a statement by Ms. Jaureguy-Naudin. So, without further ado, I give the floor to Mr. Pisani.

Mr. P.-H. PISANI (European Space Policy Institute) *(interpretation from French)*: Having listened to presentations by countries on space activities and exploration, and having had the very interesting presentation by the United States, in particular the Space Shuttle, what we need to move on to now is a new set of initiatives. And last September, the European Space Policy Institute welcomed clarification(?) on a project from the Centre for Strategic and International Studies, and you can see the name in English on the screen in front of you. And I would like to ask Maité to present this space exploration project.

Ms. M. JAUREGUY-NAUDIN (European Space Policy Institute) *(interpretation from French)*: Mr. Chairman, delegates, ladies and gentlemen, delegates, good afternoon. I should like to start by thanking Serge Plattard from the European Space Policy Institute for this opportunity to present our project. I am anxious to thank COPUOS for this welcome and I would also like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and your staff on your election.

The Centre for Strategic and International Studies, which I am representing today, is a research centre for political science. It is an independent, non-partisan Centre with an international reputation.

The Human Space Exploration Initiative, HSEI, is a project which goes back to June 2003. It is completely independent of the vision presented by President Bush in January 2004. Our project looks at new prospect when it comes to the future of the presence of humankind in space, whether we are talking about a physical presence or the use of robots. The aim of this project is a global vision for the future of space exploration. Our aim is not only to foster long-term space exploration but also, and above all, to include the greatest possible number of partners.

The first study stage led to conclusions which we published last spring. Following that study, we chose to focus particularly on three points, namely, how to coordinate, lead and direct an adventure of this kind and asked the question “can one set up a lasting cooperation model?” Secondly, how can one foster funding mechanisms? And finally, bearing in mind that we wish to see global and sustainable space exploration important to associate all generations and cultures in such an adventure in which framework we are working in conjunction with UNESCO and the IAF in order to develop a programme for the pupils of primary and secondary schools. And I would like to take this opportunity to greet and thank the President of IAF, Jim Zimmerman, and our friend Yolanda Berenguer from UNESCO.

We hope to compile the educational material produced by space agencies around the world in order to make them available to teachers, in particular, in developing countries. The CSIS, UNESCO and the IAF are jointly organizing a workshop on education as part of the Fifty-Seventh International Astronautical Congress next autumn.

The first draft of a joint declaration has been written in order to pinpoint tangible objectives represented by the Global Vision for Space Exploration and this declaration includes four key points:

Space exploration is a global adventure. The challenges and opportunities represented an opportunity(?) by this adventure, go beyond national interests and, therefore, space exploration must draw more substantially on globalization in order to pool ideas and individuals and players from the private and public sectors;

Space means dreams and inspiration and to make sure this is a global and sustainable operation, we must draw on the support on each and every one of us. We must train explorers, scientists and engineers for tomorrow. A global vision for space exploration for space exploration will mean that we can devise the programmes and exchanges which go beyond cultural, geographical and linguistic barriers and bring together pupils, students, teachers and engineers throughout the world;

Links in all relevant sectors of space exploration, that is between the public and private sectors and between the commercial and financial sectors are links that must be maintained and reinforced;

And, finally, space exploration calls upon amazingly diverse and varied disciplines and more effective collaboration and, if necessary, a competition when it gives rise to emulation, are something that would allow us to broaden the competences to areas which have not yet been exploited.

Our objective is to promote space exploration by encouraging communication, cooperation, collaboration and competition in order to achieve effectiveness. Our objective is to turn space exploration into a sustainable, realistic and viable adventure for all human kind.

The declaration must take into account the ambitions and needs of all countries. I, therefore, Mr. Chairman, and members of COPUOS, suggest that we organize a seminar under the aegis of the COPUOS which could take place during the next Plenary meeting.

Perhaps on such an occasion we could discuss setting up an organization on the CEOS model which would mean regularly reviewing strategies and current projects. Such an organization would work on a voluntary basis and it would allow us to define and take account of the needs of all countries.

