

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Unedited transcript

570th Meeting
Friday, 8 June 2007, 10 a.m.
Vienna

Chairman: Mr. G. Brachet (France)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*): Distinguished delegates, could I please ask you to be so kind as to take your seats, I would like to call this morning's meeting to order. I call the 570th meeting of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to order.

Before we start, I should like to congratulate the Italian delegation on the launch of their first COSMO-SkyMed satellite last night.

This morning, we will continue and conclude our consideration of item 4, general exchange of views, we will begin our consideration of item 5, ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes and item 6, implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III. Time permitting, we will also begin our consideration of the report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its forty-fourth session. Might I also recall that, at the end of this morning's meeting, Mr. Gusyev, representing Ukraine, will make a technical presentation under item 7, entitled, Observation and Surveillance of Near Earth Objects.

Distinguished delegates, I should now like to continue and, if possible, conclude, our consideration of agenda item 4, general exchange of views. We have one member State on the speaker's list, to whom I give the floor. I recognize the Ambassador of Burkina Faso.

Mme. B. DAMIBA (Burkina Faso) (*interpretation from French*): Thank you very much, Sir. I would like to thank you for re-opening agenda item 4 this morning, which has given us an opportunity

to speak. Unfortunately, I was not able to come yesterday or the day before.

My delegation is delighted to be able to take the floor at this the fiftieth session in order to share, with you and other delegations, our concerns with regard to the peaceful and non-harmful use of outer space and the fair sharing of the fruits of space research and technology.

I would like to start by adding my voice to those delegations to thank you and OOSA for the courtesy and the far-sightedness that you have been showing since you were elected to the helm of our work. I should also like to thank Dr. Camacho, to Ms. Alice Lee and to all of their staff.

Dr. Camacho, as you reach the end of your mission, I should like to say to you, Sir, how grateful we are to you for your huge contribution to space activities. We will miss you, Sir, however, I would like to say that what you have done in charge of OOSA is something that we will not forget.

This session is being held at an important moment for the Committee because we see the simultaneous celebration, in 2007, of the fiftieth anniversary of the space era and the fortieth anniversary of the Outer Space Treaty. Therefore, at this crucial point, we need to stand back and think what we have achieved in order to consolidate our legal arsenal and we need to look at the future role of our Committee given the fact that there are ever more players in this field and an ever greater diversification of activities in the area of space.

In its resolution 50/27 of 6 December 1995, the General Assembly endorsed the recommendation of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space that, beginning with its thirty-ninth session, the Committee would be provided with unedited transcripts in lieu of verbatim records. This record contains the texts of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages as transcribed from taped recordings. The transcripts have not been edited or revised.

Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, within one week of the date of publication, to the Chief, Conference Management Service, Room D0771, United Nations Office at Vienna, P.O. Box 500, A-1400, Vienna, Austria. Corrections will be issued in a consolidated corrigendum.



When it comes to consolidating our legal arsenal what the Committee should do is everything it can to ensure the ratification of the five space treaties by the largest possible number of States. In addition, we should thoroughly examine the reports of the Subcommittees submitted to us. Some of the points, within those Subcommittees, have struck us most particularly and I would like to mention, *inter alia*, the use of nuclear power sources in space, the registration of space devices and the delimitation of outer space.

As regards the future role of this Committee it is absolutely vital that the Committee be in a position to adapt to numerous changes and be able to meet crucial needs of the greater part of the world's population and, in particular, the needs of developing countries. From this point of view, my delegation considers that the proposals in the unofficial memorandum on the future role and activities of COPUOS, presented last February, is a good basis for our thought processes and the decision. The main lines in this report were as follows: the sustainable development of space activities; international cooperation in space exploration; the protection of designated areas of the Moon and other celestial bodies; questions of the development of space tourism; and near Earth objects. We continue to be convinced that this memorandum contains important elements for the appropriate pursuit of space activities as long as we make sure that we also introduce into it the results of delegations' comments. I would like at this point to say that we, in my delegation, are open and committed to the finalization and adoption of this document.

Whilst we wait for this memorandum to become our road map it is important to look at the matters on the agenda for this session, in particular, the implementation of UNISPACE III recommendations, space and water, the use of geospatial data from space for sustainable development and an examination of the current situation when it comes to spin-off benefits of space technology, these are matters that are of particular concern to developing countries, including my own. They place before this Committee an opportunity to contribute, in a meaningful way, to the efforts being undertaken by the international community to attain the Millennium Development Goals.

In May 2008, a regional workshop will be held in Burkina Faso on tele-medicine, organized jointly by the United Nations, the World Health Organization and my country. The organizational committee is already up and running in order to make sure that this is a successful event. Given the commitment of my authorities and the enthusiasm of

health professionals for the above-mentioned workshop, I can guarantee that this will increase health-care capabilities in Burkina Faso and throughout Africa. I would like to invite you, here and now, all of you and in particular the countries of my continent, to participate actively in this event. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank OOSA and, in particular, Ms. Alice Lee and her staff for their enormous support for this project. My country undertakes to make sure that the results of the work of this workshop will be up to your expectations. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*): I should like to thank Ambassador Béatrice Damiba for her statement on behalf of Burkina Faso. I would also like to say just how much I appreciate my collaboration with your colleague as vice-chair and rapporteur and I would also like to wish you every success in the tele-medicine workshop to take place next May in Burkina Faso.

Ladies and gentlemen, we will now hear from ESCAP and the statement to be made by Mr. Nokeo Ratanavong. I recognize the representative of ESCAP.

Mr. N. RATANOVONG (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific) (*interpretation from French*): I would like to congratulate you upon your election to the helmsmanship of this Committee, Sir, I am convinced that we will be successful in our work under you helmsmanship and I would also like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude on behalf of my section at ESCAP. I would also like to express our gratitude to Dr. Camacho for so many committed years of work at the head of OOSA.

If I might, I would like to convey a message from Mr. Thampi, the Director of Information, Communications and Space Technology Division, my colleague in Bangkok, who has not been able to come to this session.

I will now continue in English.

[*continued in English*] It is an honour for the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, in short ESCAP, to take part in this fiftieth session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, as this year marks also the fiftieth anniversary of the launch of the first man-made satellite, Sputnik I, into orbit and the fortieth anniversary of the Outer Space Treaty.

ESCAP, being the regional development arm of the United Nations Secretariat for the Asia and

Pacific regions, has over 20 years of experience in raising awareness and promoting the benefits of space technology for sustainable development. Being the largest United Nations body in the region, with 62 members and associate members, the ESCAP mandate is to promote economic and social development by serving as a hub for regional cooperation and coordination. It provides the regional structure linking global and national initiatives.

Through its regional convening authority, ESCAP convenes intergovernmental meetings to adapt regional strategies in various areas, including regional mechanisms on space technology applications. With its multidisciplinary capacity in a range of interrelated development fields, such as, poverty reduction, sustainable development and information, communication and space technology, the Information, Communication and Space Technology Division of ESCAP works on linking the regional space application programmes with the other substantive development subprogrammes of ESCAP by contributing to the thematic areas addressed by these subprogrammes.

ESCAP organized the first Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Development in Asia and the Pacific at Beijing in September 1994, hosted by the Government of China. The conference launched a Regional Space Application Programme for Sustainable Development, RESAP, established a network involving a spectrum of space technology applications including remote sensing, satellite communication, satellite-based positioning and satellite meteorology. The Asia and Pacific region became one of the fast-growing regions in space technology development and applications. Some countries in the region are recognized global leaders in space technology. However, a major challenge is still to ensure equitable access to space technology to all developing countries in the region for addressing social economic problems.

The second Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific took place in New Delhi in November 1999, hosted by the Government of India. The conference was regarded as a regional follow-up of UNISPACE III. The programme shifted from training and awareness-raising towards promoting regional cooperative mechanisms to support operational applications of space technologies focusing on natural disaster management, environment, natural resources management, poverty alleviation, food security, education, health care, sustainable development planning. Development trends in the region moved

gradually to operational applications for societal benefits.

ESCAP has been cooperating with OOSA, participated in action teams to implement the recommendations of UNISPACE III at the regional level, provided inputs to the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the coordination of space-related activities within the United Nations system and participated, on a regular basis, at the Interagency Meeting on Outer Space Activities and collaborated with OOSA in organizing regional workshops in the Asia and Pacific region.

ESCAP is pleased to inform the COPUOS session that it will organize, with OOSA, a regional expert group meeting on the use of space technology for avian influenza monitoring and early warning systems in Asia, at the United Nations Conference Centre in Bangkok, from 1-3 August 2007. The meeting will be co-organized by OOSA, on behalf of the COPUOS Action Team 6, in partnership with the China National Space Agency, the Canadian Space Agency, the Centre National d'Etudes spatiales and other countries' ongoing studies in this field, as well as, WHO and FAO, to work towards the establishment of a workable regional network for joint development of an avian influenza monitoring and early warning system in Asia. The Joint Informatics and Space Technology Development Agency of Thailand has kindly agreed to co-sponsor the meeting. We would take this opportunity to extend our gratitude for such support.

ESCAP is interested to also contribute to the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (SPIDER) and to work with OOSA to jointly develop mechanisms on the use of space technology for disaster management at the regional level, based on ongoing regional initiatives to avoid duplication and create synergy. ESCAP's experience and expertise and its well-established RESAP network could be shared with SPIDER to translate activities into the regional context. ESCAP has been promoting and carried out policy studies on regional cooperative mechanisms on the use of space technology for disaster management and related space information products and services.

An important regional mechanism, Sentinel Asia, has been initiated with the Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) and other regional space-faring countries and other developing countries to address wildfire and flood.

Another regional initiative that will be developed with countries in the region and in partnership with FAO is drought monitoring using space technology, building on the practices of India and China in this field.

