

Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space
Sixty-seventh session
19 – 28 June 2024

**REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE INTER-AGENCY
MEETING ON OUTER SPACE ACTIVITIES (UN-SPACE)**

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Mr. Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

I am pleased to provide you with an update on developments regarding UN-Space, the United Nations Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities.

As Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, I would emphasize the Office's commitment to enhancing collaboration, both within the United Nations system and among the broader global community, because only by doing so, can we ensure that we make best efforts to tackle global challenges and make sure that the benefits of space truly reach all those who need them.

The UN-Space inter-agency mechanism seeks to promote synergies and avoid duplication of efforts related to the use of space technology and applications in the work of UN entities.

Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

The General Assembly, in its resolution 78/82, encouraged United Nations entities to participate in UN-Space coordination efforts.

While UN-Space has a good network of collaborators, we hope to strengthen this with a renewed vision and by continuing to visit new and creative ways of working together, which include educational components as well.

In recent years we have taken the annual UN-Space meeting to different physical locations, allowing us to engage different voices from within the wider United Nations system. While virtual connections are an important practical method of exchanging information, such face-to-face meetings help us build stronger connections as a good basis for further collaboration.

In 2022, the UN-Space meeting was held in Bangkok, in the Asia-Pacific region. Last year the 42nd Session took place in Brindisi, Italy in collaboration with the Service for Geospatial, Information and Telecommunication Technologies at the UN Global Service Centre of the Department of Operational Support, convening representatives of 12 UN entities.

In 2023, a joint meeting of UN-Space and the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS), identified specific needs of Member States and UN entities for capacity-building in the use of satellite imagery. As a result, technology demonstrations and trainings on topics such as flood mapping and deforestation monitoring were introduced into the 42nd UN-Space session. I thank the space agencies and CEOS partners who supported this unique learning opportunity for UN personnel, who we know will go on to amplify messaging around the use of space-based data with their colleagues.

The Global Service Centre also facilitated a tour of the base in Brindisi, offering visits to the Strategic Air Operations Centre and the Digital Twin and Virtual Operations Centre, where participants were able to experience simulations and virtual reality tools, gaining a first-hand understanding of key operational and technical support services. The expertise shared by partners not only added value, but also contributed to meeting needs previously identified by UN entities.

Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

In view of the importance of the topic of space debris to the sustainability of outer space activities, UN-Space decided at its last annual session, that this would be the focus of its next special report. You now have before you the special report in document A/AC.105/1317.

This report, to which 10 UN entities contributed, emphasizes the need for a multifaceted approach to address the challenges posed by space debris, involving not only technical, but also regulatory, policy, legal and cooperative measures.

The special report also acknowledges that space debris, and any related space debris risk tipping point, is a human-made problem, which it is therefore possible, with correct and communal action, to avoid.

Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

The 42nd session of UN-Space also agreed on a new UN-Space publication, currently being developed jointly by UNOOSA and the Food and Agriculture Organization. The publication focuses on space tools for agriculture and food security. It will be a valuable addition to UN-Space publications and will be made available before the end of the calendar year.

Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

In recent years, UN-Space has increased the number of its open sessions, acknowledging the value of engaging multistakeholder audiences.

The 19th open session, held in October 2023 in Brindisi, Italy, was a collaboration with the UN Global Service Centre and ASI, the Italian Space Agency. It focused on the topic of “Earth observation and integrated applications for disaster risk management and sustainable development” and gave special consideration and emphasis to case studies from the broader Italian space community and specifically, the Apulia region.

By convening representatives of Member States, UN entities, and the private sector, the session fostered a collaborative environment providing the possibility to connect, share views, learn about each other’s work, and explore possible synergies in connection with the session’s topic. I thank our partners, particularly the Italian Space Agency, for making the session a success.

You will find the full report of the 42nd session and the 19th open session of UN-Space before you in document A/AC.105/1318.

Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

This update aims to not only report on UN-Space work, but also to reaffirm a commitment to leverage the universal benefits of outer space steered by the principle of collaboration. As such, the UN-Space secretariat is actively reviewing how this area of work can be improved.

In this regard, I would bring to your attention, that at its annual session in 2023, UN-Space recognized the need to improve coordination in the sourcing and sharing of commercial satellite imagery across the UN system to reduce cost and redundancies. UN-Space requested UNOOSA to work towards coordinating data-sharing, building United Nations system capacity, and cooperating on the procurement of space-based information, to accelerate the application of space assets to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, and to raise extrabudgetary funds for human resources and technical capacities to lead those efforts.

As a result, and based also on the needs expressed by Member States to the leadership team, access to space data was included in the UNOOSA strategic plan for 2024-2030 and is a priority topic that will be brought forward to the next UN-Space meeting.

In this regard, I am pleased to inform you that the 43rd session of UN-Space will take place directly at UN Headquarters in New York in October this year. Again, we look forward to broadening the UN-Space network as we work for the first time with the Capacity Development and Operational Training Service of the Department of Operational Support.

We will also be working with NASA, through the framework of CEOS, to again include a unique educational component in the 43rd annual session.

The updated information on UN-Space activities to take place this October will be posted on its dedicated website: www.un-space.org.

Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

Let me conclude by informing you that the UN-Space secretariat is now exploring the use of communications platforms to create improved ways for UN entities to communicate between UN-Space meetings.

We are strongly committed to inter-agency work and to making UN-Space even more fit for purpose.

Thank you for your attention.