Might I conclude by saying the following? We believe that space exploration should not be reserved to the traditional space powers alone. This is a human adventure and it concerns all of humankind. We are convinced that it is possible to give rise to a model which brings together all partners, whether big or small. But we know that such a model would only be able to function if its objectives are shared by all.

Distinguished delegates, Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for your attention.

The CHAIRMAN *(interpretation from French)*: Thank you very much Madam for your statement introducing the CSIS project and the human space exploration project. I feel that what you said at the end of your presentation is something that will have struck us most particularly, here as representatives of member States of this Committee and who often have the impression that space exploration is not for them whereas I think that your project is designed to raise an interest amongst such States in space exploration as such an adventure. Thank you very much, therefore, for your statement Madam.

This, I think, brings us to the end of our examination, at least as far as this afternoon is concerned.

Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes (agenda item 6)

We will now, therefore, turn our attention to agenda item 6 which focuses on the ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes.

The first speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of the United States of America, Mr. Ken Hodgkins. I give you the floor.

Mr. K. HODGKINS (United States of America): Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, my delegation once again welcomes the opportunity to 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 and 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 close to 100 new international agreements entered into force with other governments 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 results and benefits in the use of outer space for peaceful purposes. The United States-India Joint Working Group on Space held its first meeting in Bangalore, India, 29 to 30 June 2005. The Joint Working Group provides a useful mechanism to explore possibilities for enhanced cooperation, promote understanding of government policies and procedures and facilitate collaboration by addressing issues promptly. Among other things, agreement was reached to fly two United States instruments on India' Chandrayaan-1 lunar mission. In October 2005, we signed the United States-Sweden Framework Agreement for Civil Space Cooperation for Peaceful Purposes. And in December 2005, the United States and Russia continued government-level consultations on establishing radio frequency compatibility and interoperability between GPS and GLONASS. Additionally, the first meeting of the United States-European Commission Civil Space Policy Dialogue was held in March of this year in Brussels.

The United States is reaching out to other nations to consider international cooperation in conjunction with the United States Vision for Space Exploration. Our objective is to promote common space exploration objectives and cooperative or complementary space exploration missions, along with the development of new technologies that will open up many opportunities for exploration and discovery.

In the Group on Earth Observations, or GEO, the United States is working with other members to establish a Global Earth Observation System of Systems, otherwise known as GEOSS. Our goal is to realize a future wherein decisions and actions for the benefit of humankind are informed via coordinated, comprehensive and sustained Earth observations and information.

The 10-Year Plan for GEOSS was endorsed by the participating governments at the Third Earth Observation Summit in Brussels, Belgium, on 16 February 2005. The plan is structured to support nine broad socio-economic benefit areas. The United States is working in parallel to develop its own Strategic Plan for the United States Integrated Earth Observation System, the United States contribution to GEOSS. During the past year, we gave priority to six "near-term opportunities": Improved Observations for Disaster Warnings, the Global Land Observation System, the Sea Level Observation System, the National Integrated Drought Information System, the Air Quality Assessment and Forecast System, and Data Management. Additionally, NOAA is embarking on a regional initiative in the Western Hemisphere, known as the Earth Observation Partnership of the Americas, or EOPA. EOPA aims to improve Earth observations and their utilization by facilitating working relationships and collaboration, encouraging the use and exchange of data and coordinating and leveraging regional assets and resources in order to improve the use of environmental data by all sectors of society in the Western Hemisphere.

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 multi-lateral mechanisms where disarmament matters can be and are appropriately being addressed. 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 space. It was clear that there would be entirely independent efforts to deal with disarmament issues. These would include the First Committee of the General Assembly and the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

The Committee has played a notable role in advancing space cooperation and provides a unique forum for exchange of information among developed and developing countries on the latest developments in the use and exploration of outer space. In our view there are 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, members 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, for example, 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 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 over the past few years in the number of other intergovernmental organizations, as well as non-governmental organizations and private firms that seek participation in the Committee's work. 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.