SPIDER needs to develop a regional mechanism with ESCAP and regional initiatives would explore information sources that would be developed through SPIDER.

We are pleased to inform the COPUOS session that ESCAP will organize the third Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific from 18-23 October 2007. The Ministry for Science, Technology and Innovation of Malaysia has informed us of its preparation for hosting the conference at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. In anticipation of the official final confirmation from the Government of Malaysia and the transmission of the formal invitations, in due course, we would encourage the representatives of member Governments of ESCAP, United Nations and international organizations to note the expected date for the Ministerial Conference and to commence arrangements for your country and organizations to be appropriately represented at that important event.

The third Ministerial Conference on Space Applications will be convened with a new regime, to enhance regional cooperation and consider concrete steps towards developing effective institutional arrangements designed to facilitate operational applications of space-based information and communication technologies among members and associate members of ESCAP. It will assess the implementation of the regional space application programme for sustainable development, examine the converging trends in information communication in space technologies and issues facing the region in reaching internationally agreed development goals and recommend a regional strategy and action plan and cooperative mechanisms in priority areas that are of common concern to the countries of Asia and the Pacific, such as, disaster reduction, natural resources, environment management, tele-education, tele-health with supportive connectivity and _____ (*inaudible*), the over-arching strategy being to contribute to poverty alleviation.

With the emergence of internationally agreed development goals to which member States are committed, ESCAP looks forward to forge stronger partnerships, to realize the goodwill expressed by space-faring countries, to expand opportunities and benefits to less capable countries and to aim for

regional mechanism in space technology applications to help member States reach the Millennium Development Goals, the goals set by WSSD, WSIS and the World Conference on Disaster Reduction. With your support the Ministerial Conference would be able to translate these universal goals into the regional context to reflect the aspirations of the countries in the ESCAP region. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*): I thank the representative of ESCAP for his statement and for the message that he brought to us on behalf of the Director of the Division for Information, Communications and Space Technology of ESCAP. I am glad to note that ESCAP has been organizing, with the Office for Outer Space Affairs, a meeting of experts on the use of space technologies with regard to telemedicine. This meeting will be held in Bangkok in August. I am also glad to note, obviously, that the third Ministerial Conference on Space Applications for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific will take place in Kuala Lumpur, in October of this year.

Now, I am going to recognize the representative of the European Space Policy Institute (ESPI), Mr. Serge Plattard.

Mr. S. PLATTARD (European Space Policy Institute) (*interpretation from French*): I would like to congratulate you and join many colleagues in expressing my joy at the fact that you are at the helm of this Committee's session. The recent resolution of the United Nations General Assembly recommended that French people should speak in French and that is my case, however, distinguished delegates and Mr. Chairman, to talk on behalf of my Institute I will use the working language of my Institution, which is recognized as part of the United Nations system.

[*continued in English*]

Distinguished delegates, I would like to take this opportunity to present the current activities of the European Space Policy Institute which is located in Vienna. As presumably you know, this Institute was created after a decision of the Council of the European Space Agency in December 2002, installed as an association of Austrian law in November 2003. The Institute really started to work in September 2004 and entered into an operative mode in early 2005.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, I would like to just recall very briefly what is the mission statement of this Institute. The mission of the European Space Policy Institute is to carry out studies and research to provide decision-makers with an

independent view on mid- to long-term issues relevant to the governance of space.

Through its activities, ESPI, as the European Space Policy Institute is dubbed, will contribute to facilitating the decision-making process, increasing awareness on space technologies and applications with the user communities, opinion leaders and the public at large and supporting students and researchers in their space-related work.

To fulfil this objective, the Institute supports a network of experts in centres of excellence working with ESPI in-house analysts. Today, the Institute is staffed with 12 to 13 persons, some of them are hired by the Institute, some are students, some are interns and some are seconded from national space agencies of Europe for the moment and also from the European Space Agency.

This Institute is also having a board with members, the members are the founding members which are the European Space Agency and the Austrian FFG-ALR and in addition to those two founding members, we have today currently seven ordinary members which are made up of space agencies, space operators and industrial companies in the space business. A tenth member will join this Institute early next year, which is EUMETSAT.

We carry research activities, I cannot be exhaustive here but I will give a few areas of interest which are carried out under yearly workplans and those workplans are _____ (*inaudible*) a three-year perspective. We have worked intensively on the governments of European space policy and European space activities, it is a tricky topic, currently we are working on a topic called, the case for space: how can we find the proper means to "sell" space to decision-makers, in particular, political decision-makers.

We have worked on a rising space-faring nation which is China and looking at the consequences of the important Chinese programme as far as European space policy is concerned. We are working currently on commercialization of space and in particular the role of entrepreneurs in space activities and the risks they are taking and analysing the risk they, indeed, have to take. We are also working on sustainability and the role of space to ensure long-term sustainability on Earth, I will come back to that in a few minutes, and also on the role of space as a particular proving ground to stimulate the innovation process in high technologies.

To finish with this short list, we have started a work that has been touched upon in this Committee, we are working on space situation and awareness, the European approach and in particular, in line of what presumably will be decided at the ESA Ministerial Conference at the end of 2008, the ways and means for Europe to have its own means of assessment of the space environment of Earth.

In addition to these studies we are carrying out, we have a very demanding task which is to set up a network of experts, based for the most of them in Europe, but not only, we are involving also experts from Asia, mainly for the moment, but of course there are no limitations. Our two key words to conduct our studies are, world and space, we are a European Space Policy Institute but we are not a policy institute of European space affairs, of course we do that but we are more holistic than just concentrating on Europe.

The second point, Mr. Chairman, if you will allow me, I will address to indicate also our involvement in organizing or co-organizing conferences, it is also part of our role. The Institute as such has been very much involved last year and the Austrian presidency of the European Union in organizing or co-organizing a conference on GMES in Graz in April of last year. This conference was dealing with the role of regions in Europe to stimulate or to create a market for GMES, the European initiative on Global Monitoring for Environment and Security.

We are involved also this year with three conferences, the first one will be held from 8-9 October of this year, this was already recalled by the Austrian delegate. It is a conference organized by CONGO, the Conference of NGOs, it is a forum on civil society in outer space, where do we stand on using outer space for peaceful purposes and I would like sincerely to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for having accepted to give the keynote address to this conference. I would like also the delegates of this Committee to take note of this important conference which, indeed, is expressly meant to expose NGOs who are already using space, who would desire to use space to know better what is the environment of using the space tool and how this can be used for newcomers in this arena.

A few days later we will be involved with the European Science Foundation, the European Space Agency on a conference on human in outer space will be organized, also in Vienna, 11-12 October. At the end of the year we plan to put together, presumably 11 and 12 December, a conference on sustainability, looking at long-term sustainability and the role of space, looking first at risks and secondly, looking at

some activities which can be translated into an ingredient to improve sustainability like mobility, management of resources, security etc.

Third point of my talk, my talk has four points. The first point I just want to say briefly, that our activities translate into the publication of reports that can be downloaded from our website, which is www.espi.or.at. We also publish articles in German, we plan to publish this year about six reports, we have already a number of reports which are online. We have started a series last week of what we call "flash reports". The Institute, as I indicated at the outset, is an independent institution and we take the liberty to react on hot topics that are related to space activities and our first flash report, that you can consult also on our website, is the Institute's views on the newly released European Space Policy. We intend to release in the coming weeks one flash report on the European ESDP and the space tool and also a report on Galileo some time in July or this summer.

In the publications we are involved in also, I want to indicate that the Institute has started a process of publishing a yearbook on space policy. This will be done in early 2008 and the idea is to have a 250-page report which will be published by a well-known publisher, explaining what are the outcomes of space policies, what has succeeded, what has failed, what are the reasons for failure, taking some major topics of 2006 and half of 2007 and give some explanation and views on that. This will be certainly a flagship of the Institute and it will be a yearly process, there is no such to my knowledge in the way we intend to do it, an equivalent publication today and we hope this will be a reference for students, for researchers in space policy and of course for a number of space-faring nations who are interested to know some details or in some particular view what others are doing.

For the future, I am finishing my intervention, Mr. Chairman, we certainly will conduct activities in the coming years centred around security issues, space exploration policy and sustainability, I think these would be the three key avenues under which the Institute will evolve. I would like also, talking of the future, to indicate that I have been Secretary-General of the Institute since 1 September 2004 and, as known early on, my term will finish 31 August of this year. My successor will be Professor Dr. Kai-Uwe Schrogl, formerly from the DLR, will take over for the next three years. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*): Thank you Mr. Plattard for your statement on behalf of the European Space Policy Institute. We can

see that the number of conferences and meetings to which ESPI has contributed is long. It is a long list and these are very important meetings and we are very glad to see our colleague, Kai-Uwe Schrogl, to be acceding to the new position of Secretary-General of that Institution. He is well-known to most of us, thanks to his excellent work at the helm of the Working Group on the Registration of Space Objects of the Legal Subcommittee, of course, we are going to discuss that later. Thank you again for your statement. I have a request from Ambassador González of Chile.

Mr. GONZÁLEZ-ANINAT (Chile) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I have to say, as to the format of this meeting involving observers for taking an active part in space-related work. This is an excellent occasion for all of us, an excellent opportunity and I wanted to touch upon the contents and the _____ (*inaudible*) of the statement delivered by the representative of the European Space Policy Institute (ESPI). In this context I would like to say that, while accredited as Ambassador here in Vienna, I was really unaware up until today of the activities of this Space Policy Institute. I have listened to the statement with great attention and I have a few comments to make.

This is an institute of an organization but I do not really understand the legal status of this European Space Policy Institute within the framework of the United Nations system. This is my first question. Again, I have to confess I was totally ignorant of this. I have worked for years in the multilateral arena and I believe that space policy is something that is well articulated and developed and I wonder how this fits within the legal framework. That was my first question to the representative of ESPI.

