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English only

**Committee on the Peaceful
Uses of Outer Space**
Fifty-seventh session
Vienna, 11-20 June 2014
Item 13 of the provisional agenda*
Use of space technology in the United Nations system

Engaging space tools for development on Earth — contribution of space technology and applications to the post-2015 Development Agenda

Summary report on the open informal session of the United Nations Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities

1.   The present document contains the summary report on the Open informal session of the United Nations Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities entitled "Engaging space tools for development on Earth — contribution of space technology and applications to the post-2015 Development Agenda". The open informal session was organized by the Office for Outer Space Affairs in New York on 13 May 2014.

2.   The report is also available at the website on the United Nations Coordination of Outer Space Activities (www.uncosa.unvienna.org/).

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Open informal session of the United Nations Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities (UN-Space)

Engaging space tools for development on Earth — contribution of space technology and applications to the post-2015 Development Agenda

Held at New York, 14 May 2014

Summary Report

I. Background

1. The open informal session on "Engaging space tools for development on Earth — contribution of space technology and applications to the post-2015 Development Agenda" was held as part of the United Nation Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities (UN-Space), a United Nations system-wide mechanism for enhancing cooperation on and coordination of space-related activities of United Nations entities. The session was organized by the Office for Outer Space Affairs of the Secretariat (UNOOSA).

2. The event was organized in conjunction with the 34th session of UN-Space and with the 14th meeting of the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group (UNGIWG), a voluntary network of United Nations professionals working in the fields of cartography and geographic information science, and was followed by a joint UN-Space – UNGIWG meeting.

3. The open informal sessions provide a platform for constructive dialogue among governments, national authorities, United Nations system entities, private sector and civil society on the role of space technology and its applications for global development. A wide range of themes addressed by UN-Space under its open informal sessions include: education and training in space-related areas: challenges and opportunities in the UN system (2004); space technology for disaster management: opportunities within the United Nations system (2005); space technology for sustainable development and disaster management: opportunities within the United Nations system (2006); the use of space-derived geospatial data for sustainable development in the United Nations system (2007); public-private partnerships and innovative funding approaches in the United Nations system to promote the use of space technology and its applications (2008); space benefits for Africa: contribution of the United Nations (2009); space technology for emergency communications (2010); space and climate change (2011); space for agriculture and food security (2012); and space and disaster risk reduction: planning for resilient human settlements (2013). This present open informal session was the 11th in the series.

4. Panellists in the 11th open informal session represented UNOOSA, Division for Geospatial, Information and Telecommunications Technologies of the Department of Field Support of the Secretariat, United Nations Geographic Information Working Group, Executive Secretariat of the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellites System, European Space Policy Institute and DigitalGlobe.

5.   The objective of the open informal session was to increase awareness on how the integrated and coordinated use of space technology and applications could catalyse development efforts exerted by responsible authorities at national and international levels and contribute to the attainment of internationally agreed development goals in the post-2015 context.

6.   The open informal session was organized to assist countries as they engaged in substantive preparation of the High-Level Event of the General Assembly on the Contributions of North-South, South-South, Triangular Cooperation, and ICT for Development to the implementation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda (held at New York, 21-22 May 2014), where participants would consult on the potential of information and communication technologies of being a game changer for all countries' efforts to achieve sustainable development.

II.   Opening of the session

7.   The open informal session was opened with welcome address by *Simonetta Di Pippo*, Director of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs.

8.   In her opening remarks, Simonetta Di Pippo outlined the pivotal importance of space technology and applications for eradicating poverty and advancing development in the post-2015 development agenda framework. She pointed out that space technology in all its forms, from Earth observations to telecommunications, from tele-epidemiology to global navigation, could catalyse socio-economic development in virtually any sector, bridging the gap between developing and developed countries.

9.   She also referred to the activities of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which, through its agenda item on space and sustainable development and under the item of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee devoted to socioeconomic development in the context of the Rio+20 conference and the post-2015 development agenda, worked towards a common approach to those global processes.