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 60/99, adopted by the General Assembly last year, notes with satisfaction that the Government of Ecuador is hosting the Fifth Space Conference of the Americas in July, the last one having been hosted in 2002 by the Government of Colombia. We were pleased to have participated in the Preparatory Meeting for the Fifth Space Conference held in Santiago, Chile, this past March. The results of that were highly encouraging and the United States looks forward to attending the Conference in Quito. In this regard, we could 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, 12 specific references were incorporated in the WSSD Plan of Implementation to the valuable role observations from space have in assisting us to understand better the Earth and its systems. For example, as a follow-up to WSSD, the United States is working through CEOS, Committee on Earth Observation Satellites, to undertake a number of activities and special events to address priority areas focused on education and training, water resource 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 and this agenda item.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN *(interpretation from French)*: I would like to thank Mr. Hodgkins for his statement, very complete, and gave us a detailed account of the United States involvement in international cooperation and we would also like to thank him for the suggestions put forth with a view to strengthening initiatives that might be undertaken during our discussions, for instance, all of which would promote international cooperation for the peaceful uses of outer space.

Are there any questions after the United States statement?

I see none.

I would propose then that we move on to the second statement on this item of the agenda which is India. I call upon Mr. Sundararamaiah.

Mr. V. SUNDARARAMAIAH (India): Thank you Mr. Chairman. Outer space is the common province of all humankind and furthering its exploration for peaceful purposes should be our common goal. The world over, people have realized that effective utilization of space application programmes is very important in the overall prosperity and development of the nation. With the increased dependence and use of space-based systems, it should be everyone's responsibility to maintain the outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes.

Mr. Chairman, in today's world, some of the challenges that the developing countries face are related to poverty, illiteracy, lack of proper healthcare infrastructure and expertise. The World Summit on Sustainable Development was an important initiative in this direction and has resulted in the Action Plan for eradicating poverty in developing nations. The effort should be towards translating these action plans into reality.

In India, the space programme got evolved to provide for the socio-economic development of the country. This has resulted in conceiving specific user-driven application programmes through the use of remote sensing, meteorological and communications satellite systems. The majority of the developing countries have also conceived space application programmes irrespective of whether they possess the space systems or not.

It is in this context, COPUOS should become the useful platform to enthuse the newer players to take up space science and technology application programmes for sustainable development. COPUOS should play a significant role in furthering the international cooperation to reach the benefits of the space systems to the developing nations.

Mr. Chairman, we will have to maintain the peaceful, responsible and international character of the space field.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN *(interpretation from French)*: Thank you Mr. Sundararamaiah for that contribution to this item of the agenda. Everyone, of course, is very familiar with your country's approach to space development and which revolves around socio-economic development and which has known great success. And I am sure that the success that you have found are of interest to all developing nations as a whole which are members of this Committee.

Are there any questions or comments following our colleague from India's statement?

I see none.

We will provisionally close item 6 on the agenda as I see no other requests for the floor on this item of the agenda.

Implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III (agenda item 7)

And we will move on then to item 7, Implementation of the Recommendations of UNISPACE III.

On this item of the agenda, number 7, we have several speakers on the list, the United Kingdom, India and Northern Ireland.

I give the floor to Mr. Richard Tremayne-Smith please.

Mr. R. TREMAYNE-SMITH (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): Thank you Mr. Chairman. My delegation looks forward to working with you and the new Bureau over the next years. Thanks also go, as ever, to the Office for Outer Space Affairs for their continuing efforts in support of the Committee and to the outgoing Chairmen for their significant inputs over the past years.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to provide a brief update on the work of Action Team 14 in helping to implement the recommendations of UNISPACE III. The agenda item at the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on the matter of near-Earth objects has been particularly significant in helping to further the work of the Action Team while providing information to the Subcommittee. The presentations that were made can be found on the Office for Outer Space Affairs website under the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee section.

With the significant support from delegations in general, as well as observers, the Action Team decided at its meeting in February to draft a report bringing together the work done so far and at the same time indicating what further activity could help to complete the work of the Action Team.

The draft structure of this report was recently distributed to members of the Action Team and the first inputs have already been received. A working draft of the report will be available for the next meeting of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee.

Additional delegations are welcome to join the Action Team and to contribute to the drafting process. Members who have not received the draft are requested to advise the Secretariat of their new address.

