

**Committee on the Peaceful
Uses of Outer Space***Unedited transcript*597th Meeting

Wednesday, 3 June 2009, 10 a.m.

Vienna

Chairman: Mr. Ciro Arévalo-Yepes (Colombia)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*): Good morning to all. It is on these(?) distinguished representatives and delegates, it is a pleasure and an honour to welcome you all to the Vienna International Centre.

I now declare open the 52nd session of the 597th meeting of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Ten years ago, here in Vienna, we had the third UNISPACE III meeting. At that time, with determination to work jointly on this topic that brings us all together and it is a true pleasure for me to say that after 10 years that enthusiasm, that determination, that energy, can still be observed at this session, a session which, I think, will be very dynamic, dealing with extremely important subjects and we will be doing an assessment of these past 10 years and developments in the field of outer space indeed this afternoon. That will be the panel topic for UNISPACE III and I would hope that we all be very active in identifying the guidelines of our future in the field of outer space.

Adoption of the agenda

Now you have before you for your approval and adoption the provisional agenda for this session. This is document A/AC.105/L.273. The provisional agenda has been prepared on the basis of the agreements that were reached at the 2008 session which was subsequently endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 6390 (63/90?) of 18 December 2008.

An indicative schedule of work is set out in the Annex to the provisional agenda.

Please note that the annotations and the indicative schedule of work are not part of the agenda for adoption by the Committee.

We must now proceed with the adoption of the agenda.

If there are no objections, I would declare that the agenda is adopted.

It is so decided.

Organization of work

Now let us mention the organization of our work. First of all, some organizational matters. General Assembly resolution 32/71 requires that members of each United Nations body be informed at the beginning of each session the resources available to it.

Let me inform you of the arrangements made for this session of the Committee.

The assigned meeting rooms, we have this one, number III, and meeting rooms C0713, C0727, C0729, C0731, C0733, C0735 and the 0951. Simultaneous interpretation in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish and sound recording will be provided for the plenary meetings in the original language and in English and we would like to take this time to thank the interpretation and translation teams.

We will be working from 10.0 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. and from 3.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m. in the afternoon on working days.

In its resolution 50/27 of 6 December 1995, the General Assembly endorsed the recommendation of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space that, beginning with its thirty-ninth session, the Committee would be provided with unedited transcripts in lieu of verbatim records. This record contains the texts of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages as transcribed from taped recordings. The transcripts have not been edited or revised.

Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, within one week of the date of publication, to the Chief, Conference Management Service, Room D0771, United Nations Office at Vienna, P.O. Box 500, A-1400, Vienna, Austria. Corrections will be issued in a consolidated corrigendum.



Intergovernmental bodies should undertake a review of their meeting patterns and reporting cycles and in coordination with Conference Services, adjust their meeting requests for subsequent sessions accordingly.

In addition to the above, as Chair, I have to point out that there are financial limits here concerning capacities for Conference Services. It is much more important now for delegates and delegations to adhere even more strictly to the guidelines and that they work very closely and in a coordinative fashion with Conference Services. It maybe that on the closing session some documents will only be available in English or may not have been fully processed by the appropriate services in the light of the time they were presented. So, on behalf of the entire meeting, let me assure the Secretariat that they can count on the cooperation and understanding of delegations in respect to deadlines for documents. If we bear this in mind, I think we will have a successful conclusion to this meeting.

Lastly, and something very important, please turn off your mobile phones when you come into any of the conference premises and switch them off completely because even on standpoint this interferes with the sound system in the conference rooms.

Now attendance by non-members. I would like to inform the Committee they have received requests from the following delegations seeking permission to attend the current session of the Committee as observers: the Governments of Azerbaijan, Belarus, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Maldives, Panama, Tunisia, Yemen and the Holy See, the Permanent Observer Mission of Palestine to the United Nations in Vienna and representatives of the following intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization and the International Association for the Advancement of Space Safety.

I would also like to suggest that following past practice, we invite these representations to attend the current session and to address the Committee as appropriate. That is, of course, without prejudice to further requests of this nature and this does not involve any decisions of the Committee concerning status of the requesters. This is a courtesy that we customarily extend to such delegations.

Now, if there is no objection, we will proceed accordingly.

It is so decided.

Chairman's statement

Now I will move to the Chairman's statement for the opening session.

As I said at the beginning, this year will be the tenth anniversary of the third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, UNISPACE III. Since the holding of the Conference in 1999, the Committee has undertaken a remarkable process in implementing its recommendations. During these 10 years, COPUOS and its Subcommittees have demonstrated strong commitment in enforcing the role of space science and technology application in meeting the major challenge to global sustainable development.

But, the main question remains as 10 years ago, and I really think this should be the benchmark for our work here, are we doing enough to ensure that no one is left behind? Are we responsibly facing the main global societal needs? These are two questions which to me are fundamental. Development in space science and technology is a fundamental prerequisite for any space application and for the benefit of human development on Earth, for protecting and preserving the Earth and space environment and in any exploration efforts in the Universe. And our Committee stands at the front bringing the world together in using that technology for peaceful purposes and to foster talents, trust and shared values.

Our experience in this decade has demonstrated that we have the opportunity to further strengthen our common efforts at national, regional, interregional and global level. As never before, we are assisting in the creation of national space commissions and coordinating bodies in all parts of the world with their subsequent space policies and regulations in the establishment of regional cooperative structures, and we see an unprecedented number of agreements on space cooperation between nations, space agencies and the private sector.

You will recall that the General Assembly in its resolution 63/90 of 5 December 2008 emphasized the regional and interregional cooperation in the field of space activities is essential to strengthen the peaceful uses of outer space, to assist States in the development of their space capabilities and contribute to the achievement of the goals of the United Nations Millennium Declaration.

In this regard, I am pleased to note the ongoing preparations for the Third African Leadership Conference on Space Science and Technology for Sustainable Development, to be held in Algeria in late 2009.

I am personally committed to support this important process as I have done for the Latin American and Asia-Pacific regions.

I would like to take this opportunity to mention that the Secretariat has prepared a report endorsed by the United Nations Inter-Agency Meeting on the topic "Space Benefits for Africa", a contribution of the United Nations family. This will be submitted to the African Leadership Conference. I am grateful to this initiative which provides a broad analysis of the involvement of the United Nations entities for sustainable development in Africa.

In the Asia-Pacific region, a successful Fifteenth Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum was held in Hanoi and Halong Bay, Viet Nam, in December 2008, "Maintain Space for Sustainable Development". And I attended the Forum and I am highly impressed by the organization of the Forum. The coordination of efforts between the Forum and Sentinel-Asia, as well as other regional programmes and initiatives are very promising, particularly the Educational Committee which is also working with the Latin American region. Cooperation and between different regions and model to be followed this example which I think can be followed by other regions.

In addition, it is also important to point this out, the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization is now established with Headquarters in Beijing. It formerly began operating in 2008. The international community is very pleased to see this firm infrastructure for cooperation set up.

Preparations for the Sixth Space Conference of the Americas are progressing and I would like to commend in particular the Pro Tempore Secretariat of the Government of Ecuador and the International Group of Experts and their Chairman, who is here with us, for their active preparation. Two promising Prep Meetings have been held in 2007 and 2008.

In this context, I would also like to highlight the important role that the Regional Centres for Space Science and Technology Education play and they are affiliated to the United Nations and the aim of enhancing cooperation. Work being carried out by the Regional Centres, supported by the United Nations

Programme on Space Applications is highly commendable. The Regional Centres have firmly established infrastructures for advanced training in the field of space science and technology and their long-standing education programmes are highly successful.

I am very pleased to note that the Directors of each of the Regional Centres will present COPUOS with their programmes and future activities.

Distinguished delegates and representatives, at this session of the Committee, you have before you a series of documents prepared by the Secretariat that capture the essence of the increasing role of the use of outer space technology by the United Nations family in meeting challenges to the global development goal.

First, you will have before you the report of the Twenty-Ninth Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities and the Secretary-General's Report on Coordination of Space Activities in the United Nations System. These two reports will be considered under our new agenda item "Use of Space Technology by United Nations Entities". This new agenda item was introduced in order to further strengthen the interaction between the Committee and the Inter-Agency Meeting which is the primary agency mechanism in the United Nations system to coordinate space-related activities by United Nations entities.

You will also have before you a draft report of COPUOS concerning our contribution to the Commission of Sustainable Development under its thematic cluster for the period 2010-2011. This draft contribution by our Committee will be considered and agreed upon when we consider the agenda item on the implementation of UNISPACE III.

You also have before you a document prepared by the Secretariat on the work of the Office for Outer Space Affairs and other United Nations entities in addressing climate change. This document will serve as an important contribution when we come to the new agenda item "Space and Climate Change".

Distinguished delegates and representatives, this concerted effort to enhance the role of the United Nations-wide inter-agency mechanism on space-related activities and to foster the important link between the United Nations system and regional coordination mechanisms and to enhance the closer cooperation between COPUOS and the global development agenda, all give us an important impetus to advance the overall role of COPUOS as the only intergovernmental body at global level that is a platform, a sound platform for

international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

Now the Committee and its two Subcommittees have both shown the will of its members to advance this role by making recent important decisions in terms of protecting the Earth and the space environment and in enhancing the capacity of States in promoting economic, social and cultural development and by enhancing the understanding of regulatory frameworks and mechanisms to that effect.