Next, I note that this European Space Policy Institute has carried out a vast array of meetings, conferences and workshops but never has there been a reference to Latin America, he has not mentioned it once. In this context I have to say that, if we look at the various activities accomplished over the years with regard to outer space, one has to say that all observers, representatives of various institutions should be aware of what has been carried out in Latin America by Latin America. These are very important activities carried out in our part of the world in cooperation with the Office for Outer Space Affairs. We have organized a number of conferences, such as, the Space Conference of the Americas and, as far as I understand and know, the Space Conference of the Americas was attended by European experts as well. If I am wrong my colleague the Ambassador of Colombia will correct me.

Developing countries, Latin American countries, had funded the participation of experts, so it transpires that developing countries helped financially support participation of experts from developed countries because we knew and we know we have a lot to learn from them.

To come back to where I was earlier, I have to say that, if I understood correctly, ESPI does not envisage in its programme of activities under the medium-term or in the short-term any cooperative ventures with Latin America.

With regard to cooperation, it starts with consultations, a website, well, a website is a good thing, it provides information but it is not really sufficient cooperation as I see it. This is why I wanted to put another question.

I would like to know if ESPI has any intention of taking into account in its future activities the position of developing countries. If I understood well, ESPI is mostly focused on the developed world.

Let us look at the matter of space exploration, obviously for developing countries it could not be a top priority we have much more concrete problems, El Niño, natural disasters and so forth. The representative of ESPI did mention sustainable development, this is a fundamental issue but to tackle these issues it is important to have cooperation, the representative of ESPI has only mentioned the interests of Europe and the intent to serve the interests of Europe. This is a certain position which definitely defines the activities of ESPI as I understand them but within the framework of globalization and the series of major challenges arising in the world today, other stakeholders should not be neglected.

Within COPUOS for example, GRULAC, the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, plays a very important part and, as you know, the future president of COPUOS will be the Ambassador of Colombia, an eminent individual, and we do have every right to participate in all of these activities.

To reprise what was mentioned yesterday by the representative of IAF, I never actually had a reply to some of the questions I put. I would like to know if Latin American experts have an opportunity to participate in meetings organized by ESPI among others, within the context of a system of exchanges or scholarships or grants. In this regard, I would like to know, what will be the policy of the European Space Policy Institute in the future with regard to facilitating participation by Latin American experts in the events

and meetings that ESPI organizes. Maybe we should uphold the principles of reciprocity to make sure that the various conferences that we organize within the framework IFAD and the Space Conference of the Americas, we have demonstrated our willingness for such cooperation.

We have also invoked the importance of regional cooperation with regard to space activities. This is a very constructive principle so obviously it would be interesting to know how other continents uphold this principle, how they are moving ahead with these very interesting and stimulating activities and how they involve regions such as ours. As far as we are concerned we are truly frustrated at times because we cannot participate in all of these meetings and events.

If I understood correctly, yesterday a document was distributed by the Austrian delegation with regard to a non-governmental organizations meeting to be held in October, if I am not mistaken. They mentioned CONGO as an organizer, I did not know what they were referring to, I thought it was the Democratic Republic of Congo but I was mistaken as it turns out. CONGO is not the Democratic Republic of Congo, it is something else.

Mr. Chairman, to participate in a two-day congress, to take a 24 hour flight to attend this two-day meeting, it is a little too much for us, even though the theme of this meeting seems to be quite interesting.

Mr. Chairman, could we perhaps get answers to these questions, specifically from the delegation that distributed that document. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*): I thank Ambassador González for his contribution. He has put a number of questions, on the one hand for the representative of ESPI, on the other hand a question with regard specifically to this conference planned for October, which was the subject of the document distributed by the Austrian delegation.

First of all I am going to recognize the representative of ESPI and ask you to comment on the possibilities, the opportunities that exist for ESPI to go beyond the confines of Europe in its activities.

Mr. S. PLATTARD (European Space Policy Institute): I will give some elements to the different questions that Ambassador González has asked me to respond. I will do that in English.

First of all, to clarify things about the statute of ESPI, as I mentioned in my exposé, the statute of

ESPI is an Austrian association following the Austrian law, it is not at all connected with any body of the United Nations, it is an association which is funded by a series of members.

Second, Mr. Ambassador, you indicated that we were not involving, at this stage, or we are not interested in looking at the important geographical and economical ensemble, which is Latin America. Let me dwell a little bit on that.

I believe that you have realized that the Institute is a young institute. Essentially we are working at an operational mode for the last two years and we had to concentrate a lot on start-up operations. We build things around a sphere of competencies that we had, that we could encounter in our network but, as I mentioned readily, the global idea is of course to extend the network and to extend the activities and I insist on saying that the two key words for the work we are carrying out at ESPI are, world and space.

You could look more in detail in the programmes for our conference on sustainability or the programme of the CONGO conference, of which we are co-organizer with others, that we are introducing Latin American speakers in October and also in the conference on sustainability in December. We of course, indeed, will include people coming from various parts of the world, including Latin America, and I am totally at the disposal of the Ambassador of Colombia or to the GRULAC members to come and visit us at ESPI and give more detailed explanations.

A second stage, see how more practically we could include more quickly representatives in some of our workshops, conferences, from Latin America and, why not carry out a particular study that could be of interest for problematics that are specifically related to Latin America. This is absolutely the type of work, the type of job, that ESPI can carry out.

You mentioned a remark to our website and you said, Mr. Ambassador, that a website is nice to have but this is not a tool of cooperation, indeed, it is not a tool of cooperation it is a tool of information. So I insist, and I said it in my exposé, that what we display on our website is information which, I would say, we consider needed on a number of topics but by no means can it be a tool of cooperation as a start-up. That is obvious, cooperation is built around projects with some persons, _____ (*inaudible*) network for an infinite goal with a time frame and some funding and of course, this is a bit out of line of a website.

To just finish your remarks, Mr. Ambassador, to complete your questions. You very rightly mentioned the problem of natural catastrophes and the fact that they do occur, quite sadly, very frequently in Latin America. In the workshop on long-term sustainability which include of course the management and the way this is tackled and, I would say, a political approach to catastrophes, this will be an integral part of the conference we are setting up at the end of the year on sustainability and, indeed, we are for the moment contacting some speakers and of course we will have representatives from a number of parts of the world and we intend to have a representative from Latin America.

Concerning your last remark about the conference on CONGO. I just want to say what I know. I know the Austrian delegate gave some information and you have some current papers indicating the content of the conference and the invitation. The only contribution I can say from ESPI is that we have been very closely involved with the organizers of the conference. ESPI is co-chairing the planning committee of the conference with the vice-president of CONGO. We have been very closely involved in setting up the programme of this conference, if you need more details I would be glad to talk to you but of course you can have more by meeting either the Austrian delegate or the representative of CONGO. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*): Thank you very much, Mr. Plattard. I would like to recall that we are not talking about the Republic of Congo, we are talking about a non-governmental organization whose acronym is CONGO. It might be that the Austrian delegation wanted to add something at this stage.

Ms. G. JÜEN (Austria): Thank you very much, Sir. We have mentioned the event in our statement and we do support this event financially. I gather from CONGO that there is an extensive aide memoire and an invitation and, it was my understanding that, this document might be circulated in the course of the session via the Office for Outer Space Affairs. I have one copy here which I happy to give to the Ambassador of Chile. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*): I should like to thank the distinguished delegate of Austria for that statement and in fact that aide memoire has been distributed. The important thing is to remember that CONGO is an acronym as I have said, it is a non-governmental organization called the

Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations (CONGO) in consultative relationship with the United Nations. This is just so that nobody is confused.

Thank you very much then for those comments. Are there any other delegations that wish to take the floor under item 4, general exchange of views?

I see no requests.

Nevertheless, I would like to inform you that some delegations have said that they will speak under item 4 at the beginning of next week so it might be that we will have to re-open item 4 on that occasion.

As things stand, I will now give the floor to the Director of the Office, who would like to speak to this morning's session under item 4. I therefore recognize Dr. Camacho-Lara.

Mr. S. CAMACHO-LARA (Office for Outer Space Affairs): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to address this session of the Committee. First of all, I would like to say that I am very pleased to see you chairing this session and, as usual, assure you of the full support of the Secretariat as regard the work of this session to a successful conclusion.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, on this special occasion of the fiftieth session of the Committee I am pleased to provide a brief overview of the work undertaken by the Office for Outer Space Affairs over the past year.

Let me begin by reviewing the staff resources of the Office. For most of 2006, the Office had the services of 20 regular staff members and two associate experts, Ms. Armanda Deli and Mr. Chang-Yune Lee, whose services were provided by the Governments of Italy and the Republic of Korea, respectively. We are very grateful for their important support in strengthening the Office. Ms. Deli strengthened the Committee's servicing capacity of the Office and was instrumental in supporting the work of the Action Team to follow-up the recommendations of UNISPACE III. Ms. Deli completed her assignment with the Office last November. Mr. Lee was a very valuable resource to the Space Applications Section, in particular in supporting disaster management activities. Mr. Lee is just completing his assignment with the Office. We are indeed very grateful for their valuable work and wish both of them well in their new endeavours.

I am pleased to introduce Mr. Levent Canturk of Turkey and Mr. Kurian J. Maniyanipurathu of India, who joined the Space Applications Section of the Office in the last quarter of 2006.

Mr. Qais Sultan of Oman and Mr. Shuhrat Sulaymanov of Uzbekistan have both taken positions with the United Nations Department of Political Affairs in New York. While they will be missed in the Committee's Services and Research Section, I am pleased to introduce Ms. Romana Kofler of Slovenia and Mr. Jamshid Gaziyeu of Uzbekistan, who have already filled these two vacancies.

