Draft report

Addendum

Chapter II

Recommendations and decisions

H. Use of space technology in the United Nations system

1. The Committee considered the agenda item entitled “Use of space technology in the United Nations system”, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 78/72.

2. The representatives of France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Mexico and Pakistan made statements under the item. The observer for the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific also made a statement. During the general exchange of views, statements relating to the item were also made by representatives of other member States.

3. The Committee had before it the following documents:

   (a) Special report of the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities on developments within the United Nations system related to space debris (A/AC.105/1317);

   (b) Report of the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities on its forty-second session and its nineteenth open session (A/AC.105/1318).

4. The Committee heard the following presentations under the item:

   (a) “From space to Earth: the vital role of the X-band frequency for downlinking Earth observation data”, by the representative of Germany;

   (b) “Peaceful uses of Earth observation: use cases across the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia member States”, by the representatives of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia;

   (c) “Re-entry of space debris into the atmosphere”, by the observer for ICAO;

   (d) “Marine environmental effects of jettisoned waste from commercial spaceflight activities”, by the observer for IMO;
(e) “United Nations Global Service Centre Analytics and Location Intelligence Unit: remote sensing analytics for environment, transhumance and groundwater”, by the representatives of the United Nations Global Service Centre of the Department of Operational Support.

5. The Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs informed the Committee that the forty-second session of the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities (UN-Space) had been held on 17 and 18 October 2023 in Brindisi, Italy, in collaboration with the Service for Geospatial, Information and Telecommunications Technologies of the United Nations Global Service Centre of the Department of Operational Support. The Director also informed the Committee that, following a needs assessment (see A/AC.105/1291), a day for the demonstration of technologies and for training on tools had been introduced into the session for the first time in 2023.

6. The Committee noted with appreciation that the nineteenth open session of UN-Space, which was focused on the theme “Earth observation and integrated applications for disaster risk management and sustainable development”, had been held on 19 October 2023, also in Brindisi, Italy, in collaboration with the Service for Geospatial, Information and Telecommunications Technologies of the United Nations Global Service Centre and the Italian Space Agency (ASI). The session had brought together representatives of Member States, United Nations entities and the private sector, providing them with the opportunity to learn about each other’s work and to explore possible synergies. During the session, special consideration had been given to case studies from the broader Italian space community and, specifically, from the Apulia region.

7. The Committee welcomed the special report of the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities on developments within the United Nations system related to space debris (A/AC.105/1317), to which 10 United Nations entities had contributed, and which emphasized the need for a multifaceted approach to address the challenges posed by space debris. That approach should involve not only technical but also regulatory, policy, legal and cooperative measures.

8. The Committee noted with appreciation the joint efforts by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Office for Outer Space Affairs towards a publication, to be made available in 2024, on the topic of leveraging space technology for agricultural development and food security.

9. The Committee noted that the secretariat of UN-Space was making arrangements to hold the forty-third session of UN-Space in New York in October 2024. The Committee was also informed that the secretariat of UN-Space was working with NASA, through the framework of CEOS, and the Capacity Development and Operational Training Service of the Department of Operational Support to incorporate an educational component into the session once again.

10. The Committee noted with appreciation efforts to utilize space technology and equitably share the benefits of space technology by operationalizing the Asia-Pacific Plan of Action on Space Applications for Sustainable Development (2018–2030) of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

11. The Committee noted with appreciation submissions to the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification to prioritize areas that needed immediate action to combat land degradation.

12. The Committee noted with appreciation action taken to meet the objectives of the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, in particular within the framework of UN-SPIDER, facilitating the use of space-based technologies for disaster management and emergency response.

13. The Committee noted with appreciation that the World Radiocommunication Conference 2023 had been held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.
14. The view was expressed that Member States should look into whether frequency bands currently used by space systems could be opened up to and shared with terrestrial mobile telecommunication systems, in order to inform discussions at the World Radiocommunication Conference in 2027.

15. The Committee encouraged entities of the United Nations system to participate, as appropriate, in the coordination efforts of UN-Space.