I would, in particular, and to be brief, point out the following achievements of the common efforts of both the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the Legal Subcommittee of promoting implementation at the national level of the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of COPUOS, endorsed by the General Assembly in 2007.

I am pleased to note the ongoing activities of member States and international organizations aimed at the mitigation of space debris and that the interaction between the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee is evolving.

The adoption, and this is another important achievement, by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee this year of the Safety Framework for Nuclear Power Source Applications in Outer Space which demonstrated a successful inter-relationship between our intergovernmental body and the Atomic Energy Agency. All of us are very grateful for the contribution to this work made by the Agency and in particular to Mr. Sam Harbison from the United Kingdom for his dedication and skilful leadership of the Working Group and the Joint Expert Group.

Distinguished delegates and representatives, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and Legal Subcommittee which held their sessions earlier this year made considerable progress under their respective agendas. I would like to commend Mr. Aboubekr-Seddik Kedjar of Algeria and Professor Vladimir Kopal of the Czech Republic for their skilful guidance of the work of these bodies. The Working Group of the Whole of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee under the able chairmanship of Mr. K. Radhakrishnan of India made significant progress on the matters considered under its mandate. On behalf of the Committee, I warmly congratulate Mr. Radhakrishnan, and friend, for skilfully guiding the Working Group. The Working Group on Near-Earth Objects of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee

and Action Team 14 are making considerable progress under their respective work plans.

Now, on behalf of the Committee, I would to sincerely thank Mr. Richard Crowther of the United Kingdom for his dedication and his able leadership of the Working Group and the Action Team. Let me also express my thanks to the Association of Space Explorers for its highly valuable and forward-looking report which contributed significantly to this progress and process.

The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee continuously considers the ways it develops in the field of global navigation satellite systems and the benefits that the use of this brings to the world's economies and societies. I am pleased to note that the Subcommittee is regularly given a report on the activities of the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems by the Chairman of the ICG. This important platform for international cooperation and coordination among GNSS providers in order to achieve interoperability is a unique endeavour and contributes highly to the overall aim of efficient interaction in one of the most important fields of space applications.

The United Nations Programme on Space Applications continues to play an important role in implementing the recommendations of UNISPACE III, particularly in improving the capacity of developing countries to use space technology to support their efforts to attain sustainable development.

On the basis of proposals made by the Office, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee recommended the proposed activities for the Programme for 2009 for approval by the Committee at this session, as contained in the report of the Subcommittee. The Office will present this at this session.

I note with pleasure the progress made in the implementation of the activities of the United Nations SPIDER for 2009 and the plan of work for 2010-2011 endorsed by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee this year.

Let me also express my appreciation for the voluntary resources, and this is very important for the SPIDER Programme, that various member States have made and for the willingness expressed by the rest of member States to make cash and in-kind contributions to support implementation of the Programme.

The United Nations SPIDER is becoming an essential mechanism and a very strong tool for better

coordination of disaster management efforts at national and regional levels.

The International Heliophysical Year 2007 has been successfully concluded. I am pleased to note that the work of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee will continue its specific progress on the effects of space weather on Earth and its impact on, *inter alia*, communication and transport. This is a special field where the indispensable tool of space science shows the direct role it can play in sustainable development of the Earth and space environment.

I am also pleased to note that the Secretariat of the Group on Earth Observations continued this year to make a presentation to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, at the invitation of the General Assembly, on progress made in the implementation of a 10-year Work Plan for Global Earth Observation Systems, GEOS.

Distinguished delegations, the Working Group on the Status and Application of the Five United Nations Treaties on Outer Space of the Legal Subcommittee made progress under the able chairmanship of Mr. Vassilios Cassapoglou of Greece, who unfortunately is not with us today. On behalf of the Committee, I would like to sincerely express our thanks to Mr. Cassapoglou for his dedication and able leadership.

I note with satisfaction that the Outer Space Treaty now has 100 States Parties.

The Working Group on Matters Relating to the Definition and Delimitation of Outer Space, under the able leadership of Mr. José Monserrat Filho of Brazil, continued its important examination of regulatory frameworks and practices on this subject. The Committee would like to sincerely congratulate Mr. Monserrat Filho for his contribution.

One of the key spheres here is how to promote space law, in particular for developing countries. We have noted that dissemination of information and education and research and development are necessary to enhance capacity in this field. I am very pleased to note that the Office for Outer Space Affairs includes cooperation with an Expert Group of Educators in Space Law.

And the Directors of the Regional Centres for Space Science and Technology Education, affiliated to the United Nations, presented to the Subcommittee this year the first draft outline of a curriculum for a basic

course on space law that will initiate space law studies at the Regional Centres.

The exchange of information of the agenda item "General Exchange of Information on National Legislation Relevant to the Peaceful Exploration and Use of Outer Space" within a framework of a four-year plan will enable the Legal Subcommittee to examine the main legislative developments taking place at national level in order to identify common principles, norms and procedures.

I am pleased to note that in 2009 a Working Group on this item was established under the very skilful and able chairmanship of Professor Irmgard Marboe of Austria. The Working Group examined national regulatory mechanisms, has already provided a strong fundament for a highly productive continuation under its Work Plan. On behalf of the Committee, I express my warm appreciation to Mrs. Marboe.

Distinguished delegates and representatives, the role of international organizations and other entities in the space field continue to be of major importance to our common endeavour of promoting space activities at the national, regional and global level. I would like to underscore the interaction with space agencies that has increased in the past years. I am impressed by their commitment to international cooperation. They have created very interesting antecedents in showing this kind of cooperation.

I have already mentioned in my statement some high-level regional decision-making processes. In addition, we have gained the invaluable support to many other efforts. Let me mention one of these, the International Astronautical Federation, IAF. The other respective host countries, it organizes every year the International Astronautical Congress which provides a fundamental dialogue between all stakeholders in the space field, both at governmental and private sector level. This year the IAC will be hosted by the Republic of Korea and I am very pleased to welcome the members of the Organizing Committee, and the local Organizing Committee who are on visit here to COPOUS. We have already been very much impressed by the way that they have organized these events. Next year the IAC will be hosted by the Czech Republic and in 2011 by South Africa, the initiative by South Africa to establish during the IAC 2011 an Interregional Space Forum is very encouraging.

Also I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation to IAF for having given me an opportunity to address its Executive Board

during its spring meetings this year. It was a great occasion to reinforce our already strong cooperation. On behalf of the Committee, I would like to sincerely thank the IAF for having organized a highly successful symposium at the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee this year on the theme “The Role of Earth Observation Satellites in Promoting Understanding of and Addressing Climate Change Concerns”, as well as the International Institute of Space Law and the European Centre for Space Law for having very successfully organized a symposium at this year’s session of the Legal Subcommittee on the theme “The Thirtieth Anniversary of the Moon Agreement: Retrospect and Prospects”.

The participation of youth through the Space Generation Advisory Council, which has produced important contributions to our work, is also very welcome.

I also noted with appreciation that the Secure World Foundation has co-sponsored a good number of interesting events on a broad spectrum of space matters.

The work of the International Academy of Astronautics is to be commended, not least for the involvement in the International Year of Astronomy 2009.

Since our last session, we have witnessed many achievements in space achieved by members of this Committee concerning that all delegations are to be presented with a CD ROM containing the comprehensive publication “Highlights in Space 2008”, which was also distributed at the two Subcommittees this year. I will not, at this time, go into depth of these efforts. The number of activities is quite impressive. Nevertheless, let me express my sincere gratitude to the Committee on Space Research, COSPAR. The IAF and the IISL for having produced this publication, a publication which gives us all up-to-date knowledge on a wide spectrum of space activities at different levels.

These are but a few examples of the invaluable support given to COPUOS by other observer organizations.

Distinguished representatives and delegates, as Chairman of the Committee, I am guided by the vision that the Committee will continue to strengthen its major role in shaping the international standards for space activities and in promoting international cooperation at the global, regional and interregional levels for the benefit of all countries.

Since our last session of COPUOS, I have taken part in many, it has been my privilege and my great luck to participate in many international and regional activities around the world in nearly every corner of the Earth, both at a governmental level and at the level of scientific, legal and political institutions. I have visited, again I was fortunate in being able to visit several space agencies and scientific institutions and to take part in seminars and workshops at universities and centres of learning. I was able to hear directly what is being done outside of COPUOS and this is very important for the Chair. And after listening to a large range of opinions, it is going to be that there is a strong commitment by all actors here to further advance our innovative global approach to space-related matters. Through all of these experiences, I was able to share today with you what I believe will be a good plan for the future.

Let me know share a few personal views by way of conclusion to this opening statement.

OK, one of the first things that I think is very obvious is that the world is entering an era of shared global utilities from space and that the global economy and security are increasingly reliant on space activities which support a myriad of applications and utilities on Earth. The growing reliance on space technology and the increasing pace of international space activities necessitate, I believe, a coordinated and strategic approach to space activities at a global level within the United Nations as a whole.

The space environment is changing and changing rapidly with an internationalization and globalization of the space sector with a growing number of States seeking to develop space capacities in every region of the world. This is a fact that we can no longer ignore or to acquire new ones, new capacities, as well as non-governmental actors extending their involvement in space activities.