We also welcome Werner Balogh of Austria who has also joined the Committee's Services and Research Section. I would like to mention that Werner was an associate expert with the Office during the preparations of UNISPACE III and was one of the drivers of the Space Generation Forum.

Ms. Virginia Ofoedu of Nigeria has left the Office for a well-earned retirement after 25 years of dedicated service to the United Nations. Ms. Ofoedu joined the Office for Outer Space Affairs when it moved to Vienna in 1993. We greatly appreciated her work, particularly as Editorial Assistant of the Office, we wish her a happy and healthy retirement. I am pleased to inform you that Ms. Liliana Hernandez of Costa Rica joined the Office in January and has filled this vacancy.

The newest addition to the team of the Office is Mr. Gerald _____ (*inaudible*), an associate expert, that has just joined the Office this last month to strengthen the establishment of the programme SPIDER. I will refer to SPIDER a little bit later.

Finally, I am pleased to inform you that Ms. Natercia Rodrigues gave birth to a healthy baby girl in October last year and is on maternity leave until October of this year. I would add that from time to time she comes into the Office to help us anyway, including with the baby.

Mr. Chairman and distinguished delegates, the Office has continued to support the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III. This has been a high priority activity of the Office and there were several accomplishments in 2006. For the sake of brevity I will mention only two of them.

As you are all aware in its resolution 61/110 the General Assembly decided to establish the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response,

SPIDER. This is a programme of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs. The Platform programme for 2007-2009 and the plan of work for 2007 were considered and agreed upon during the last session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee.

The Office has already begun to carry out the activities defined in this plan of work while at the same time moving forward with the setting up of the offices in Beijing and Bonn and also a liaison office in Geneva. The Office has prepared and will distribute a background summary report of the new programme to this Committee for its consideration. Additionally, we will also present for consideration of the Committee the proposed workplan for the years 2008 and 2009 which is being finalized on the basis of indications of commitment so far received from member States. A meeting of stakeholders will be held next Monday for this purpose.

In February of this year, on the margins of the forty-fourth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, the Office supported an informal meeting of the International Committee and GNSS (ICG) in preparation for its second meeting to take place in Bangalore, India, from 4-7 September 2007, in order to establish working groups for all the respective clusters and actions in the workplan of the ICG.

I am pleased to inform the Committee that the Office also supported another preparatory meeting with ICG on the fifth of this month, one day before we started, to further address workplan-related issues and preparation for its second meeting to be held in India. The ICG workplan can be found in document A/AC.105/879.

These are now concrete results of the sterling work carried out by the Action Team on Disaster Management and by the expert group that determined the feasibility of establishing the programme as well as by the Action Team on GNSS and by the providers and users of the GNSS systems and their augmentations. Two concrete results that the Committee has been responsible for and which make us, in the Office, feel very proud of the work that we put in to help support the work of the action groups.

With reference to SPIDER, I have noticed in the statements that have been made during the general exchange of views that, on one hand, there is strong support from many countries for the work that SPIDER will carry out and, at the same time, there are large expectations for the work that SPIDER will carry out. I am just making a reference to the statement that was made by our colleague and friend from ESCAP. What I

noticed also is that, from the United Nations system, we have networks, like the network that ESCAP has established, that have great potential for coordination of activities that SPIDER will be carrying out. One of the main ideas behind the concept of SPIDER was that the main role was going to be one of coordination, which is one of the thoughts that I want to leave with everyone, that there is much, much work that is going on and to actually be able to coordinate is going to be a very large task and we will need to be working together to make sure that, on the one hand we do not duplicate and on the other, we build up on the synergies of work that has been done and any entities that are functioning already in the entire world.

Mr. Chairman, the Space Applications Section of the Office, assisted by the Committee's Services Research Section as needed, was again very busy this year. Among other things the Space Applications Section successfully organized 11 workshops under the United Nations Programme on Space Applications. The Expert on Space Applications will provide you with more detailed information on these and other activities of the programme including the activities planned for 2008 in her statement. I would only wish to add that I feel very proud of my colleagues who have been able to carry out all this work while carrying out many other things that have to be done in the office. This is really a very large amount of work.

In supporting the work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies in 2006, the staff of the Committee's Services and Research Section continued to be fully occupied in the past year. The Office prepared a large number of documents and publications for the Committee, for the Subcommittees and for the working groups, as well as for the Interagency meeting on outer space activities. The Office also responded to numerous requests for information from other United Nations bodies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, contributed to activities that promote the work of the Committee, maintain the Office website and coordinated several outer space exhibitions at the Vienna International Centre and several other things that I would not want to list. I am also very proud of the work that they have done particularly because, if you remember at the beginning of my statement when I mentioned the changes in staff, you will note that the staff that we have in Committee Services and Research Section is more than half less than one year with the Office but they have done fantastic work.

In the past year, in respect to capacity building in space law, the Office continued to promote the understanding, acceptance and implementation of the

United Nations treaties and principles on outer space, to support the exchange of information on national space law and policy and to encourage the increase of education opportunities in space law.

The Office organized the fifth United Nations workshop in building capacity in space law, entitled, Status, Application and Progressive Development of International, National Space Law. The workshop was held in Kyiv, Ukraine, in November 2006 and was organized with the Government of Ukraine and in collaboration with the International Centre for Space Law. Approximately 80 participants from 21 countries attended the workshop. Over 30 papers and presentations were delivered by speakers from the countries of the regions as well as from Brazil, Canada, France, the Netherlands, Nigeria and the United States. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Government of Ukraine and to the International Centre for Space Law for their support in providing experts to participate in the workshop, defraying living expenses of participants from developing countries as well as providing excellent meeting facilities.

Mr. Chairman, in 2006 the Office also provided Secretariat services to the meetings of the Group of 15, comprised of five officers of the past bureaux, the five officers of the current bureaux and the five officers of the next bureaux of the Committee. The Office is very pleased to support this Group that spans six years of expertise, an institutional memory in the leadership of the intergovernmental bodies. At this juncture, I would suggest that, for bookkeeping purposes, the Committee might consider including the names of our future five officers of the bureaux for the period 2008-2009 in its report on this session. As delegates recall the Committee has agreed on the nominations of Ciro Arévalo from Colombia, Suvit Vibulsresth from Thailand, Filipe Duarte Santos of Portugal, for the offices of Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Second Vice-Chairman/Rapporteur of the Committee, respectively. Aboubekr Seddik Kedjar from Algeria for the office of Chairman of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and Vladimir Kopal for the office of Chairman of the Legal Subcommittee for the period 2008-2009.

Distinguished delegates, the Office continues to enhance coordination of space-related activities within the United Nations. We take a lead in organizing the work of the Interagency Meeting on Outer Space Activities which meets annually to exchange information and coordinate space-related activities of the United Nations entities. The twenty-seventh session of the Interagency meeting was hosted by the Office in Vienna, from 17-19 January this year.

Representatives of 13 United Nations entities participated in the meeting.

The meeting was briefed on the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subsidiary bodies bringing, in particular to their attention, the views of the intergovernmental bodies relating to interagency coordination. Regarding the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III, the meeting noted many synergies between ongoing space-related activities of the United Nations entities with activities of the Committee and with the activities of the new United Nations programme SPIDER and with the activities of the International Committee on GNSS.

The report of the work of the Interagency meeting and the Secretary-General's report on the coordination of space-related activities within the United Nations system have been distributed to delegations. These reports indicate the extent to which space technology and its applications have become essential tools in support of a wide range of United Nations activities aimed at achieving the goals of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. I invite delegations to look at the brochure entitled, "Space solutions for the world's problems: how the United Nations family uses space technology for achieving development goals". The brochure is available in printed form in English, French, Spanish and Arabic. It is also available, in an electronic format, on a page of the website of the Office that is dedicated to the coordination of Office space activities within the United Nations system.

On the last day of the meeting of the Interagency, the meeting held a half-day open informal session for members of this Committee. Representatives of 13 United Nations entities and from 29 member States exchanged views on the use of space-derived geospatial data for sustainable development in the United Nations system. I am pleased to report that this topic was chosen by the Interagency meeting in view of the new agenda item on space-derived geospatial data for sustainable development that has been included on the agenda of this Committee for this year.

As such sessions have proven to be an important component in the cooperation between this Committee and members of the Interagency meeting, I would like to take this opportunity to invite delegations to propose themes to the Secretariat that would be of interest for them to discuss with United Nations entities during a similar half-day open informal session, next year. The proposals would then be discussed with the

focal points of the Interagency meeting in order to identify the theme that would then be of interest for members of the Committee and entities of the United Nations system. The twenty-eighth session of the Interagency meeting will be hosted by UNITAR/UNOSAT in Geneva, from 16-18 January 2008.

Mr. Chairman, the Office has maintained its cooperation activities with space-related IGOs and NGOs. Again, for the sake of brevity, I will mention only a few activities in which the Office participated.

The Office has been a cooperating body to the International Charter Space and Major Disasters since 1 July 2003. This is a mechanism through which any entity of the United Nations system responding to a major emergency can request and receive free satellite data and value-added products. The Office maintains a 24/7 hotline service which is used by United Nations agencies to fax in requests for Charter imagery. In 2006, a total of 11 requests for imagery were received from the World Food Programme, the Office of the Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme, totalling 33 times that the Charter has been used by the United Nations system. I would like to recognize UNOSAT for producing many of the required value-added products.

I would also like to express the appreciation of the Office to the International Astronautical Federation (IAF) as well as to the International Institute of Space Law (IISL) for their assistance in preparing the annual publication, entitled, "Highlights in Space". The Office is also very grateful for the support of the Committee on Space Research (COSPAR) for its contribution to this publication on alternate years.

