



General Assembly

Distr.: Limited
20 February 2013

Original: English

**Committee on the Peaceful
Uses of Outer Space**
Scientific and Technical Subcommittee
Fiftieth session
Vienna, 11-22 February 2013

Draft report

Addendum

[...]. **Matters relating to remote sensing of the Earth by satellite, including applications for developing countries and monitoring of the Earth's environment**

1. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 67/113, the Subcommittee considered agenda item 6, "Matters relating to remote sensing of the Earth by satellite, including applications for developing countries and monitoring of the Earth's environment".
2. The representatives of Canada, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Russian Federation and the United States made statements under the agenda item. During the general exchange of views, statements relating to the item were also made by representatives of other member States.
3. The Subcommittee heard the following scientific and technical presentations:
 - (a) "Developing programme of China's new-generation Earth observation data grid for public service and applications system", by the representative of China;
 - (b) "25 years of Indian remote sensing (IRS) service", by the representative of India;
 - (c) "Enhancing outreach of Earth observation products and applications in India", by the representative of India;
 - (d) "RADAR Imaging Satellite (RISAT-1) of ISRO", by the representative of India;



(e) “Dust storm monitoring: prediction and allocation of sources”, by the representative of Iraq;

(f) “JAXA’s newest Earth observation satellite, Shizuku: current status and future plans”, by the representative of Japan;

(g) “The practical uses and application status of satellite images in Korea: focusing on KOMPSAT series”, by the representative of the Republic of Korea;

(h) “NOAA meteorological satellite update”, by the representative of the United States;

(i) “ISPRS: information from imagery”, by the observer for ISPRS;

(j) “Desert movement predictor for Farmaboosts: two Earth observation-based applications for pan-African development”, by the observer for ISU.

4. In the course of the discussions, delegations reviewed national and cooperative programmes on remote sensing. Examples were given of national, bilateral, regional and international programmes to further socioeconomic and sustainable development, notably in the following areas: agriculture and fishery; monitoring climate change; disaster management; hydrology; managing ecosystems and natural resources; monitoring air and water quality; mapping biodiversity resources, coastal zones, land use, wasteland and wetlands; ice-cover monitoring; oceanography; rural development and urban planning; and safety and public health.

5. The Subcommittee noted with satisfaction that comprehensive, coordinated and sustained Earth observation systems were essential for the benefit of humankind and that significant efforts were being made to build the capacity of developing countries in using Earth observations to improve quality of life and advance their socioeconomic development.

6. The Subcommittee noted the increased availability of space-based data at little or no cost, including the remote sensing data, made available free of charge, from the China-Brazil Earth resources satellites, the SAC-C international mission, Landsat of the United States and Shizuku of Japan.

7. The Subcommittee took note of the number of continued launches of Earth observation satellites and the innovative research conducted using such satellites, data from which could be used to develop advanced, global-integrated Earth-system models.

8. The Subcommittee recognized the important role played by organizations such as APRSAF and Sentinel Asia and its Space Applications for the Environment initiative, the Group on Earth Observations (GEO), and the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS) and its virtual constellations for the GEO initiative in promoting international and regional cooperation in the use of remote sensing technology, in particular for the benefit of developing countries.

9. The Subcommittee noted the progress made by GEO in the implementation of the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS) and other initiatives, such as those on forest carbon tracking, climate and agriculture monitoring, development and integration of observation networks in cold regions and capacity-building efforts towards expansion of access to and use of Earth

observation in developing countries. The Subcommittee also noted the 5th GEOSS Asia-Pacific Symposium, held in Tokyo in April 2012.

10. The Subcommittee noted the successful conclusion of the 26th plenary meeting of CEOS, hosted by India in October 2012. The Subcommittee also noted that Canada had taken up the chairmanship of CEOS for 2013 and would host its next plenary meeting. The Subcommittee further noted that Switzerland would host the next GEO plenary session and ministerial meeting in January 2014.

11. The view was expressed that all States should have equal access to remote sensing technology and the data produced by remote sensing technology, at reasonable cost. The delegation expressing that view encouraged the providers of remote sensing data to grant single government licences for developing countries purchasing remote satellite data.

12. The view was expressed that the free availability on the Internet of high-resolution imagery of sensitive areas could pose a risk for national security.

13. The view was expressed that the use of remote sensing for purposes other than peaceful uses was unacceptable.

[...]. Examination of the physical nature and technical attributes of the geostationary orbit and its utilization and applications, including in the field of space communications, as well as other questions relating to developments in space communications, taking particular account of the needs and interests of developing countries, without prejudice to the role of the International Telecommunication Union

14. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 67/113, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee considered agenda item 14, "Examination of the physical nature and technical attributes of the geostationary orbit and its utilization and applications, including in the field of space communications, as well as other questions relating to developments in space communications, taking particular account of the needs and interests of developing countries, without prejudice to the role of the International Telecommunication Union", as a single issue/item for discussion.

15. A statement under agenda item 14 was made by the representative of Chile on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States. The observer for ITU also made a statement under the item. During the general exchange of views, statements relating to the item were made by representatives of member States.

16. The Subcommittee heard a scientific and technical presentation entitled "Q/V band experimentation and use: involvement of digital divide-affected countries" by the representative of Italy.

17. The Subcommittee welcomed the information provided in the annual report for 2012 of the Radiocommunication Bureau of ITU on the use of the geostationary satellite orbit and other orbits (www.itu.int/ITU-R/space/snl/report), as well as other

documents referred to in conference room paper A/AC.105/C.1/2013/CRP.17. The Subcommittee invited ITU to continue submitting reports to it.

18. Some delegations were of the view that the geostationary orbit was a limited natural resource that was at risk of becoming saturated, thereby threatening the sustainability of space activities in that environment; that its exploitation should be rationalized; and that it should be made available to all States, under equitable conditions, irrespective of their current technical capabilities, taking into particular account the needs of developing countries and the geographical position of certain countries. Those delegations were also of the view that it was important to use the geostationary orbit in compliance with international law, in accordance with the decisions of ITU and within the legal framework established in the relevant United Nations treaties.

19. Some delegations were of the view that the geostationary orbit provided unique potential for access to communications and information, in particular for assisting developing countries in implementing social programmes and educational projects and for providing medical assistance.

20. Some delegations were of the view that this item should remain on the agenda of the Subcommittee and that its study could be carried out, as necessary, by working groups or intergovernmental panels in order to ensure the use of the geostationary orbit in accordance with international law.