So we believe that we should begin to develop a more inclusive approach that involves all actors while always keeping in mind the critical needs of societies and major populations of the world, especially in developing countries, providing a unique platform in the United Nations for dialogue and cooperation among States and international organizations, both intergovernmental and non-governmental.

The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, as well as its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and Legal Subcommittee have a formidable role in further promoting their own

capacities as the main intergovernmental body in the space arena, in my opinion. In order to adapt to emerging challenges to the global community, the United Nations system, in close coordination with its member States needs to come up with holistic solutions to current and emerging global problems. A strategic role of the United Nations is fundamental in achieving the long-term requirements of the global community in sustainable uses of outer space.

It is, therefore, time, in my opinion, to all together outline clear objectives to strengthen the interaction between member States and the United Nations system, in particular on the role of space tools for global development agendas. In order to have a better positioning here, vis-à-vis, this theme, the overall objectives and priorities of the United Nations needs a sound policy, a sound policy which is relevant to the overall objectives and priorities of the United Nations. This is what is essential to promote the development and application of space activities for the benefit of mankind. This holistic approach, this would provide over-arching guidance for a broad spectrum of stakeholders in the space arena and would promote improved coordination and cooperative governance of space activities. Hence, the need for greater coordination between the different bodies and entities that are part of the United Nations system dealing with space topics. We need to have a much more coordinated vision. In my opinion, the United Nations systems and its member States cannot afford not to respond collectively to the challenges of the rapidly evolving space arena in the twenty-first century. At this tenth anniversary of UNISPACE III, we must shape future strategies to that end, building on what we have already achieved.

That is why I, in the form of a CGR, I have advanced a series of proposals called "In-President's Initiatives", "Chairman's Initiatives" and our vision of how we can develop a United Nations space policy. And this document, which you will all have this week, I would ask that this document be a concept paper, a reference paper, a forward-looking document, as a result of the endeavour of all of us as to what we could have as a future vision of the United Nations in this field. This is, I think, a good way to advance towards the future.

To conclude, let me say that 40 years ago, in 1969, Neil Armstrong's first steps on the Moon epitomized the leading path of our common endeavours to ensure that the technical progress is made available to all peoples and all nations. This is a key responsibility, I believe, of direct concern to the United Nations as the sole body representing all

mankind and should be assumed with dynamism and generosity, this responsibility. I emphasize generosity.

Thank you for your attention.

General exchange of views (agenda item 4)

Now, following our agenda, I now propose that we move to item 4, General Exchange of Views. The first speakers on my list are the People's Republic of China and it is, for me, and a special honour to express welcome to Yang Liwei, an astronaut who is visiting us today. Well, let me, without any further ado, give the floor to Mr. Yang Liwei.

Mr. L. YANG (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, as a Taikonaut myself, I feel very honoured and pleased to attend this fifty-second session of COPUOS in Vienna today and please allow me to express my sincere greetings to Mr. Chairman and to all the distinguished delegates present here and my best wishes for a complete success of this session.

In the past few decades, the world aerospace industry, especially the manned space flights have been developing rapidly with constant breakthroughs and tremendous achievements. There has never been an industry like the aerospace industry which has managed to pull together almost the entire human wisdom and the creativity in developing, researching and perfecting technology, though the road ahead is still arduous and difficult. The exploration by mankind into our outer space and unknown world has demonstrated an unprecedented granduous prospect and the space activities have produced an ever-greater impact on the human civilization and social progress.

In the history of human development, the Chinese nation had once contributed a splendid ancient civilization to the world since its founding the new China by relying on its own strengths has embarked on a new journey of space development. In 1992, China re-launched its manned space flight project with clearly defined goals and directions. Taking solid and steady steps, one-by-one, the project has overseen the successful launches of spaceship Shenzhou-1 to Shenzhou-4 which conducted unmanned space flight tests. Shenzhou-5 was the first manned flight, Shenzhou-6 with two taikonauts(?) on board for multiple days mission and last year's Shenzhou-7 which carried out a successful space walk by a taikonaut(?).

This is the common noble idea of mankind and harmony is the shared wonderful aspiration of

mankind. Both of them are contained in the traditional genes of the Chinese blood and the culture. From the very outset, China has always taken peace and harmony as its purpose in the use of space activities. The Chinese Government has always maintained that the outer space is the shared wealth of all mankind and has consistently advocated for the peaceful exploration and use of outer space for the common good and benefits of all mankind.

As a next step, China will start building space stations conducting moon landings, exploring Mars and further promote the development of its space activities in line with its national needs and real situations.

Every space ship sent up into space by China is for peace and harmony just as one would wish when he sends off the doves of peace into the sky.

We fully recognize the importance of international cooperation in the field of space exploration. While I was flying in outer space on board Shenzhou-5, I displayed the United Nations flag and made a declaration for the peaceful use of outer space for the benefits of all mankind.

Since the first visit to the United Nations, I, the delegation of Chinese manned space flights project, 19 May 2004, at the invitation of the United Nations, we have always maintained a close and friendly relationship with the United Nations and conducted extensive exchanges and mutual learning with astronauts and space agencies of many other countries. Our cooperation with them have also been developing effectively. We believe that the international space cooperation should follow the basic principles as set out in the Declaration on International Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space adopted by the United Nations General Assembly at its fifty-first session in 1996 and that the space resources should be explored and used peacefully on the basis of equality and the mutual benefits, mutual complementarities and the mutual learning for the benefits of all mankind.

We sincerely wish for a lasting friendship and a deeper and a wider cooperation with other countries and a more beautiful prospect of peace and development of all mankind. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Video

The mission of Shenzhou-7 manned space flight.

At 21.10 hours on 25 September 2008 Beijing time, the Shenzou-7 was launched by Long March-2F at Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre. On board, the three Chinese astronauts, Zhai Zhigang, Liu Boming and Jing Haipeng.

Five hundred and 79 seconds after ignition, the carrier rocket sent the spacecraft into the pre-determined ellipse orbit. At 4.03 minutes on 26 September, after its first orbit, the spacecraft completed the orbital manoeuvre successfully and entered into a near-circle(?) orbit at a height of 343 kilometres above the Earth.

From the ninth orbit, the astronauts, Zhai Zhigang and Liu Boming, took more than 10 hours to complete assembly and tests of the EVA(?) space suits and conduct in-orbit training and duly adapted to the micro-gravity environment in the outer space.

At 16.34 hours on 27 September, when Shenzhou-7 orbited for the twenty-ninth round, the Ground Flag Control Centre sent out the order of going out of the module. Zhai Zhigang and Liu Boming wearing the _____(?) and aluminium spacesuits respectively, started to conduct (endeavour?) EVAs.

At 16.41 hours, being supported and assisted by Liu Boing and Jing Haipeng, Zhai Zhigang opened the orbital module head and slipped out of the module successfully.

Facing to the video camera in _____ (*inaudible*) outside work of the orbital module and waving his hand, he quoted the Chinese people _____ (*inaudible*) all over the world and displayed China's national flag.

As planned, Zhai Zhigang retrieved the experiment samples, conducted a space walk and then returned to the orbital module safely.

At 17.00 hours, the orbital module head was closed and the EVA was completed successfully.

After orbiting the Earth for 45 rounds, Shenzou-7 landed safely at 17.37 hours on 28 September. The three astronauts came out of the re-entry module in sound physical conditions after a flight of 68 hours and 27 minutes altogether and the mission had achieved complete success.

During the flight mission, the spacecraft Shenzou-7, the launching vehicle, Long March-2F, the EVA spacesuits of Fatian(?) and RLM(?), as well as the data relay satellite, Tianlian-1, and onboard

terminals have proved good performance. All operated normally and provided good support to the astronauts' multi-day flight, especially the EVA.

The crew outstandingly completed every pre-planned operation and successfully completed the EVA.

After the EVA, the accompanying satellite was released and conducted a trial orbiting flight surrounding the orbital module.

During the in-orbit phase, the satellite data relay test of Tianlian-1 has also been successfully conducted. The whole flight mission has been organized scientifically and rigorously. The flight control centre and the _____(?) systems on the surface have accurately completed the telemetry, telecommunications, as well as the control operations.

The learning(?) system organized for search and rescue of astronauts and recovery of spacecraft with high efficiency.

According to a three-step _____(?) study of China's manned space engineering programme, China will make a breakthrough in the technologies used for space _____(?) and docking, developing a national space lab that can make long-term flight independently with _____ (*inaudible*) basis. Based on this, China will establish a space station for space applications of a larger scale with man attending on a long-term basis. With the development of aerospace technology, China will attain to new achievements in the exploration of the Universe and the peaceful use of outer space.

End of Video

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*): On behalf of the Committee, please allow me to express our gratitude for the presentation that we have had at the outset from astronaut, Yang Liwei, and let me mention that the other astronaut, who is seen on the video is Jing Haipeng, who is also here with us today and we would also like to salute.

However, let me mention that Mr. Liwei was the first Chinese member of the Shenzhou-5 manned space flight mission and Jing Haipeng was a member of the crew of Shenzhou-7 as I said, as you saw on the video, and we would like to thank them for their attendance.

My next speaker is the distinguished Ambassador, Yasuyoshi Komizo, from Japan, to whom I now give the floor.