We are grateful for the excellent cooperation that we received from IAF and the host countries in organizing a series of UN/IAF workshops in conjunction with the International Astronautical Congress (IAC). On a yearly basis this cooperation makes it possible for participants from nearly 30 developing countries to participate in the IAC. In 2006 the UN/IAF workshop was held in Valencia, Spain and the next one will be held this September in Hyderabad, India.

With respect to the International Space Information Service, the website of the Office is the main vehicle of this Service. While providing member States with reference tools such as the Online Index of Objects launched into Outer Space, the National Space

Law database and the Treaty Status database, the website also provides text of the treaties and the relevant General Assembly resolutions and documents in all official languages of the United Nations as well as technical presentations of the activities organized under the United Nations Programme on Space Applications. I would like to take this opportunity to invite member States to provide texts of their national space laws for inclusion on the website.

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to note that the Office has set up a special web page to assist member States in accessing the series of limited distribution type of document that will be before delegations at this session. The address of the web page has been distributed in the document boxes for delegations.

As mentioned by you, Mr. Chairman, in 2006 the United Nations Office for Internal Oversight (OIOS) conducted an inspection of the programme management and administrative practices of the Office. I would like to inform the Committee that the Office has begun to implement a set of recommendations made by OIOS to further improve the performance of the Office. The OIOS report has been distributed in Conference Room Paper 3.

With respect to outreach activities, as in previous years, the Office has continued its efforts to increase the awareness of the general public of space benefits and to inspire young people.

The United Nations permanent space exhibit attracts visitors of all ages but particularly young people and remains one of the highlights of tours offered by the United Nations Information Service (UNIS). In 2006, over 47,000 visitors participated in the guided tours offered by UNIS. The Office would like to express its deep appreciation to member States and space agencies that have made contributions to the United Nations permanent space exhibit.

In addition to the permanent exhibit, in June 2006 the Vienna International Centre was host to an exhibition by the Government of Germany on 3-D imagery of the planet Mars. I would like to express our appreciation to the Government of Germany for its efforts in making this exhibit a resounding success. I would add that Germany is displaying this exhibit, as we speak, at Headquarters in New York.

To celebrate World Space Week 2006 last year which had the theme, Space for saving lives, the Office and UNIS invited school students aged 6-10 to visit the VIC. The children were briefed by experts from the Office and from the Austrian Aeronautics and

Space Agency on how satellite technology can help solve problems on Earth and participated in a model United Nations Conference on Outer Space (i.e. a model UNISPACE conference). We would like to express our thanks to the Austrian Aeronautics and Space Agency for its assistance as well as to UNIS for their assistance.

As part of its outreach activities in promoting the International Heliophysical Year 2007, the Office has distributed over 8,000 brochures on IHY in all languages of the United Nations and to all countries, there are 192 countries of the United Nations. Additionally, we have distributed over 2,000 free DVDs commemorating 15 years of operation of the Hubble Telescope. The Office would like to express its appreciation to the European Space Agency and the European Southern Observatory for donating the DVDs.

More significantly, this year, the celebration of the fiftieth session of the Committee and with the general support of member States and organizations the Office has organized a number of special events during the session. I would like to express our gratitude to all States and organizations who are participating in these events to make the session a memorable one. A programme of special events has been made available to delegations. I would add that, in addition to the programme of events, the Office is also organizing tomorrow a special tour for children of staff members of the Vienna space organizations. Tomorrow, it will be easier for them, we will give them private tours and show them the exhibit, explain what it is and then after that it will be followed by the documentary that we have on the Space Station, the IMAX documentary, so that will be shown to children of staff of the organizations here at the VIC.

Finally, the Office would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff of the United Nations Security and Safety Service, the UNIDO Buildings Management Service and the United Nations Information Service for their valuable assistance and advice in organizing all these special events.

The Office has also worked with the United Nations Postal Administration on the design of two stamps under the theme, "Space for humanity, 50th Anniversary of the Space Age" to commemorate the anniversaries of this year. The first issue stamps will be launched simultaneously in New York, Geneva and Vienna on 25 October 2007. In the case of Vienna the launch of the first issue stamps will coincide with the events that the Office will organize to celebrate World Space Week. In the case of New York the launching

will coincide with the dates when the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly considers the item, international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates. This year is truly a special year in marking the fiftieth anniversary of the space age, the fortieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Outer Space Treaty, the fiftieth anniversary IGY and the fiftieth session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

Mindful of the significance of this year and increasing the awareness of the relevance and importance of space exploration and applications, the Office will work with the Committee to reach higher levels in the exploration of space and the use of space science and technology for the betterment of the human condition and in particular to strengthen the capacity of developing countries to partake in these benefits.

Thank you very much, distinguished delegates, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*): Thank you, Mr. Camacho, distinguished Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, for your very comprehensive statement which informs the delegations of the various activities conducted by the Committee. I have to say that I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to say, yet again, how much this Committee appreciates the great work you have carried out in the position of Director of the Office and in support of the various activities of the Committee and its two Subcommittees. Many of the colleagues present here would happily associate themselves with this tribute.

I have noted two requests for the floor that came up during your statement, one from Ambassador González of Chile and the other from the Ambassador of Colombia. Mr. González.

Mr. R. GONZÁLEZ-ANINAT (Chile) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We would like to take this opportunity that has presented itself to us in the follow-up to Mr. Camacho's statement to first of all warmly and from the bottom of our hearts thank him for this comprehensive report that he has just submitted to us.

This statement delivered by Mr. Camacho shows how he has skilfully managed the work of the Office for Outer Space Affairs over the years. It demonstrates how he has steered the work of the Office, taking up challenges and never losing sight of

the challenges that we, in the development countries, face every day. Over the years we have benefited enormously from his support and his work, we thank him most sincerely and we hope that the person who will replace Dr. Camacho will continue in the same vein and will build on the activities accomplished by his predecessor. I have to say that it is truly our hope that future work will be as much oriented toward the issues and the needs of the developing countries as work in the past.

I would also like to congratulate Madam Herman? who helped me very much when I acceded to the position of Chairman of the Legal Subcommittee. Thanks to the help, the assistance I have received, I have been able to perform my functions smoothly and I really appreciate the availability and the help and support extended to all delegations. I also would like to thank Madam Alice Lee, an expert on space applications, we need to mention her contribution as well. Also I see Imelda seated in the first row, she is an excellent co-worker and in the second row I also see individuals whose names are not known to me but they have been very helpful as well. Since I became Chairman of the Legal Subcommittee I have been able to fulfil my functions because of and thanks to the cooperation of the entire staff of Mr. Camacho. Thank you to everybody and another great, great, thank you to Sergio, he will not be here but we will not miss him because we will continue working together in the future.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*): Thank you very much, Ambassador González for your statement. I am sure that the staff here, the whole team, greatly appreciates your words.

The Ambassador of Colombia has the floor.

Mr. C. ARÉVALO-YEPES (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to associate myself with the eloquent words of the Presidency and of Ambassador González in appreciation of the work accomplished by the Office for Outer Space Affairs. It has been managed brilliantly and particularly human resources management has been excellent, very impressed. We would like to recognize the highest quality of the work accomplished by Sergio in that regard. He has put together a team that is full of commitment and devotion. Alice, Imelda and others, all the members of Sergio Camacho's team have been working brilliantly and they have been extremely cooperative, every step of the way.

It is this small group that bears on their shoulders the huge burden of carrying out an enormous mandate. It is a little bit asymmetrical in that regard but we count on this team as a family, working together and Dr. Camacho has managed it wonderfully.

I am going to be very brief, Mr. Chairman. I have taken note of the contents of the report delivered by Sergio Camacho and I would like to highlight a couple of important issues.

First the SPIDER platform. I can see that the Office is putting together an operational approach, there is a lot to be done there with regard to the SPIDER platform. It needs to be set up without duplication on the one hand but, on the other hand, with the participation of the various regional organizations of countries directly affected by the major disasters that it is meant to address. It should have operational tentacles reaching to the various regions.

It is very important that GNSS, and that is my other comment, also be approached in a way that should ensure broad cooperation by countries. The Global Navigation Satellite System should be accessible and open to countries in a way to make sure that they can benefit from the accomplishments of this group.

Now I am coming to space applications. We are interested in the further development of space law, Alice has carried out excellent work in that context and in the future, since we are going to think in the course of this anniversary session about the future, this is part of what we are here to do, maybe we should think about a special mandate for a department on technical cooperation. This is for the future, maybe not the immediate future, this is something that might help us make more concrete, more specific, the participation of all stakeholders in space activities.

My fourth comment. The Office is a mechanism of consultation which those of us from developing countries consider to be a fundamental factor of paramount importance. We have developed our own legislation, set up a space centre in Colombia and we have been knocking on the door of the Office in terms of getting this consultation and this assistance and we are really counting on that.

Next item. The Group of 15. Sergio is right in pointing out the important experience accumulated there and now we need to look at the possibility of further consultations that would make it possible for us to get better knowledge, more profound knowledge, of

the various factors that operate within the United Nations system with regard to our work. To preserve institutional memory, this is very important, it should be a matter of reference and last recourse on all issues pertaining to space activities.

As regards the list of various individuals proposed. It would be a good thing to publish this list in the future.

Now the distribution of results. This is heavily human resource oriented activity but it is important to do that, to publicize the results of our work, to make the public more aware of what we are doing and what we have accomplished. In the future, maybe we should think about spreading this information in a more specific, more detailed way. Dr. Camacho has outlined an intergovernmental structure for intergovernmental meetings which, in our view, would be key to spreading information among the international community, sharing information with other United Nations agencies and institutions. These meetings, inter-institutional meetings, should also be inscribed within the framework of COPUOS regular activities.