The Action Team looks forward to helping with the planning of a further successful agenda item at the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee meeting in 2007.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN *(interpretation from French)*: Thank you Mr. Tremayne-Smith for that statement and for your report on the progress achieved by Team number 14 on UNISPACE III recommendations. It is reassuring to see that it is now 2006. It has been almost seven years after UNISPACE III and to see that the recommendations are being implemented by way of these teams and it is continued on a regular basis, some are further along than others, some have already issued their reports actually. But, I think, that indeed this confirms the quality of the measures decided by the Committee to ensure that the UNISPACE III recommendations were followed indeed through a Plan of Action and specific decisions and events. So thank you once again for the information you provided. And we will continue to

follow with interest the discussions of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee based on the report that the teams will be presenting to us.

I do not believe we have any other speakers requesting to speak to item 7 on the agenda. We will continue item 7 in the coming days.

Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on its forty-third session (agenda item 8)

We can now open agenda item 8, we can at least begin item 8. Item 8 is the Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on its Forty-Third Session. This is an item that we will just open today and will be continued tomorrow and Monday and probably beyond that as well. But we could start it now because we do have a little bit of time left this afternoon.

So I will give the floor to the representative of Malaysia, Mr. Subari. You have the floor Sir.

Mr. M. SUBARI (Malaysia): Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, our statement will be very brief and direct to the items concerned.

With regards to the recommendation made by the Working Group of the Whole that the next Symposium organized by COSPAR and IAF, to be held at the forty-fourth session of the Subcommittee in 207 should be on the "Use of the Equatorial Orbit for Space Applications: Challenges and Opportunities". We would like to inform this meeting that our coming Earth observation satellite will be placed at the orbit of interest to the seminar.

RazakSAT, carrying a Medium-Sized Aperture Camera, capable of producing a 2.5 metre resolution panchromatic and 5.0 metre multi-spectral images, will be placed at an altitude of 685 kilometres. This unique orbit, the near equatorial orbit, or NEqO, will benefit Malaysia and countries within the Equatorial Belt by providing maximum number of imaging opportunities, as compared to the traditional polar orbit. We believe this will be the first Earth observation satellite placed in such orbit.

The launch of RazakSAT into its NEqO itself is a challenge. For this launch, Malaysia is working with the United States of America to provide solution for this launch, tentatively scheduled for mid-2007.

With this, Mr. Chairman, we will be more than happy to provide and share our experiences in the Seminar.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN *(interpretation from French)*: Thank you very much Sir for what you have told us about the RazakSAT project and the upcoming launch on Equatorial orbit next year. It is true that the idea is not absolutely brand new but it has not yet been fully implemented and it is very interesting to note that Malaysia may be the first State to implement this low Equatorial orbit satellite concept.

Now, are there any questions arising from this statement?

I do not see any. I think that this, therefore, brings us, at least for today, to the end of our examination of agenda item 8. We will take it up again tomorrow subsequently.

Distinguished delegates, I will soon adjourn this session of the Committee but I would like to inform you of the working plan for tomorrow morning when we will meet again at 10.00 a.m. sharp. And, as you will have noticed from what happened this morning, I am determined to call the meeting to order at 10.00 a.m. sharp. We will re-open item 7 of the agenda, that is the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Use of Outer Space, UNISPACE III.

We will continue our examination of item 8 of the agenda in addition, namely the Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on its Forty-Third Session, and we will start our examination of item 9, the Report of the Legal Subcommittee on its Forty-Fifth Session.

At the end of tomorrow morning's session, we will have a presentation under item 8 of the agenda made by Pakistan.

Are there any questions on tomorrow morning's schedule?

I see no questions.

I should, therefore, in addition, like to inform you that the Team on the Environmental Monitoring Strategy, Team 1, will meet tomorrow morning at 9.00 a.m. in Room C-0727.

And the Special Experts Group on creating an international space services coordination entity for the management of disasters, disaster management, will also meet in Room C-0713 at 9.00 a.m. tomorrow.

Might I also recall that the United States delegation has invited us to a reception which will take place in half an hour's time at 6.00 p.m. in the special function room in the VIC Restaurant on the Ground Floor here in this building.

So without any further comments, I adjourn this meeting and look forward to seeing you tomorrow morning.

The meeting closed at 5.34 p.m.