Mr. Y. KOMIZO (Mr. J. YANAGI?) (Japan): Thank you Mr. Chairperson, distinguished delegations. My name is Yanagi, Director in charge of space affairs of the Japanese Foreign Ministry in Tokyo.

On behalf of the Japanese delegation, I am pleased, but I am a bit humbled after the Chinese astronauts, to have the opportunity to address this fifty-second session of COPUOS.

Japan wishes to express our sincere gratitude and respect for efforts of the Chairman, Ambassador Arévalo, Vice-Chairman, Dr. Suvit (Vibulsresth?), and Second Vice-Chairman, Mr. Santos, as well as the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, Dr. Othman, and her excellent staff.

Mr. Chairperson, before starting my presentation, I wish to commend your initiative towards what you call the United Nations Space Policy for an inclusive approach. Japan fully shares the participation and the basic thinking with you and we are delighted to work with you towards a United Nations Space Policy.

Nowadays there is an increasing number of nations and even private sectors which are embarking upon space activities and these activities are becoming more and more diversified. At the same, space applications have become vital not only in sharing economic and social prosperity, but also in solving global problems such as climate change and natural disasters.

We are now also facing emerging problems originating from outer space such as space debris. In this respect, Japan highly appreciates the role of COPUOS as a sole venue where the widest range of nations meet, share insight on experience, develop common ground and seek solutions with regard to various space issues.

Japan has been making modest contributions to COPUOS through dedicated participation in discussions of important agenda items such as implementation of UNISPACE III recommendations and by promoting a range of international cooperation efforts.

Today, I wish to first explain the basic plan for a space policy. The Japanese domestic, legal and

platform and thereafter, give examples of our international cooperation efforts to demonstrate Japan's contribution to COPUOS.

Mr. Chairman, according to the basic space law enacted last year, the basic plan for a space policy was adopted yesterday on 2 June, marking a turning point in the history of Japanese space activities. This five-year plan foreseeing the new 10 years aims to assist the policy priority from a research-oriented to a utilization-oriented. This plan also aims to realize, reach secure and certified(?) of our people and also to contribute to the international community.

From _____ (*not clear*) in this plan(?), I wish to touch upon the following three tiers(?) which embody Japan's position in contributing to COPUOS and other international activities.

First, what we call space diplomacy. Japan will accelerate diplomatic efforts towards formulating appropriate rules in space activities and to develop human resources so that our people, maybe including astronauts, can play a leading role in space-related international fora.

In addition, we will apply space technology as a tool for protecting human beings from the threat of disasters, climate change and other catastrophic events.

On the issue of climate change, we will contribute to the exploration of policy options through a Japanese satellite, Ibuki, which measures greenhouse gas on a global level with high accuracy. Ibuki will start the planned operation this august.

Second, promotion of leading-edge research and development. Japan will contribute to resolving the global environmental and energy programmes through leading-edge research and development and promote space science and manned space activities.

Kaguya, the lunar exploration mission of the larger scale, which will be completed next week, has acquired large amounts of data and achieved a tangible result to the balance(?) of our studies of the origin and evolution of the Moon.

With regard to the International Space Station, next weekend, one of the key board(?) elements on on-orbit storage facility and on-orbit main facility for experiments will be launched by the United States Space Shuttle and assembly to the International Space Station using Canadian robotic arms operated by a Japanese astronaut, Mr. Wakata.

We hope these activities will contribute to new scientific impacts.

Third, constellation for the environment. JAXA has developed its own Space Debris Mitigation Standard and has played an important role in the work of the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee.

Japan will promote observation of orbital objects to better identify the debris cooperation leading to the mitigation of debris and coordination to remove them with international cooperation and we participate proactively in making an appropriate international framework to manage the debris issue.

Under these players, Japan will continue to promote space exploration and utilization in the interests of all international communities, certainly in accordance with the space-related treaties and certainly in accordance with the Japanese Constitution. I will give a detailed presentation of this plan tomorrow morning here.

Mr. Chairperson, Japan has been providing an essential contribution to COPUOS through international cooperation in many, many fields, but today I wish to mention four cases.

First, as you mentioned, last December with Viet Nam, Japan successfully co-organized the Fifteenth Session of the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum, APRSAF-15, in Hanoi and Halong Bay, under the title "Space for Sustainable Development". The APRSAF-15 was attended by about 200 participants and lively discussions took place regarding concrete steps to enhance international cooperation. Especially Japan, we wish to express our appreciation to the Chairman of COPUOS, Ambassador Arévalo, for attending this APRSAF-15.

At the session, we launched two initiatives. The first is an initiative named "SAFE" or "Space Application for Environment" to observe climate change using Earth observation satellites. Another initiative is the APRSAF Satellite Project named "STAR" to jointly develop small satellites.

We hope that APRSAF will become a kind of model for regional space cooperation in regions outside the Asia-Pacific region.

Early next year, the Sixteenth Session of APRSAF will be held in Thailand. We welcome the participation of delegates from all interested countries including those from outside the Asia-Pacific region.

Second, Sentinel-Asia which is an international joint project that Japan initiated and served as the Secretariat, created for the purpose of disaster management and rescue support in large-scale disasters in the Asia region, has moved on to its second stage called "Step Two". The Step Two which includes an increasing number of satellites providing necessary data and high-speed large-capacity transmission experiments of disaster information using the Japanese satellite, Kizuna, will be performed between Thailand and the Philippines beginning this July.

Third, we have been promoting international cooperation using DAICHI as the Advanced Land Observation Satellite. JAXA has been a member of the International Charter on Space and Major Disasters since 2005 and contributes to the international disaster management through providing the data of DAICHI.

In addition, JAXA has started the cooperation with UNESCO with a view to monitoring world heritage sites using DAICHI. JAXA will acquire image data on 10 world heritage sites about twice a year to provide the data to UNESCO and we make a database of world heritage sites images.

Fourth, through Official(?) Governmental Assistance, ODA, Japan has been providing developing countries with more than astronomical equipment, such as astronomical optical telescopes and educational planetariums. In cooperation with educational and space agencies in developing countries, Japan will continue to work towards identifying the best ways to promote space education and to support sustainable development in these countries.

Japan will strengthen efforts to further enhance international cooperation truly with members of the United Nations and COPUOS so that the benefits from space activities can be shared and appreciated by all human beings.

I would like to conclude my remarks by stating again that we are ready to work, Mr. Chairperson, towards what we call a United Nations Space Policy, a so-called inclusive(?) approach.

Thank you for your kind attention.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*): Let me express thanks to the distinguished representative of Japan and let me apologize because this was Mr. Yasuyoshi Komizo. I was mistaken with the introduction. We very much appreciate Sir your

words concerning the initiatives taken as well as the regional cooperation programmes, especially those out of the Asia-Pacific region which I think is an excellent example of interregional efforts. Again, thank you for your contribution.

The next speaker on my list is a close friend, the Ambassador from Bolivia, Horacio Bazoberry, speaking on behalf of GRULAC.

Mr. H. BAZOBERRY (Bolivia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Thank you very much Ambassador and friend. Chairman, on behalf of GRULAC, let me express our gratitude and thanks for the work you have carried out in representation of the countries of our region, as the Chairman of this Committee. And, at the same time, distinguished Ambassador, Ciro Arévalo, let me express our firm belief that under your skilled leadership, the work of this session will be crowned a success.

Chairman, GRULAC, in its effort to help consolidate peace and international security, as well as strengthening international cooperation, reiterates its support in respect for the legal principles that serve as the foundation for the exploration and utilization of outer space for peaceful uses, highlighting in particular the principle of access to outer space on conditions of equality between all States with no discrimination among them, whatever their level of scientific, technical and economic development. In this respect, we support the regional activities aimed at strengthening the universal nature of the utilization and exploration of outer space, as well as the equitable and rational use.

The principle of non-appropriation of outer space, which includes the Moon and other celestial bodies, which cannot be the subject of appropriation by States or any claims of sovereignty for occupation or any other form.

We would also highlight the non-militarization of outer space. Its quality as the heritage of all mankind and its strict use for the improvement of living conditions and promotion of peace among peoples of this planet. Likewise, regional cooperation in the development of space activities as established in the Plenary of the United Nations General Assembly.

Chairman, in relation to the work of this Committee, GRULAC is very pleased to see the progress obtained and wishes to express its wish to continue to constructively discuss the items on our agenda as well as the inclusion of other areas related to its field of endeavour for the sake of promoting the

peaceful use of outer space and providing space technology to all peoples.

In relation to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space, GRULAC, with all respect to international norms, believes that the regulatory activities associated with the use of nuclear power sources in space is solely a duty of States, whatever their level of social, economic, scientific or technical development. It is a task that behoves all mankind.

We would also reiterate the international responsibility of States in national activities that presuppose the utilization of nuclear power sources in outer space, whether these are carried out by governmental organizations or non-governmental entities, as well as the importance that these be carried out for the benefit of peoples and not to their detriment.

For the specific case of space debris, GRULAC is very pleased to see the reception by the General Assembly of the Guidelines for the mitigation of space debris. Nevertheless, we believe that it is of priority importance to continue to work on this topic, in particular to pay closer attention to space debris coming from platforms with nuclear power sources as well as collisions of space objects with space debris and other related aspects as well, as well as those present in geostationary orbit, not to mention improvement of technology for surveillance of space debris.