I would like to congratulate the Office for Outer Space Affairs for having organized the various events to celebrate different space-related anniversaries that we are marking this year and once again a great thank you to our friend, Sergio Camacho.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*): I thank the Ambassador of Colombia on the one hand for the tribute paid to the Director of the Office but also for the substantive and very positive comments that he has shared with us with regard to specific elements contained in the Director's report.

I am now going to call upon our distinguished colleague, representing Nigeria.

Mr. D. EBIRERI (Nigeria): We join other speakers in paying tribute to the Office for the report just presented. We seek certain clarifications about the composition of children invited to celebrations that the Secretary mentioned. We want to know whether there were challenges, on the Office part, in inviting these children and this is against the background of this Committee's commitment to capacity building in developing countries. If the whole purpose is to create awareness from an early age, we want to know where these children came from and how they were selected. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*): Thank you, distinguished representative of Nigeria. Maybe the Director would like to respond.

Mr. S. CAMACHO (Office for Outer Space Affairs): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the sake of brevity I have mentioned only one activity, which was held here in Vienna at the same time as World Space Week. The children that came were from the countries around Austria and from around, we did this with no resources, they came by bus from their schools.

Something else that we have been doing is, we work in the same line with UNESCO and we have been doing a series of space camps. We did one last year in Nigeria, so we had three different cities in Nigeria where, together with UNESCO, with UNESCO putting in the expertise on the educational part that relates to children _____ (*inaudible*) where we do not have that much expertise but we have joint activities and also last year we did one in Colombia. UNESCO with JAXA, but it is the same line, have just finished doing one in _____ (*inaudible*). Last year, also in 2006, we had something similar but in Viet Nam. So the intention is to work with partners and cover all parts of the world. For sake of brevity I did not put this material in the report, I made reference only to the one around here. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*): Thank you Dr. Camacho for this clarification. I now recognize our distinguished colleague from Brazil.

Ms. C. RIBEIRO MOURA (Brazil): Brazil would like also to join previous delegations in commending Mr. Camacho for his comprehensive statement and we concur with many of the themes highlighted by the delegations of Chile and Colombia.

In relation to the programme SPIDER we specially note, as the Colombia ambassador said, that the Office should take care not to duplicate efforts with other organizations which are also involved in this.

All the other issues raised by Ambassador Arévalo are very important also to us. The larger participation of States in the ICG, the development of space law also in relation to the so-called G15, we absolutely agree that the coordination with other delegations could be improved in order to have more transparency and to better spread the decisions.

The activities also of public awareness that we just mentioned, beginning with the children are also very important.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, in relation to the new agenda item which was mentioned by Mr. Camacho entitled, International cooperation in promoting the use of space-derived geospatial data for sustainable development, which was also a Brazilian initiative, I would like to reiterate here that Mr. Gilberto Camara, who is the Director of the Brazilian Institute for Space Research (INPE), will be here next week to make a presentation on this agenda item. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*): Thank you for this.

Do we have any other requests for the floor? Or questions, following-up on the Director's report? I see none.

Once again I would like to thank the Director for his very complete, very comprehensive report. I suggest that we thus conclude our consideration of agenda item 4 but it will be re-opened next week in case we receive any other requests for comments. At this point we have concluded it.

We are moving on to agenda item 5, ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes.

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

In paragraph 36 of its resolution 61/111 of 14 December 2006, the General Assembly requested the Committee to continue to consider, as a matter of priority, ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes and to report thereon to the Assembly at its sixty-second session and agreed that during its consideration of the matter, the Committee could continue to consider ways to promote regional and interregional cooperation based on experience stemming from the Space Conference of the Americas and the African leadership Conference on Space Science and Technology for Sustainable Development, as well as the role that space technology could play in implementing the recommendations of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

On this agenda item the first speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of the United States.

Mr. K. HODGKINS (United States of America): Thank you, 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. 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. The United States has a long and successful history of civil space cooperation with other partners. Over the past five decades, the United States has concluded almost 5,000 agreements with over 100 nations and international organizations and the level of new cooperation is rising each year.

During the past year alone, NASA signed 67 new international agreements with other government and non-governmental entities in North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia. The number of nations investing in space activities has also steadily grown and we now have a significant private sector presence in space.

Since our last meeting the United States has entered into several bilateral ventures that will produce significant benefits in the use of outer space for peaceful purposes. The United States/India joint working group on space held its second meeting in Washington, D.C., 27-28 February. The 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.

In December 2006, the United States and Russia continued government-level consultations on establishing radio frequency compatibility and interoperability between GPS and GLONASS. Similar talks were held last month with Japan, on GPS/QZSS interoperability.

The second meeting of the United States/European Commission Civil Space Policy dialogue was held in April of this year in Washington, D.C. On 23 January, the United States and France signed a framework agreement for civil space cooperation.

From a broader perspective, the United States is reaching out to other nations to consider international cooperation in conjunction with the vision for United States 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.

The United States works through GEO with the other 69 member countries, the European Commission and 46 participating organizations to establish a Global Earth Observation System of Systems or GEOSS. The GEO vision for GEOSS 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 United States supports the work of the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS) whose membership includes on the United States side, NASA, NOAA and the US Geological Survey. CEOS has been recognized as the principal space segment coordination mechanism for GEO and is coordinating space agency support to GEOSS. The US Geological Survey currently serves as the CEOS Chair and NOAA will assume chairmanship of the CEOS Strategic Implementation Team at the end of this year.

In light of these developments and the accomplishments of COPUOS, my delegation remains unconvinced of the need for action to be taken by this Committee regarding matters relating to the militarization of outer space. There is no scarcity of appropriate multilateral mechanisms where disarmament matters can be discussed. COPUOS is not and should not become one of them. COPUOS was not created to deal with disarmament. Almost five 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, which we still believe is valid today, was to establish COPUOS as the body of the General Assembly concerned exclusively with promoting international cooperation. It was clear that there would be entirely independent efforts to deal with disarmament issues. These would include foras such as 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 the exchange of information among developed and developing countries on the latest developments in the use and exploration of space. In our view there are tangible opportunities to enhance international cooperation in keeping with the

Committee's mandate. Our consideration of the ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes has produced measurable results in the revitalization of the Committee. Under this item, member States concluded that reinforcing international cooperation in space implies the need for the Committee to improve the form of its work. This has been reflected in the restructured agendas of the Scientific and Technical and Legal Subcommittees, the unique organizational aspects of UNISPACE III, the addition of new items to the agenda of COPUOS concerning spin-off benefits of space and space and society and the consideration of developments in the international satellite-aided search and rescue programme known as COSPAR 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 intergovernmental organizations as well as NGOs 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 in 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 61/111 adopted by the General Assembly last year notes that the Government of Ecuador hosted the fifth Space Conference of the Americas in July 2006 and that the Government of Guatemala will host the sixth Conference in 2009. We were pleased to have participated in the Quito conference, the results of that meeting were highly encouraging and the United States looks forward to the next conference. In this regard we could use this item to explore ways to promote regional and interregional cooperation based on the experience of the Space Conference 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.

As a follow-up to WSSD, the United States is working through CEOS, one of the recognized WSSD partners, 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.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*): I should like to thank you for your statement, Sir, on behalf of the United States. Thank you also for your suggestions by way of pursuing our work in that area in order to make sure that space continues to be used for peaceful purposes.

I now recognize the distinguished representative of India.

Mr. V. SUNDARARAMAIAH (India): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The application programmes utilizing space assets have demonstrated their viability over the last few decades in terms of providing benefits to the society. People have realized that effective utilization of space application programmes is very important in the overall prosperity and development of the nation. With the increasing independence and use of space-based systems for sustainable development it should be everyone's responsibility to maintain outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes.

Space programmes in India are application driven and primarily oriented towards national development. Like the majority of developing countries these application programmes involve the use of remote sensing, communication and meteorological satellites. As the space application activities of many developing countries are centred on the space asset deposits, the safety and security of these assets are essential so as to continue to derive the benefits from the exploration of outer space.

Mr. Chairman, the Indian delegation would like to point out that COPUOS should endeavour to promote greater transparency of the space activities

being taken up by various countries and should do everything possible to keep space peaceful, international and serving the interests of all human beings both now and in the years to come. There is no doubt that we will have to maintain the peaceful and responsible international character of the space field.

Let me conclude by saying that the best way to maintain outer space for peaceful purposes is to further strengthen the international cooperation with explicit respect to the safety and security of these assets. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*): I should like to thank you very much, Sir, for your statement on behalf of the Indian delegation.

I should just like to ask whether any other delegations wish to take the floor under this agenda item?

I see no requests at this stage.

We will resume our consideration of item 5 this afternoon and perhaps we have come to the point where we can open item 6 on the implementation and recommendations of UNISPACE III, the United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

Implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III) (agenda item 6)

In resolution 59/2, dated 20 October 2004, the General Assembly agreed that the Committee should continue to consider at its future sessions, starting with its forty-eighth session, the implementation of the recommendations of the third United Nations Conference, UNISPACE III, until the Committee considered that concrete results had been achieved.

Furthermore, in paragraph 37 of its resolution 61/111 adopted last year, the General Assembly noted with satisfaction that the Committee had established a closer link between its work to implement the recommendations of UNISPACE III and the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development by contributing to the thematic areas addressed by the Commission. I would like to point out that this is entirely in line with one of the suggestions mentioned by the United States just a few minutes ago.

At its forty-ninth session the Committee agreed that the Working Group of the Whole of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee should, during the forty-fourth session of the Subcommittee, conduct the first review of the draft concise document relating to the issues to be addressed by the Commission on Sustainable Development in the period 2008-2009.

