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**Committee on the Peaceful  
Uses of Outer Space  
Scientific and Technical Subcommittee  
Fifty-eighth session  
Vienna, 19–30 April 2021**

## **Draft report of the Working Group on Space and Global Health**

1. In accordance with paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution [75/92](#), the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, at its fifty-eighth session, reconvened its Working Group on Space and Global Health.
2. From 21 to 28 April 2021, the Working Group held four meetings, with Antoine Geissbühler (Switzerland) as Chair.
3. The Working Group had before it the documents listed in paragraph [...] of the report of the Subcommittee on its fifty-eighth session.
4. The Working Group noted that, in addition to the meetings that the Working Group had held with the benefit of interpretation services during the current session of the Subcommittee, the Chair and interested delegations had held scheduled informal consultations on 20 and 23 April, on the margins of the session.
5. The Working Group also noted with appreciation the presentation entitled “Advances in space medicine applied to pandemics on Earth”, delivered in the context of the informal consultations. The applicability and possible benefits on Earth of space activities and innovation were well noted to guide considerations for pandemic preparedness and health emergency response in the future.
6. The Working Group recalled the following activities for 2021 under its multi-year workplan for the period 2019–2022, adopted by the Subcommittee at its fifty-sixth session, in 2019 ([A/AC.105/1202](#), annex III, appendix I, para. 9):
  - (a) Review the draft set of recommendations presented by the Chair of the Working Group on current uses of space (technology, applications, practices and initiatives) in support of global health;
  - (b) Chair of the Working Group to submit a first draft of the report of the Working Group to the Subcommittee and a corresponding draft resolution to be submitted to the General Assembly.
7. The Working Group agreed on the following recommendations regarding policies, experiences and practices in the use of space science and technology for global health, prepared by the Chair of the Working Group on Space and Global Health:



*Policy development for strengthened collaboration between the space and global health sectors*

**Recommendation 1.** United Nations entities, intergovernmental organizations and national Governments are encouraged to pursue effective coordination in all key space activities relevant to global health, including telecommunications, global navigation satellite systems, remote sensing and geographic information systems, and space life science and technology development.

**Recommendation 2.** Formal cooperative agreements are encouraged between health authorities and space authorities at the national level.

**Recommendation 3.** Member States are encouraged to establish policy-enabled environment and governance mechanisms, with due consideration of legal and ethical issues, for removing barriers to the effective use of space-based technologies, including telemedicine solutions.

*Policy development for strengthened data accessibility and sharing*

**Recommendation 4.** Member States are encouraged to promote open data-sharing policies and participatory approaches to developing and improving access to all geospatial information relevant to global health, whenever possible.

**Recommendation 5.** Member States are encouraged to enable organizational and technical interoperability to facilitate the development and implementation of space-based science and technology in the health sector.

*Development and implementation of applications of space solutions for global health*

**Recommendation 6.** United Nations entities and intergovernmental organizations should support the wider development and application of space solutions for global health, public health and the individual health needs of Member States. This could be achieved by encouraging the implementation of a broader range of space solutions for sustainable development and could include public-private partnerships.

**Recommendation 7.** Member States and participating entities are encouraged to advance their efforts related to the geotagging of all assets relevant to health systems, including health information systems, and make them available to further the attainment of health goals.

**Recommendation 8.** Member States are encouraged to conduct appropriate drills and exercises to benchmark their operational preparedness and response capacities and capabilities for the appropriate use of space technologies in responding to global health events.

*Knowledge management and sharing*

**Recommendation 9.** A dedicated platform should be established for effective coordination on space and global health issues among United Nations entities, other international organizations and relevant actors.

**Recommendation 10.** All key activities, reference documents and plans relevant to space for global health activities by United Nations entities should be monitored and compiled, including those of the World Health Organization and other international organizations, States members of the Committee as well as, as far as possible, non-governmental organizations and other non-governmental actors. The annual compilation of activities will serve as a reference to identify and discuss gaps and opportunities and will be shared broadly in an effort to raise awareness and promote cooperation among relevant actors in this domain.

**Recommendation 11.** An engagement strategy should be developed to analyse and assess current actors' roles and interests in the domain of space and global health. The engagement strategy is expected to be used to help to promote synergy, complementarity, cooperation and coordination among all actors.

*Capacity-building activities*

**Recommendation 12.** Intersectoral coordination and cooperation should be enhanced for effective international, regional, national and subnational capacity-building activities relevant to the application of space science and technology in the field of global health. Actors engaging in such activities should consider follow-up mechanisms aimed at strengthening the sustainability of the activities.

**Recommendation 13.** Member States are encouraged to engage learning institutions and other capacity-building mechanisms in motivating young health professionals, at an early stage, to acquire space-related skills and abilities.

**Recommendation 14.** Capacity-building events, to be organized by United Nations entities and other relevant actors, should be promoted, with the objective of further promoting awareness of and engagement with regard to the important contribution of space science and technology among actors applying the One Health approach. Those efforts will be aimed at increasing the number of organizations and of other actors in the health domain that are actively engaged in using space science and technology.

*Review of the workplan*

**Recommendation 15.** With attention to the broad needs expressed over the years in the field of space and global health and taking into account future evolving needs, including with respect to global pandemics, the Working Group will, at the fifty-ninth session of the Subcommittee, review its terms of reference and consider whether it is necessary to extend its workplan.

8. The Working Group recalled its agreement, reached at the fifty-seventh session of the Subcommittee, in 2020 (A/AC.105/1224, annex III, para. 12), to prepare recommendations as to the role and structure of the globally accessible platform, the establishment of which was recommended under thematic priority 5 (Strengthened space cooperation for global health) of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, and agreed that the Chair of the Working Group should develop the design and a proof of concept of the space and health globally accessible platform.

9. The Working Group noted that the platform would benefit from the experiences and information in the field of space and global health of States members of the Committee, international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations with permanent observer status with the Committee, United Nations entities, the Group on Earth Observations, the World Organization for Animal Health, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and Médecins sans frontières.

10. The Working Group agreed that a series of intersessional meetings would be necessary for advancing the work on the globally accessible platform and for preparing the activities scheduled for the final year of the workplan of the Working Group. In that connection, the Working Group requested the secretariat to facilitate the scheduling, preparation and holding of those intersessional meetings.

11. The Working Group requested the secretariat to invite States members of the Committee that have not done so to provide the details of national points of contact for the Working Group.

12. The Working Group noted with appreciation that the contents of the web page of the Office for Outer Space Affairs dedicated to the work of the Working Group ([www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/copuos/stsc/gh/index.html](http://www.unoosa.org/oosa/en/ourwork/copuos/stsc/gh/index.html)) had been continuously updated.

13. The Working Group noted that an informal online meeting of the Working Group had been held on 12 June 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

14. At its [...] meeting, on [...] April, the Working Group adopted the present report.