We would encourage States to implement the above-mentioned Guidelines as well as to transmit to this Committee and to disseminate information on any efforts at reducing their production and mitigating the presence of space debris, especially those States that are, to a great extent, responsible for the current situation and those that have the capacity to adopt mitigation measures, all of this under resolution 62/217 of the General Assembly.

Chairman, one of the main responsibilities of the United Nations is to promote the progressive development of international law and its regulation. In this respect, GRULAC believes that it is absolutely necessary that this Committee contribute to promote the existing interaction between the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the Legal Subcommittee in order to promote new norms, regulations and protocols relative to the subjects of common interest in these international fora and which have an impact on the life of the planet, for example, the use of nuclear power sources, space debris, geostationary orbit, amongst others.

Chairman, in addition, and considering the topic of the nature and utilization of the geostationary orbit, GRULAC wishes to reiterate its position that this natural resource, which is limited, runs the risk of saturation. This is why we believe that its utilization should be further rationalized and be extended to all States, providing them with the possibility of accessing the geostationary orbit in egalitarian conditions, taking particular account of the needs and interests of developing countries, as well as the geographical location of specific countries under the principles established in the standard-setting efforts of the ITU and other norms and decisions of the United Nations.

This is why, in order to ensure the peaceful and sustainable use of geostationary orbit, GRULAC believes that it is necessary that the consideration of the above-mentioned themes be maintained in permanent discussion within the Committee and on the agendas of its two Subcommittees through the creation of different working groups, action groups or intergovernmental panels when necessary.

Chairman, following the Guidelines established by the United Nations General Assembly for the promotion of the consistency of its system, GRULAC is anxiously following the deliberations aimed at the review of the norms and procedures that regulate the admission, participation and membership of observers, taking into account of the importance of the contributions that these latter can make to the work of this Committee and its Subcommittees. Likewise, we feel that it is important to receive from non-governmental organizations that currently are accredited as observers, with information on the progress they have made in filling the requirements that are demanded by the currently established norms of this Committee, as we agreed on in the last session.

And lastly, Chairman, GRULAC recognizes the importance of regional cooperation in the development of space activities. And in this respect, we would highlight the importance of the mechanisms established by the Space Conference of the Americas and express our special gratitude to Ecuador which has taken charge of the Pro Tempore Secretariat of the Fifth Space Conference of the Americas since 2006 and for the activities carried out under the mandate established by the Action Plan of the Fifth Space Conference of the Americas.

The GRULAC Group would like to highlight the upcoming Workshop for the Application of Comprehensive Space Technology and Sustainable Development for the Mountainous Regions of the Andean Countries, to be held in Lima, Peru, 14 to 19

September 2009, which has been made possible thanks to the support of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, as well as UNEP, the ESA and other donor governments.

Let me conclude, Chairman, by reiterating on behalf of GRULAC, our willingness to work together with all to contribute to a productive debate in this session in order to conclude with success. Let me personally reiterate my thanks to you for everything you have been able to contribute to Latin America, the Caribbean and to Bolivia. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*): Thank you very much distinguished Ambassador of Bolivia. Let me particularly thank you for the words that you, on behalf of my region, have expressed which is, of course, an honour and a privilege in undertaking the tasks that have been commended to me. Thank you for your statement which lists a series of activities that are taking place in Latin America and which are very interesting. There is a tradition in the Latin American Group really and I am thinking of many things, for example, in Colombia had seminars on outer space, this was some of the ones that you mentioned for Ecuador, this had never been done before in Colombia, a seminar that was held in Bogotá dealing with legal aspects here, space law, and which was attended by many European represents. There was also a meeting in Barranquilla which had the participation of numerous schoolchildren. This was also sponsored by NASA. It was a very educational, a very didactical meeting to teach children what the long-term responsibilities of space efforts entail. All of this just to make mention of these other aspects of the efforts being made in the region, which I think we will hear about later.

Thank you and it is now my pleasure and honour to give the floor to the distinguished representative, Helmut Boeck of Austria, to take the floor.

Mr. H. BOECK (Austria) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Thank you Mr. Chairman. First of all, let me express the satisfaction of the Austrian delegation to see you at the head of our deliberations here at this session of the Committee. We are convinced that your lengthy experience and deep knowledge will make a crucial difference in the unfolding and progress of international cooperation in this field during this session, as well as amply proved during the previous one.

Consequently, my delegation is very pleased to offer to you and to the other members of the Office, our full support in achievement of the goals.

We would also like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, Mazlan Othman, and her team for their deep dedication and professionalism in the management of the Office in preparation of this meeting.

(*Continued in English*) Mr. Chairman, this Committee has held to create the unique spirit of cooperation that has dominated much of the workings of the Vienna-based United Nations institutions and often transcended ideological and cultural barriers.

Vienna, home of a variety of institutions with space pull, has epitomized the spirit and dedication. Since 1979, Vienna has been one of the headquarters of the United Nations. It is, thus, with great pride that the Vienna International Centre celebrates its thirtieth anniversary this year.

In this spirit, the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, UNISPACE III, which took place in 1999 in Vienna, has provided important new initiatives to the work of our Committee, extending its scope of work and helping to provide benefits of space technology applications to a growing number of nations, in particular developing countries.

On the occasion of its tenth anniversary this year, we look very much forward to discussing the progress achieved in the course of this session.

Austria notes that the Conference's main objectives have been achieved to a large extent, which were, *inter alia*, to promote effective means of using space solutions to address problems of regional or global significance and to strengthen member States capabilities to use research-based results for their social, economic and cultural development.

We also note with satisfaction that the implementation of the recommendations have yielded concrete results, like the establishment of the United Nations Platform for Space-Based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response, UNSPIDER, and the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems, ICG.

As a contribution by Austria to the tenth anniversary of UNISPACE III, we have organized an exhibition of Austrian space expertise and specifically Austrian projects that are related to UNSPIDER. This exhibition can be viewed in the corridor and in front of Conference Room II.

Let me express my gratitude to the organizers of this exhibition, the Austrian Space Agency, the Austrian Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology, in close cooperation with Austro-Space, the Association of Austrian Space Industries. The exhibits can still be seen until Friday, 5 June.

Mr. Chairman, the Secretary-General, in his report on the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, indicated that the impact of climate change and communities around the world would continue to grow. Unfortunately, we are not yet on track in strengthening the resilience of nations and communities to disasters, as agreed in the Hyogo Framework for Action. This presents an urgent problem which needs to be tackled as soon as possible.

Particularly in a difficult process of adapting to the after-effects of climate change, and coping with natural disasters and extreme weather events, space-based technologies have tremendous potential for early warning, as well as effective relief and rehabilitation efforts.

Mr. Chairman, as mentioned before, the UNSPIDER Programme is a concrete result of deliberations that reach back to UNISPACE III in 1999. UNSPIDER, as we know, acts as the gateway to access to space-based information for disaster management, as a bridge between the space and the disaster management community, and also aims at facilitating capacity-building and institution-building.

UNSPIDER has already now, about two years after its launch, offered a tangible added-value to communities at risk by linking the disaster management community with the space community.

Austria has helped to jump-start UNSPIDER, established as a programme of the United Nations under the authority and supervision of the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, and has provided considerable financial and human resources from its inception.

An important share of our contribution for 2009, the equivalent of approximately US\$180,000, in addition to the provision of an Associate Expert to assist the staff of UNSPIDER in Vienna, will be dedicated to reach out to the expert community in developing countries and to support capacity-building. This is also in line with Austria's tradition of actively supporting forums for exchange between developed and developing countries in the area of space activities.

Last year's UNSPIDER Workshops in Barbados and Fiji, financed by Austria with a cash contribution of US\$180,000, and focusing on the Caribbean and the Pacific Islands in particular, have reiterated our impression that real results have been achieved in making those communities at risk more resilient and prepared to cope with disasters.

We welcome the possibilities for a further follow-up to these Workshops and the International UNSPIDER Workshop in Vienna, currently taking place back-to-back from 2 to 4 June, an important part of which will be dedicated to small island developing States and capacity-building.

We are particularly pleased that a considerable share of Austrian experts also participates in this Vienna Workshop, presenting a wide-ranging Austrian expertise in the field of space information for disaster management and emergency response.

We are also particularly pleased that considerable progress has been made in the implementation of the Work Plan during the year 2008, as shown by the progress report submitted by the Office during the forty-sixth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee in February this year.

We, therefore, thank both the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs and the Programme Coordinator of UNSPIDER for their tireless efforts in implementing the Programme according to the ambitious programme for 2007 to 2009, as endorsed by the General Assembly.

A new Work Plan has been presented for 2010 and 2011 that we fully support.

Austria also encourages all member States that have not made any commitment so far to seek ways of supporting UNSPIDER. The Work Plan 2010-2011 is indeed ambitious and the Programme will also need extra-budgetary support in order to deliver on its promises. Disasters, such as those in Myanmar and China last year, have again clearly shown how destructive natural disasters can be. UNSPIDER has to ensure that access to space-based information is available throughout the disaster cycle. It can best perform this task if the necessary resources are being made available.

Mr. Chairman, another aspect of the Austrian engagement in the field of space applications for sustainable development is the continuing series of symposia in Graz which have proven to be a valuable

platform for exchange between developing and developed countries.