The Working Group of the Whole noted that the Secretariat would prepare a revised version of the draft concise text and include any contributions that member States of the Committee and the United Nations system and other organizations having permanent observer status with the Committee might make, by 30 March 2007, for consideration by the Committee at its fiftieth session.

Distinguished delegates, you have received the revised text, only in English, as Conference Room Paper 4 for the Committee's contribution to the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development for the thematic cluster 2008-2009. This draft text is a revised version of the draft document that was presented at the forty-fourth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee held last February and it takes into account comments received during that session of the Subcommittee. Furthermore, this document CRP.4 has been prepared on the basis of input received from member States up to 30 March 2007 and other sources, in particular, the report of the Expert on Space Applications A/AC.105/874 and, the Secretary-General's report on the coordination of safety activities within the United Nations system, A/AC.105/886. The Committee is invited to review and finalize the document for its submission to the Commission on Sustainable Development.

I should now like to give the floor to those delegations that wish to make a statement under this agenda item. The first speaker on my list under item 6 is the representative of Japan, Ms. Kaori Taniguchi, you have the floor, Madam.

Ms. K. TANIGUCHI (Japan): Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, on behalf of the Japanese delegation I am honoured to present Japan's activities relating to the implementation of the UNISPACE III recommendations.

Mr. Chairman, Japan has actively participated in and contributed to a number of action teams established to carry out the implementation of the Vienna Declaration, UNISPACE III recommendations adopted in 1999. Primarily, Japan's _____ (*inaudible*) of Action Team 17 to enhance capacity building by developing human and _____ (*inaudible*) resources

through the discussion related to space education and awareness. During the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF), Japan supported activities to highlight the importance of space science and technology and their applications for sustainable development with a view to securing more support from the general public especially deepening the understandings of the younger generations for space education.

In recent years, space education activities have become one of the main activities of APRSAF. For example, the water rocket event was held last December in Jakarta with various numbers of participants including many school students in the region. In addition, the first APRSAF poster contest and the APRSAF/UNESCO/LAPAN space education seminar was held during the meeting. The working group of APRSAF also discussed ways and means on how we can contribute to improve education for young people through each country's space activities and how we can offer more opportunities to the educational level such as using space materials in the classrooms and make it enjoyable. Japan will continue to carry out actively steps to stimulate interest among young people in space and inspire them to develop visions for the future through space activities.

As for the field of education of Earth observation, JAXA earnestly addresses space and education and the cultivation of human resources that contribute to the training and promoting of remote sensing applications through pilot projects carried out with the organizations in Thailand and Indonesia.

Mr. Chairman, at this moment, I would like to turn to other recent activities to implement the recommendations of the action teams in which Japan participated. To begin, on the development of a comprehensive worldwide environmental monitoring strategy, Item 1, Japan has contributed towards fulfilling the 10-year implementation plan as a member of the GEO executive committee. In order to promote remote sensing activities in the Asia-Pacific region, APRSAF has been active in exchanging information and has made specific proposals to promote cooperation activities in the field of space technology.

Regarding improvement of universal access to and compatibility of space-based navigation and positioning systems called, Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS), item 10, the _____ (*inaudible*) regarding the advancement of utilizing geospatial information which provides the policy of GNSS and navigation satellite was passed in the current session of the Diet and announced to the public. In the Act there

is an article stipulating that necessary communication and coordination with the operators of worldwide navigation satellite systems should be made and, from this viewpoint, Japan is participating in the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems (ICG) as a member country, for discussing the utilization of GNSS and the compression in the compatibility and interoperability among GNSS. Specifically, Japan is developing the Quasi-Zenith Satellite System (QZSS) and the Multifunctional Transport Satellite-based Augmentation System (MTSAT) which is the augment system of GPS.

QZSS consists of several satellites with highly inclined orbits and geosynchronous periods. At any given time at least one of the QZSS satellites is located over Japan. Unlike geostationary satellites QZSS can transmit signals free from obstructions in urban or mountainous areas because the satellite remains aloft at all times. In addition, the system, used together with GPS, promises to _____ (*inaudible*) the area where GPS can be used, improve convenient standards for GPS users and generally provide much more accurate positioning information than before.

Research on the positioning experiment system is expected to increase benefits to GPS users and promote more sophisticated uses of the advanced future satellite positioning system. Upon the completion of a back-up system consisting of two empty sub-satellites, it will provide a GPS performance augmentation, namely, MTSAT Satellite-based Augmentation System, MSAS, covering civil aviation.

Satellite-based Augmentation Systems (SPAS) such as the Wide Area Augmentation System (WAAS) operated by the United States, the European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service (EGNOS) operated by Europe and MSAS are interoperable and can be accessed by an aircraft equipped with the same gear. By developing a greater _____ (*inaudible*) of interoperability and improving the system's performance we will provide global stimulus and high quality services.

Regarding implementation of an integrated global system to manage natural disaster mitigation, relief and prevention efforts, item 7, Japan, together with countries in the Asia-Pacific region related organizations, is now working closely in Sentinel Asia project. Through these activities Japan will make the necessary contributions to the United Nations SPIDER project.

Regarding management of the Earth's natural resources, enhanced weather and climate forecasting

and near Earth objects, Japan will continue to support the implementation of the Vienna Declaration, to extend _____ (*inaudible*) by our limited resources. Japan is of the view that the recommendations of UNISPACE III can be firmly implemented in collaboration with COPUOS member countries, the United Nations and other international organizations. In particular we believe, with countries of the Asia-Pacific region, Japan can play a critical role by financing activities through APRSAF and strengthening relations between APRSAF and international framework, such as UN? and UN? Thank you very much for your attention.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*): I should like to thank the representative of Japan for her statement and we are delighted to note that Japan is continuing to make a very active contribution and a very constructive contribution to various activities following the UNISPACE III Conference which took place in 1999.

I now recognize the distinguished representative of Brazil.

Mr. L. IANSEN DE SANTANA (Brazil): Thank you Mr. Chairman. Brazil attaches high importance to the United Nations Conference on Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. In this context, my delegation notes with satisfaction that progress achieved in the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III held in 1999, in line with the Millennium Development Goals.

Brazil is pleased to note the increased interaction between COPUOS and the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development where COPUOS _____ (*inaudible*) areas to be debated by the CSD.

At its forty-ninth session COPUOS recommended that member States submit inputs for the elaboration of a report on outer space applications for sustainable development especially in the areas of agriculture, rural development, soil management and desertification. In this context, Brazil has contributed with a report it prepared by the Brazilian Institute for Agricultural Research (Embrapa) on the use of space applications for the development of agriculture in semi-arid regions of the Pernambuco State which was considered by the forty-fourth session of COPUOS.

Finally, my delegation will like to highlight the importance of the regional centres for space science and technology, education, to foster capacity building in the field of space applications. In this regard, we are

attach special relevance to the activities of the CRECTEALC. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*): I should like to thank you very much for your statement, Sir, on behalf of the Brazilian delegation.

Do I see any other requests for the floor under this agenda item 6? I see no requests for the floor.

We will continue our consideration of item 6 this afternoon and we will continue with the exchange of general comments on the revised draft text for the Committee's contribution to the work on the Commission on Sustainable Development for thematic clusters 2008-2009. It is also my intention to review this document, paragraph by paragraph, with a view to finalizing the Committee's contribution to the work on the Commission on Sustainable Development for the thematic cluster as I mentioned and I hope that we can do that this afternoon.

Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on its forty-fourth session (agenda item 7)

Distinguished delegates, we will now start our examination of item 7, the report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on its forty-fourth session.

Since we have moved on quite a long way this morning we will simply hear from the statement made by Ms. Othman representing Malaysia and who is the Chair of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. We will listen to her presentation on the work done by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its forty-fourth session held last February. I therefore without further ado recognize Ms. Othman.

Ms. M. OTHMAN (Malaysia): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, my delegation is pleased to note the progress made by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its forty-fourth session and, Mr. Chairman, since the details you have already outlined in your statement I will not elaborate them any further.

Suffice to say we are in particular pleased with the Subcommittee's success in the adoption of the space debris guidelines and the new multi-year workplan for the agenda item of nuclear power sources in space. We believe these issues are extremely important and the continued engagement of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee is necessary. We note with the greatest satisfaction the involvement of IAEA in the latter issues.

My delegation would like to commend the efforts of OOSA for the establishment of SPIDER and the launching of the International Heliophysical Year worldwide campaign.

My delegation would like to reiterate our commitment to the International Heliophysical Year, as we have indicated at the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee meeting, the Langkawi National Observatory has now a fully operational solar telescope. We have also embarked on a space weather programme which will include research and education elements. The International School for Young Astronomers, held in March 2007, which was jointly sponsored by the International Astronomical Union gives special emphasis on solar physics and solar terrestrial relationships. The national planetarium will conduct an IHY education week from 17-25 August 2007. A joint research project with the Indonesian Watukosek Solar Observatory on solar differential rotation has been initiated. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*): Thank you very much Madam for your statement. I will now give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Czech Republic.

Mr. P. LÁLA (Czech Republic): Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, since this is the first time our delegation is taking the floor at this session we would like to express how happy we are to see you again in the Chairman's chair. Our words of appreciation also go to your Vice-Chairmen, Elöd Both of Hungary and Paul Tiendrébéogo of Burkina Faso. We are fully confident that under your able leadership and with the Secretariat help, the Committee will make further progress in many items of its agenda.

For a long time COPUOS had substantially benefited from devoted supervisory skills of the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, Sergio Camacho. As a former staff member of the Office, I had the pleasure to witness his dedication to the noble case of promoting international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space for more than 20 years. We will miss you, Sergio, but at the same time we wish you a good luck in all future endeavours which absolutely will come and I can assure you there is a life after OOSA.