10.   In conclusion she stressed that concerted efforts were required to ensure continuous monitoring and assessment of the environment in meeting sustainable development objectives at all levels and that it was essential to enhance autonomous capacities to access and use space-based technology in support of decision-making processes at national, regional and international levels.

III.   Panel discussion

11.   *Rolf Sjoberg*, Deputy-Director, Division for Geospatial, Information and Telecommunications Technologies of the Secretariat, in his presentation entitled "Earth Observations and Telecommunications for Peace and Security" provided background information on the use of satellite telecommunications for peacekeeping operations of the United Nations, and outlined geospatial information requirements for United Nations operations. He reviewed challenged to effective support of peacekeeping operations and presented prospects for framework support and capacity building for geo-enabled peace-keeping operations.

12.   *Peter Hulsroj*, Director, European Space Policy Institute, and his team, *Alexandra Bonnefoy* and *David Gionet-Landry*, looked at potential telemedicine applications to assist developing countries in primary and

secondary care. They discussed benefits and opportunities of humanitarian telemedicine both for patients and health care providers, provided examples of successful secondary care humanitarian telemedicine projects, and reviewed technological, legal, cultural and other challenges for telemedicine projects. Three prototype potential projects were presented.

13.   *Simonetta Di Pippo* introduced examples of the wide range of activities carried out by the Office for Outer Space Affairs, which included discharging the Secretary-General's responsibility under international space law, servicing the intergovernmental Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subsidiary bodies, implementing the United Nations Programme on Space Applications and United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER), as well as other capacity building and technical advisory activities in space technology and applications, law and policy.

14.   *Sharafat Gadimova*, United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs in its capacity of Executive Secretariat of the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellites System (ICG), in her presentations entitled "ICG and its Programme on the Applications of Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS)", focused her remarks on the main areas of work of ICG, such as compatibility and interoperability, enhancement of GNSS services performance, information dissemination and capacity building, and reference frames, timing and applications, and promotion of the use of GNSS as tools for scientific applications.

15.   *Taner Kodanaz*, Director, Seeing a Better World Program, DigitalGlobe, and *Kumar Navulur*, Director, Next Generation Products, DigitalGlobe, in a joint presentation entitled "Seeing a Better World – Global Development Trends in Remote Sensing", explored the global development trends in remote sensing along the four pillars: food and nutrition security, infrastructure development, human rights, and sustainability. They discussed trends in geospatial industry, and stressed the importance of accessibility of data and data consistency for creating a common understanding to global processes.

16.   *Andre Dehondt*, Department of Safety and Security in its capacity as Co-Chair of UNGIWG, introduced the efforts of the Working Group in facilitating inter-agency cooperation and coordination on specific issues in the fields of cartography and geographic information science and promoting the use of geographic information within the United Nations System in the delivery of various mandates. He emphasized the major accomplishments of the Working Group, including the development of the Secondary Administrative Level Boundary and International Boundaries datasets and the United Nations Spatial Data Infrastructure, as well as efforts for the unification of satellite imagery purchase contracts.

IV.   Conclusion

17.   The discussion at the open informal session provided a multidimensional perspective on examples of how the wide range of space technology applications, involving Earth observation, global navigation satellite systems, telecommunication, and telemedicine, as well as other sources of geospatial information, were being used as enabler and means of implementation of sustainable development objectives, including the improvement of the resilience of populations and infrastructures, and in meeting the post-2015 development agenda process.

18.   The theme of the open informal session reconfirmed the importance of space technology applications and use of space-derived data and information in making informed decisions at all levels. In the concluding discussion of the open informal session there was wide recognition of the need to enhance dialogue between

the scientific community, the providers of data and added-value products, and the user community in order to bridge the existing gaps in knowledge on the access to and use of space-based technology. The need for awareness raising, capacity-building and training, and institutional strengthening was of paramount importance in order to meet demands of user communities and the enabling effect of space-based applications on informed decision making at national, regional and international levels was emphasized.

19. Presentations delivered at the open informal session are available on the website of the United Nations coordination of outer space activities (www.uncosa.unvienna.org), and can also be accessed through the website of the Office for Outer Space Affairs (www.unoosa.org).