The Office for Outer Space Affairs, the Government of Austria, the State of Syria, the City of Graz, and ESA, are jointly organizing in close collaboration with Joanneum Research from 2009 to 2011 another series of three consecutive symposia to promote the use of space technology and its application.

The first series held from 2003 to 2005 focused on water-related issues, while the second series of symposia, held from 2006 to 2008, was dedicated to the Earth's atmosphere. The current series of symposia aims to enhance access to space application tools for sustainable development through building indigenous institutional capabilities in basic space technology.

The present symposium to be held in Graz, Austria, from 8 to 11 September of this year, will focus on "Small Satellite Technology for Sustainable Development", that is primarily on small satellite mission design. Presentations will include case studies of successful applications of small satellite technology that provide cost-effective solutions and essential information for planning and implementing programmes or projects related to sustainable development.

The symposium will also feature presentations on both the technology and applications of small satellites for capacity-building, establishing a small satellite programme in the context of policy, planning and implementation and launching opportunities for small satellites.

Participants will also have the opportunity to visit the test laboratory at the Technical University in Graz where the first Austrian nano-satellite, TUGSAT-1/BRITE-Austria is currently assembled and tested. The scientific goal of the Bright Target Explorer BRITE Mission is the investigation of the brightness variations of massive luminous stars. The mission is designed and carried out in close cooperation with the University of Toronto in Canada.

In mid-2010, two BRITE satellites will be launched simultaneously, namely TUGSAT-1 and UNIBRITE, to constitute a small satellite constellation. UNIBRITE is procured by the University of Vienna from the Space Flight Lab at the University of Toronto. This constellation of spacecraft will carry out star photometry in two spectral ranges with high precision over a period of at least two years.

The launch of the satellite will not only bring Austria into a new area in a technical respect, but will also constitute the factual basis for the development for national space legislation to further govern the exploration and use of outer space. We, therefore, particularly welcome the establishment of the Working Group on National Space Law in the Legal Subcommittee and appreciate the support of member States for the election of Professor Irmgard Marboe as Chairperson of this Group. The work undertaken in this Working Group will seem to be of tangible benefit for those countries that have not yet draft national space legislation.

The University of Vienna and Professor Marboe will hold a public conference next Tuesday evening looking at "Perspectives of Space Exploration and the Role of the United Nations". Representatives of some space-faring nations, as well as from ESPE(?) and the Office for Outer Space Affairs, have been invited to present activities and plans of space exploration and their international perspectives.

Delegates of COPUOS are cordially invited to join this Conference on 9 June at 7.00 p.m. at the University of Vienna's main building. Leaflets for this Conference will be distributed to the delegates.

Mr. Chairman, let me also refer to an issue we will be discussing, that is the threat posed by near-Earth objects, NEOs. I would like to convey our appreciation for the initiative taken by the Association of Space Explorers to constitute an Inter-disciplinary International Panel on Asteroid Threat Mitigation, which was to articulate the threat potential of near-Earth object impacts, the available technologies and their legal and institutional implications.

We would like to express our thanks for the Panel's support submitted to the Working Group on NEOs at the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee which we see as just another example of the valuable contributions from the science community and from civil society to global governance processes.

The issue of asteroid threat mitigation is in many respects typical for the new agenda to which the United Nations and its member States are challenged to find the needed responses. There are important legal issues to be addressed which are also of pertinence to the issue of the institutional allocation of responsibility.

The technological requirements of asteroid threat mitigation would imply a partnership between leading nations in space technology and the

international community with appropriate mandating processes of those willing and capable to help.

The decision-making process at the intergovernmental level would also require new processes of capacity-building with technical know-how being fused with the capability for political responsibility and decision-making.

Institutionally, COPUOS, as well as the Office for Outer Space Affairs, could provide the appropriate input into the deliberations of the political organs of the United Nations.

Mr. Chairman, before coming to the end of my intervention, let me shortly turn to Austria's contribution on the European and the national level.

In November 2008, the Austrian Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology pledged approximately 200 million Euros for the next three to four years for ESA programmes. There are mandatory and optional programmes as well as the Guyana Space Centre.

In addition to Austrian participation in EUMETSAT, Austria is involved in a broad array of activities and programmes including programmes related to Earth observation, navigation and telecommunications, such as GMES.

Austrian stakeholders play a significant role in the GMES process since the beginning especially in activities related to remote sensing, land monitoring and emergency response.

This engagement will continue in the upcoming EU Seventh Framework Programme Activities to include also the atmosphere and services related to security.

Within the Austrian Space Programme, one key topic of last year's major programme element was dedicated to a GMES initiative in Austria. Applicants were encouraged to develop a project proposal that referred to UNSPIDER.

In 2009, the Programme will focus on space sciences, space technology development and space technology applications.

Finally, let me mention the Alpbach Summer School which is held annual since 1975 in Alpbach, Austria, and well-known for providing in-depth teaching on aspects of space science and space technology with the aim of advancing the training and

working experience of European graduates, post-graduate students, young scientists and engineers.

The 2009 Summer School Alpbach from 21 to 30 July will focus on the theme "Exoplanets: Discovering and characterizing Earth-type planets", addressing innovative mission concepts aiming to increase our knowledge of extra solar planets.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, and following a tradition, I have the pleasure to announce that the Secretary-General for Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Johannes Köller(?), invites Heads of Delegations to a Viennese Heurigen Evening that is planned for Thursday, 11 June next week. Please check the invitation that will be distribution for further details.

On this occasion, we look forward as in the past to another fruitful and more informal exchange that will assist COPUOS to chart the course to its ever-closer commoration(?) of humankind in outer space.

(Continued in Spanish) Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Thank you very much Ambassador. Let me congratulate you first of all on your Spanish. It is so good. It seems you learnt it in Colombia, in all modesty.

Let me thank you for those kind words to the Chair and I am sure that all of the initiatives, particularly those supported by the Office and UNSPIDER is very much appreciated by the international community. It is a programme that has really taken on a lot of importance and has been very well received in all regions of the world. Thank you.

Now the next speaker is the distinguished Ambassador of Italy, His Excellency Gianni Ghisi. I will continue in English Sir.

(Continued in English) Is it your first?

Mr. G. GHISI (Italy): At the outset, let me reiterate to you the full support of the Italian delegation. I am sure that under your well-known able guidance, the Committee will reach a fruitful conclusion in view of enhancing the United Nations Space Policy as you suggested.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, Dr. Othman, for the excellent preparatory work.

Mr. Chairperson, despite the financial crisis, the space activities remain high in the Italian Government's agenda and whilst striving to fulfil at our best our role of current presidency of the European Space Agency.

While warmly greeting and congratulating the Chinese astronauts who honour us with their presence today, let me inform you that two of the six European Space Agency new astronauts are Italian nationals and I am proud to say that one of them is a woman.

Italy attaches great importance to COPUOS as a unique opportunity to exchange views on a global scale between scientists and policy-makers and to reach agreements between States. The promotion of regional and interregional cooperation is an important component of the Italian National Plan for Space Activities. We are fully convinced that the peaceful use of outer space can be achieved only through an enhanced international cooperation for the benefit of all the members of the international community and as a contribution to sustainable development. Italy is engaged in sharing, particularly with developing countries, our national expertise and best practices through education and training programmes.

Allow me to mention just some of them, promoted by the Italian Space Agency, with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other Italian institutions.

Some specific training projects for Argentinian, Kenyan and Iraqi young scientists are under execution. A Master Course on Special Institutions and Policies has just commenced. The course is designed to provide both institutional and practical, professional training in the field of the spatial governance and policies, with special attention to the legal, politics and economic branches related to the exploitation of the extra-atmospheric space.

A Master Course in Space Applications for Early Alert and Response to Emergencies will start next year at the Italian-Argentinian Regional Centre for Space Research, Education and Technology Promotion. The Centre is about to be established at the Gulich Institute in Cordoba.

Finally, I would like to mention that the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs and the Politecnico di Torino are currently working together on a long-term fellowship programme which will provide students and experts from developing countries and from countries with economies in transition with an

opportunity to attend a specialized Master Degree on navigation and related applications.

Mr. Chairman, coming to an important item we will discuss in the next days, space and climate change, let me stress that the role of space in supporting the assessment of climate change, was chosen by the Italian current _____(?) presidency(?) as a key item in the discussion on study and protection of the environment.

During the G8 Meeting Siracusa, the Ministers of Environment agreed to strengthen their action in considering biodiversity, mitigating and adapting to climate change and reducing poverty. Climate change impacts and biodiversity will be also the agenda of the forthcoming G8 Africa Outreach where, *inter alia*, the safeguarding of the Congo Basin Forests and their biodiversity will be discussed.

In this spirit, my delegation is glad to welcome the Indian proposal to include space on support of preservation and assessment of climate change impact as a new item on our agenda.

Allow me now, Mr. Chairman, to briefly anticipate three subjects that my delegation will bring to the debate later on: space debris, satellite navigation, and long-term sustainability of space activities.

Italy intends to reiterate the proposal presented at the last Scientific and Technical Subcommittee for the creation of an international databank on space debris.

The United Nations COPUOS Secretariat, through its website and the registration information from member States, could be an important actor in that too.

In order to achieve this, we believe, that an Ad Hoc Working Group should be established expeditiously to explore possible solutions as subsequently referred to COPUOS.