Mr. Chairman, let me briefly inform you on recent developments in exploration and peaceful uses of outer space in the Czech Republic. Since November 2004, the main engine of our space cooperation is the ESA plan for European Cooperating State. Its Charter

specifies activities through which the Czech Republic can participate in both ESA research projects and ESA industrial projects. All projects are funded by contributions from the Czech Republic to the PECS programme of at least €1 million per year. To start the programme, 11 proposals have been selected by the Czech side and approved by the ESA Programme Board. An additional 13 proposals were submitted in 2006 and 2007 and, if all approved, the total budget would exceed €6 million.

A further development of the ESA/Czech Republic relations in 2006 was the accreditation of the Czech Republic as an observer in two ESA programme bodies, the International Relations Committee and the Earth Observation Programme Board. That important step, in line with the generous strategy of the Czech Republic, provides access to the decision making process of ESA and should lead to a full membership in the Agency in the very near future. The negotiation process has already started.

The twenty-sixth General Assembly of the International Astronomical Union took place from 14-25 August 2006 in Prague. This important gathering of almost 2,500 astronomers was held in Prague for the second time. The first time it was in 1967 and its success led to the venue being selected for the meeting of 2006 again. Based on this positive experience the Czech Republic is bidding for the International Astronautical Congress to be held in Prague in 2010.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates. Coming back to the forty-fourth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, our delegation is more than satisfied with its results. At this productive session the Subcommittee agreed to accelerate the realization of the SPIDER platform programme and requested that OOSA begin activities immediately taking advantage of the commitments provided and building upon the network of regional support offices. We are convinced that this initiative will ensure access to, and use of, space technology during all phases of the disaster including the risk reduction phase. This should significantly contribute to an increasing reduction in loss of lives and property.

Regarding the issue of space debris, our delegation had been actively involved in the deliberations of the Working Group on Space Debris from the very beginning. We always considered this problem extremely important particularly for the safety of space traffic in the future, therefore, we are happy that the Subcommittee has adopted its space debris mitigation guidelines. In order to highlight the importance of the adopted guidelines, our delegation

supports the idea to submit them as a unique draft resolution of the General Assembly.

We also noted with satisfaction that Switzerland, which is hosting several important United Nations entities and already participates on COPUOS activities, has asked for membership during the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee session.

Mr. Chairman, it is not a mere coincidence that, at this golden jubilee session, we are to consider your memorandum of the future role and activities of our Committee. This material which you have prepared in consultation with most of us should lead to further improvement of efficiency of our deliberations. Many of your proposals concern the work of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. In particular, our delegation is a long-standing supporter of the involvement of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee in the question of safety of space traffic, the so-called rules of the road. The question of the working group to assess the current situation and propose ways and means to improve it, in view of the future expansion of global space activities, is an excellent idea and we fully endorse it.

Serious consideration should also be given to your proposals on more explicit involvement of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee in topics such as near Earth objects, monitoring global environmental changes and enhanced cooperation with non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations. Our delegation is looking forward to discuss your inspiring memorandum later in the session.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for your attention.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*): I would like to thank you for your statement on behalf of the Czech Republic.

Looking at the clock I think that it is time for us to suspend examination of item 7 that we will take up again this afternoon. A number of delegations are already on my speaker's list under this agenda item and we will also hear from the space applications specialist.

What we will now hear is this morning's technical presentation and I would like to give the floor to Mr. Sergiy Gusev, representing Ukraine, who is going to make a presentation on the observation and surveillance of near Earth objects. You have the floor, Sir.

Mr. S. GUSYEV (Ukraine) (*interpretation from Russian*): Thank you very much. Thank you for this opportunity to take the floor, Sir.

Ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the Ukrainian delegation I would like once again to congratulate you on this fiftieth anniversary session and 50 years since the first artificial Earth satellite and I would like to express gratitude towards Dr. Sergio Camacho for decades of fruitful work. What I would like to do now is talk about some of the results of our observations of space in order to study objects approaching the Earth or near Earth objects.

The orbits of most asteroids lie within the main belt, that is within the orbits of Mars and Jupiter, however, some of them have elongated orbits and they overlap places with the Earth orbit. Asteroids are a potential danger for the Earth, they could collide with the Earth and, in addition to orbits with a fairly steady orbit, there are some that are a particular risk and these are ones that could come into the Earth's orbit following disruption caused by influence of the great planets or the result of a collision with another asteroid or with comets whose mass has not even yet been detected. The observation of objects of this kind is fundamental when it comes to protecting the Earth.

Sonar detection is a very useful technique when it comes to near Earth objects and the use of the VLBI method to pick up reflected echo signals can significantly widen the list of measurable attributes and increase the accuracy of the measurements made. The combination of classical detection and the VLBI method amounts to a unique tool for three dimensional measurements and important practical applied aspects of this are determining the exact trajectories of asteroids which might collide with the Earth. The idea is the safe use of space.

Using the radio telescope RT-70, the Ukrainian National Space Centre in Evpatoria has carried out a series of research. This telescope is unique, it is one of a kind because given its 70-meter diameter antenna, it has a fully roving platform and it can work in both reception and emission regimes.

In recent years, together with scientists from abroad, we have followed a number of asteroids. In December 1992, using RT-70, we carried out the observation of the Tautatis asteroid and this came to within 3.6 million kilometres of the Earth. This asteroid we measured its reflective characteristics and its revolution period. Further observation of near Earth objects carried out as of 1996, here we used the RT-70 telescope and we carried out work on an international

VLBI detection experiment. This was coordinated by a task force bringing together institutes from Russia and Ukraine.

VLBI detection is a new area, only two such attempts have been made in the past when it comes to visualizing the surface of celestial bodies, done by the United States and Japan. Therefore the first experience in this area was designed to give rise to the appropriate method, equipment and programmes for VLBI detection. VLBI observations that have been going on since 1999 and the radio sensing of the bodies of the solar system have been carried out by an RT receiver using a frequency of some 5,000 megahertz and an uninterrupted capacity of two channels which can reach 200 kilowatts. Echo signals were measured using a number of combinations of receiver antennas and, as of 2003, a new method was used the LFN measurement and it used a number of radio telescopes _____ (*inaudible*) and others.

On this slide you can see the telescopes which are being used for the LFN programme. The next slide you can see the main radio telescopes which are being used in this work. As a result of these experiments, echo signals from Mars, Venus and the Moon and the asteroid 2004XP14 were recorded as well as those from some 100 pieces of space debris some of them _____ (*inaudible*) in size and down to 0.5 metres with various different orbits and the main results on the next slide.

In 2007, we are going to continue processing and refining this method for high precision detection of objects of the Earth's group within the framework of a special project that we have developed to that effect.

An international network of optical telescopes has also been set up. The most interesting objective of the experiments we have undertaken was to detect asteroid 2004XP14, discovered in 2004. At the time, that was on 3 July 2006, it was at a distance of the order of 432,000 kilometres from the Earth. The physical properties of the asteroid are not known, its diameter is about 430 metres according to our estimate. Because the asteroid's orbit was so close to the Earth and its slight size, the object was included in the list of potentially hazardous asteroids.

As mentioned above, in order to organize VLBI detection experiments, optical measurements are required to obtain preliminary data with regard to the distances involved. It is especially important that the radio detection and optical detection, both the sonar and the optical radar measurements, are carried out consistently for objects below 15 times stellar size.

Telescopes of this type are required, AZT-8, an astronomic mirror telescope, located near the other telescope we used previously, made it possible to carry out these parallel coordinated studies. These telescopes could also be used to tackle a large range of astronomical issues such as observation of asteroids approaching the Earth. In June/July 2006, observation was carried out of this asteroid and astronomical and photometrical data were obtained as a result, these data are of high value. Thus, in the course of this comprehensive experiment, involving both sonar detection and optical detection of these objects, for the first time in the history of our astronomy the 2004XP14 asteroid was carried out from Evpatoria in Ukraine and at 8.5 gigahertz with the use of the _____ (*inaudible*) detector in the United States.

We are planning similar studies on a regular basis throughout 2007 within the framework of the IADC guidelines. Once we resolve the various organizational issues, we plan to regularly send these data to the International Centre for the Study of Small Planets.

Distinguished participants in the fiftieth session of COPUOS, on behalf of the leadership of the National Space Centre of Ukraine, I would like to invite scientists from every country in the world that shows an interest in joining these studies to come to Ukraine and join us in this cooperative project. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*): I thank Mr. Gusyev for his presentation. Some of the delegations may have questions to ask of Dr. Gusyev about his very interesting presentation on the study of near Earth objects using an installation in the Ukraine.

I have a question. Do you use CCD cameras?

Other questions for our Ukrainian colleague?

If there are none I would like to once again thank Dr. Gusyev for his presentation and I will shortly adjourn this meeting.

I would like to inform you of the programme of work for this afternoon. We will resume at 3 p.m. sharp. At that time we will continue and hopefully conclude our consideration of item 5, ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes. We will also continue our consideration of item 6, implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III and 7, report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on its forty-fourth session.

Time permitting we will begin our consideration of agenda item 8, report of the Legal Subcommittee on its forty-sixth session.

Finally, at the end of the afternoon meeting there will be one more technical presentation by the representative of Ukraine. During lunch break I would like to make you aware of the fact that two documentaries will be shown. The first will be screened at 1:45 p.m. it is entitled, the Mission to Mir, provided by the United States and the other one will be screened at 2.25 p.m. it is entitled Space technology, health for all and it is offered by India. I warmly invite you to view these documentaries. Once again, the first one at 1.45 p.m. the Mission to Mir, the second one at 2.25 p.m. Space technology, health for all.

Any questions or comments on this proposed schedule?

I see none. Thus the meeting is adjourned. We will reconvene at 3 p.m. Thank you.

The meeting closed at 12.50 p.m.