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**Committee on the Peaceful
Uses of Outer Space**
Scientific and Technical Subcommittee
Forty-eighth session
Vienna, 7-18 February 2011
Item 8 of the provisional agenda¹
Space-system-based disaster management support

Report on coordination activities carried out by the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs with existing mechanisms and initiatives supporting emergency response activities with space-based information

Note by the Secretariat

1. Background

At its fifty-third session the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space requested the Office for Outer Space Affairs to report to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its forty-eighth session on its efforts to meet with the International Charter on Space and Major Disasters, Sentinel Asia, the GMES SAFER project, the Mesoamerican Regional Visualization and Monitoring System (SERVIR) project and others with a view to establishing an agreed interface with UN-SPIDER to avoid overlaps and duplication of efforts (A/65/20, para. 118).

The United Nations General Assembly in its resolution A/RES/65/97, which was adopted on 10 December 2010, specifically requested in paragraph 16 that the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs ensure that the support it provides to Member States through its UN-SPIDER Programme is coordinated with all existing mechanisms and initiatives that are making space-based information available to support responses to emergency events, thus avoiding duplication of efforts.

The present note provides an overview of the activities conducted in response to this request.

¹ A/AC.105/C.1/L.306.



2. Coordination activities carried out

In 2010 the Office, through its UN-SPIDER Programme, participated in the following meetings in order to coordinate further with existing mechanisms:

(a) The End User Advisory Committee II meeting of GMES SAFER project from 15-16 June 2010 in Geneva

(b) The Sentinel Asia STEP-2 meeting of the Joint Project Team (JPT) from 6-8 July 2010 in Manila

(c) An evaluation meeting with the International Charter: Space and Major Disasters on 26 November 2010 in Frascati, Italy. At this meeting, recommendations were put forward to the Charter to improve cooperation between UNOOSA and the Charter, and specifically requesting to the Charter that they consider taking advantage of the UN-SPIDER Regional Support Offices, ensuring a closer and active participation of these offices in the work carried out by Charter members.

Additionally, UN-SPIDER took advantage of the following meetings to promote the existing mechanisms and also to elicit recommendations from end users on how to improve the access to and use of the space-based data and information provided by such mechanisms.

(a) UN-SPIDER Regional Workshop "Building Upon Regional Space-based Solutions for Disaster Management and Emergency Response for Africa", from 6 - 9 July 2010 in Addis Ababa.

(b) The Fourth United Nations International UN-SPIDER Bonn Workshop on Disaster Management and Space Technology: "The 4C – Challenge: Communication – Coordination – Cooperation – Capacity Development", from 12 – 14 October 2010 in Bonn, Germany.

(c) A Garnet-E ("GMES and Africa: Regional Network for Information Exchange and Training in Emergencies") workshop on 30-31 October 2010 in Addis Ababa

(d) Meetings at the Permanent Mission of Germany on the topic of "Enhancing global cooperation in satellite-based emergency mapping" on 3 November 2010 and 9 December 2010 in Vienna.

Finally, to provide an opportunity to promote a joint discussion with all the existing mechanisms the Office organized an expert meeting on "Space-based Technologies and Emergency Response" on 9 February 2011 in which representatives from the four leading mechanisms, the International Charter: Space and Major Disasters, Sentinel Asia, GMES SAFER and SERVIR, as well as representatives from a number of service providers and the established UN-SPIDER Regional Support Offices attended. The presentations and discussions aimed at defining an understanding of how these mechanisms could improve collective value to the disaster management community and also how to optimize collaboration and related communications during major disasters.

3. Recommendation

The representatives that attended the above meeting agreed on the following recommendation:

“With a view to improving collective value to the disaster management community, representatives from leading existing mechanisms that could make space-based information available to support emergency response activities as well as representatives from leading service providers agreed to consider further the possibility of establishing a working group, facilitated by the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, in order to optimize collaboration and related communications during major disasters.

Among others, the working group could consider the following topics:

- Establishing complementary operational procedures
- Rules of engagement
- Best practices and guidelines
- Quality control, validation and consistency
- Confirmation of capacities
- Common training and exercises

The representatives requested that UNOOSA officially seek confirmation from these mechanisms and service providers to participate in this proposed working group, inviting them to nominate representatives.”