As to satellite navigation, Italy strongly contributed to the United Nations COPUOS relevant Working Group and favoured the establishment of the International Committee on Satellite Navigation, which will be hosted next year by Italy and the European Union in Turin.

Coming to my third item, as our delegation will reiterate during the debate, Italy believes that the sustainability of outer space exploration activities is a

matter of concern not only for space-faring States, regional space organizations and for commercial satellite operations, but also for the international community as a whole. Only by establishing universal cooperation rules, the space activities will become sustainable over the long term. Our discussions and deliberations in COPUOS are crucial and instrumental to this goal. With this conviction, Italy supports the inclusion of the item “Long-Term Sustainability of Space Activities” in the COPUOS Scientific and Technical Subcommittee’s next agenda in 2010.

In this connection, let me also recall the Italian position on the Draft Code of Conduct that, as expressed by you, is the following.

We believe that the Code of Conduct, which the States would participate on a voluntary basis, with standard safety, security and predictability of activities in outer space, among other things, by limiting or minimizing harmful interference, collisions or accidents in outer space.

To conclude, Mr. Chairman, allow me to touch briefly on two issues, very distant in time and content but indeed connected.

The first is Earth observation in connection with earthquakes in Italy. The second is when we think 400 years ago, Galileo point his “cannocchiale”, his telescope, for the first time to the Universe. The first interferogram of the area hit by the recent disastrous earthquake in the Abruzzo Region, was obtained to using data from the satellite system, COSMOS-SKYMED.

Soon after, the collaboration with our Space Agency has been particularly useful for the civil protection in planning and executing operations and emergency assistance in the affected area.

Earth observation is a sector in which Italy is ever-more present and is ahead of times with a system such as COSMOS-SKYMED and with all the aerospace sector. We thought that our experience could be useful for COPUOS members and we would like to share it through a technical presentation we will offer to you on 10 June.

Earth observation, as any other of the activities we are discussing here, would not exist if Galileo had not started 400 years ago the celestial discovery with his telescope. To contribute to the celebration of the International Year of Astronomy, which marked the fourth century and anniversary of the first astronomical observation by Galileo Galilei, the

Italian delegation has organized a Round Table Discussion on astro-physics and cosmology for a hundred years after Galileo, meant to be a historical and perspective reflection on the progress of our knowledge of the Cosmos. As it will appear in the Journal, this COPUOS side event will take place on 11 June during the lunch break.

On behalf of the Italian Space Agency, I would like to cordially invite you, Mr. Chairman, as well as the distinguished delegates and the Secretariat, to participate and I thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*): Thank you very much distinguished Ambassador. You highlighted a series of very important, a series of topics for our work here and we would like to thank you for your words about the United Nations space efforts here, and above all, the implication of the use of satellites in the case of the natural disaster that occurred in the centre of Italy, and on behalf of the Committee, we would express our deep regrets. We can see here the impact that space tools can have in facing these disasters which strike indiscriminately of any level of development of the State.

And also it is very important to mention the 400 years that have transpired since Galileo’s efforts and we are very pleased to see the Round Table that you mentioned. Thank you again for your words.

On my list I now have the distinguished Ambassador, Raimundo González Aninat, from Chile. You have the floor Sir.

Mr. R. GONZÁLEZ ANINAT (Chile) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Thank you very much Chair. If I am not mistaken, we are still on the general discussion and exchange of opinions so let me express a few opinions. I do not have a written statement prepared. I just wanted to share a few ideas with you because the current challenges we face, I think, necessitate a flexible dialogue, as flexible as possible in the light of events that occur.

First of all, let me begin by commending you and your teams for the work carried out in a substantive way, not just the organization of this meeting, but the substantive effort on issues. Let me just make two points here. First of all, it is tradition towards the _____(?) Ambassador really because the distinguished representative has worked a great deal in _____(?) and has made great contributions in linking different international legal associations which, you may not believe, I am also a part of. And

secondly to our friends in the Spanish interpretation, in the booth, who has been with us for years and whom I have great memories of.

Let me concentrate on a few aspects that I have taken note of here and which I feel are important.

First of all, with reference to the statement made by my distinguished friend, Horacio Bazoberry, Ambassador of Bolivia, and I would like to say hello to him, I did not have time this morning, a country for which, my country, Chile, and for which I have a great deal of esteem and appreciation, not only of the country but of the Government of that country. So we feel we were very well represented in his statement, in that declaration.

But now, as Chile, we would like to add a few remarks to what was said. For example, the reference to the Space Conference of the Americas. This is very important, which, I think, would not have come about if we had not all worked in a very systematic and well-coordinated way, along with the support provided by the Group of Experts, and that, I think, was something that needs to be highlighted.

Moreover, it is very important also to point out the work that CRECTEALC is carrying out in the region, both in Brazil and in Mexico. I understand that on 16 March this year, or thereabouts, in March, was it? April, sorry. An important meeting was held in Brazil in which advanced, well it is the candidacy for the Executive Board of that Organization, an Organization which we want to see take a greater role in the future. This is, I think, a meeting, an Organization which meets every two year and to which you were invited and we held in the Space Conference two years where we came up with the idea of the satellite as a tool for achieving sustainable development at that time, a topic which, of course, is of great relevance to all.

Following the Bolivian Ambassador's remarks, I would just add one or two things concerning activities carried out in the region. We, of course, are ready to approve any and all statements made by his Government in this meeting. We thought it was important to add a few things that we have just done.

Secondly, concerning, Chairman, if you are listening please, I think it is very basic that we all listen closely to what each of us says and that the Secretariat, as efficient as it is, carries out its role. I was talking about then in an unofficial way that you mentioned the introduction of a document on a space policy for the United Nations as a whole. We think that, after an

initial reading, this was a very good step forward in the right direction. I think this document we have to take as a kind of a reference and, sorry to use football, soccer terminology, but we have to have a clear idea of what the field of play is here. When we have a good field laid out, we have a good frame of reference in which we can place these different elements and receive the support of all members of the Committee.

In that there are many good things. Nevertheless, there are a few omissions and we would have a few, a bit of constructive criticism, for example, there is no reference to global public policies. And another idea that I have already mentioned in the past that may not be directly linked to this, I think we need to do some conceptual, legal and policy work on, I am talking about the responsibility of protecting in relation to things like the global heritage of mankind. Although it is protecting, first of all, peace and security, as well as what we consider to be, or through what we consider to be the global public heritage. The resolution 25/26 of, I think, of 1970 establishes part of this. In other words, there is a great area here that has to be discussed and deliberated. I think part of it is conceptual. And in the positive sense, it kind of spills over into the purview of other United Nations agencies and organizations, for example, the Inter-Agency Meetings are being held in the United Nations where we have identified about 25 agencies that make use of space technology, then this would give extra weight to the substance of our work here.

I would commend the Office for Outer Space Affairs for the work carried out. Its work is very important and it is just as important that the Inter-Agency Meetings have a greater political spectrum and that we do not continually find the lamidable(?) (formidable?) spectacle of when we attend, for example, the General Assembly, we are nearly pushed out of the room because we are sidelined by other subjects that actually never manage to reach a conclusion. Whereas we can produce results and conclusions in our work. At the very best, we are given half an hour of meeting time.

And I would in all due respect remind you, Chair, that in a whole series of meetings, I requested that the Chair send a letter to the Secretary-General saying that this situation is not normal and that we need to make a fully detailed description of all the achievements and I would commend my colleague from China again because with them, or the effects on relations with other countries, for the great achievements and the tremendous benefits that mankind will receive from this. And let me remind you that in the Cape Town Ministerial Meeting of

GEOS, China announced a mission, a provision of data to Africa, a humanitarian gesture which is also linked to one of the aspects and people tend to forget this, one of the aspects that is in the Vienna Report on Space and Human Development or words to that effect, where it is said that one of the important elements here is that we must have a greater contribution to the security of the planet and this seems to have been left by the wayside in the United Nations despite the fact that the General Assembly received a mandate in principle from Heads of State and Government and I think Walter Leifman(?), quote me if I am wrong, I think it was in 2005 when the Heads of State and Government met at the Millennium Assembly and came up with this very specific mandate for the General Assembly. But the General Assembly just kind of played deaf and dumb with this, if you would allow the expression, and has not taken this up in its true dimension.

So, this brings us to a moment in time which is crucial. We are faced with very brutal challenges, I would say. I am talking about the financial crisis here and this is a fact of life, but other crisis which are more perverse, more subtle, more invisible, marked civil(?) line(?). I am talking about the insecurities coming from the general situation of climate change, as well as the economic crisis, as well as the epidemiological challenges we face and Argentina has made great progress concerning Dengue in this respect.

Why do we not do some clear thinking, as we said informally yesterday with our distinguished colleague from South Africa and those from Kopal(?). And as I said, we take these global paradigms and work more on concrete situations, food security, health and so on, all of these are linked to space, to see how through concerted action with WHO. But that this be done through a mechanism, through concrete modalities not just exchange of letters such as the one you received from the United Nations University for later consideration for support for our Committee. We are not interested in ulterior support or consideration of our Committee. We need to be concrete here. I think in the case of working with between COPUOS and _____(?), we should have some concrete action. And this mandate, and let us not forget at the last General Assembly there was a High-Level Panel on Food Security. It actually was not a panel. It took place within the deliberations of the General Assembly. But I think that during the upcoming General Assembly, this is something that we should address, tele-medicine, for example, and I would ask that all of this be reflected in our fora because, once again, my country is a small country, our delegation is a small delegation but our ambitions are huge and we would

ask that ideas which are so important and find that they will be reflected in the report. We are asking for a follow-up space and health and through that formal mechanism be established for links with the WHO. The problem of health is one that is obviously a trans-national problem affecting all strata of society, old, young, fat, skinny, everything, and no discrimination and I think it is well worth making an effort in this respect.

Moreover, Chair, I think we have come to the point where the High-Level Group of Consultants and Advisors, which was set up some time ago with the assistance of the Austrian Ambassador, who is modestly sitting in the second row now, this has been a very excellent initiative. The idea here was to have an active recognition and establish a real connection with the wishes of the different peoples, a subject again which has not been fully developed or ignored. And I would even criticize my own country here, it is not clear, this tool which is so broad in its application which has so many possibilities, a 180 different applications for the benefits of citizens. This should be taken as a fundamental part of our agenda.

So I think that the Group that I have just mentioned has really reached maturity and it is time to have a qualitative jump in its work and that is why I would ask the Secretariat that this be included in the report that this be turned into a high-level panel to provide advice to the Bureau and to the Secretariat on this matter. There is nothing, I think, surprising about this. We have to consider all aspects. We operate on a rotation basis here in terms of representation and we have the different Subcommittees, Legal and Scientific and Technical, and I think that, given time, those of us in this room should be able to participate by providing the Secretary-General directly with advice and counselling. And I can tell you that the Secretary-General, in none of the reports that I can think of, not has mentioned space affairs. There is only one omission will take a little bit of time to consider outer space. We have to ourselves create the conditions perhaps leading to a resolution in the General Assembly to ask that this Group, this Advisory Group be set up, without financial implications, because I know that this will be an objection, in fact. This has zero financial implications. The same Group meeting the day before the beginning of the General Assembly, say, and a meeting with the Secretary-General to report to him on what we have been doing and what we are requesting, what the most important requests, do this and on that basis and on the basis of the document that you provided us with on which that could be a little bit of fairly acute criticism which I will do later, is, of course, of great importance.

Chairman, I believe that what has been said by the distinguished representative of Japan is perfectly intertwined, “imbricado” in Chilean Spanish, which is the best Spanish, I know this could be debated outside of this room, but in any case, it is a case of synchronicity here with the distinguished representative of Japan. I fully agree with this concept of diplomacy in space or space diplomacy. In order to promote this, we have to have a substantive document to serve as a basis and a formula through which we could express this to the Secretary-General.

I can see that you are getting a bit nervous. I promise I will finish within the next 45 minutes. Let me just remind you. Alright 60 minutes. Now just let me say that, in full agreement with everything you have said, we are 10 years from the previous UNISPACE and indeed are preparing the fourth UNISPACE. I have the feeling that between 1999 and 2009, there have been a series of situations which have been serious and very traumatic in nature and which must be taken account of. We cannot say that these did not happen. We cannot come up with a report that does not at least mention some of the instruments that have occurred and have been created. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*): Thank you very much Ambassador. It is always a pleasure to listen to you because your ideas here on the basis of your great experience are quite serious in nature, your knowledge and experience here. I have pulled out a few things of what you have said in your general remarks, several aspects of it, I think, are important to highlight.

First of all, the remarks you made concerning the loopholes that we face of space affairs within the United Nations system, or the shortcomings. This is something I, myself, have noticed when going to New York, although last year we were in a relatively good stance. We are always trying to force things to get time in the General Assembly. I think we really have to be frank in discussing now between us. It is very clear that this is the case and I think that over time what we have seen is a kind of degradation of the level of attention that is paid to the very important role that we should be playing in the United Nations, hence the importance of having a kind of holistic or comprehensive approach that you mentioned, to the United Nations as a whole, and not just in relation to the assiduous(?) critics that you have mentioned which are very useful and we welcome these. This is going to allow us to come up with our positions, a very concrete proposal that I think we all must think about is that one of the ways to do this is to strengthen an existing group

and this group that deals with this on a kind of comprehensive approach representing all regions of the world, none of them are absent.

Quite the contrary, it was set up in a way such as to have the rotation you mentioned. That is what gives it scoop (scope?), its vitality. So on the basis of what Ambassador Raimundo González has just said, I think we could make a proposal in this direction and can include this in our report. This is a proposal advanced by a delegation for further discussion. I will not go into too much more detail on the observations you have made. I agree with many of these that Space Conference of Americas plays a very important role and we have Ambassador Stacey who chaired the Fifth Space Conference of the Americas and was the Chair at the deliberations and who, I am sure, would agree that this was a fundamental point for the Latin American region. We hope that the upcoming one will be as substantive and as dynamic as the one in Ecuador.

With those words, let me, therefore, give the floor to my friend, Ambassador Stacey from Ecuador.

Mr. D. STACEY-MORENO (Ecuador) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Ecuador would like to start by congratulating you for the excellent way in which you are managing the work of our Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. We are sure that all of the objectives that you have set will be accomplished and met under your aegis.

We would also like to thank you, as well as Ms. Mazlan Othman, the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, for the organization and preparation of this meeting, this meeting of ours which is meant to indeed see how we can best cooperate in outer space activities for sustainable development purposes.

We have noted all of the introductory points that you have made that guide our COPUOS work. I would like to thank you for having mentioned the activities of the Pro Tempore Secretariat for the Space Conference of the Americas and the International Group of Experts under Professor Raimundo González.

I would like to participate in this debate making general comments on a particular import to the work of this Committee.

I would like to say that we are very interested in the demonstrations of interest of the national scientific and technical authorities of various countries with regard to these possibilities formulated in the

Vienna Declaration on Space for Human Development. This has been picked up in the Declaration of San Francisco de Quito and the Action Plan and this guides the activities of the Fifth Conference on Space of the Americas, the Headquarters of which is in Quito, in Ecuador.

We would like to note our attachment to the Principles in resolution 63/90 of the General Assembly of the United Nations that we consider to be of fundamental importance. Firstly, the development of the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes as the heritage for mankind so that all States would be able to enjoy the benefits deriving from such activities and the development of international cooperation for the purposes and sector such as environment preservation, the prevention and mitigation of natural disasters, the creation and development of _____(?) capabilities for development of research and sustainable development and exploration of natural resources.

We are very interested in COPUOS session work because we would certainly like to develop the possibilities that States have in using space technologies for the benefit of all mankind. This session provides us a very important opportunity to discuss what should be done to ensure that space be used exclusively for peaceful purposes.

And in saying this, I would like to come back to the fact that the General Assembly has called upon the Committee to establish strategies to strengthen regional and international cooperation with this on the basis of the experience made by the Conference of the Americas, the Conference of African Leaders on Space Science and Technology, and the fact that space technology can play a role in the application of recommendations as developed in the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

There is yet another important point for the Committee and that is the development of these mechanisms for countries with less access to space technologies. This is why the Pro Tempore Secretariat for the Space Conference of the Americas has indeed shared its experience with the Committee's work.

In relation to UNISPACE III, we would like to say that we support holding a Round Table for the tenth anniversary of UNISPACE III. We believe that such a Round Table would allow the development of recommendations to achieve mechanisms for better cooperation amongst States and United Nations entities and this would in turn promote better implementation of UNISPACE III recommendations.

Ecuador, in this regard, would like to emphasize the link between the work of COPUOS and that of the Committee on Sustainable Development.

As regards the report on the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its forty-sixth session, we would like to say that we take note with satisfaction of the advances made in the considering the United Nations Programme, and the implementation of UNISPACE III recommendations on Earth remote observations, space debris mitigation and disaster management.

As regards space debris, Ecuador would like here to reiterate the GRULAC position, i.e., that it is important to continue delving into this subject, especially stressing the space debris which is generated by nuclear power source platforms. It is necessary to look into the possibility of collisions of such space debris and how they can be prevented. We believe that it is necessary to improve the Guidelines in this regard.

As regards nuclear power sources in outer space, here we would like to stress the importance of the security framework with regard to nuclear power sources and this in conformity with the United Nations Charter Principles. We especially support what is said what is regard to peace and international security, international cooperation and protection of life on our planet.

As regards the physical and technical characteristics of the geostationary orbit and its use and applications in the field of space technology and all of the questions having to do with the evolution of this type of communication, especially given the needs of developing countries. Here, we would like to reiterate the criteria that which should be applied. The geostationary orbit is one which is a limited resource. It can be saturated and it should be rationally, efficiently, economically and fairly operated in order to safeguard interests of our countries in certain geostationary positions and this following paragraph 196.2 of Article 44 of the Constitution of ITU, as amended by the Plenipotentiary Conference held in Minneapolis, United States, in 1988.

Let me also say that we hope to receive greater details on the French proposals concerning long-term sustainability of space activities.

As far as the work of the Legal Subcommittee, the delegation of Ecuador wishes to express its satisfaction with advances made here and particularly with relation to General Assembly resolution 63/90 to

support and maintain its future programme of works, themes related to the situation and application of the United Nations space agreements, with the definition and delimitation of outer space, and the character and utilization of the geostationary orbit, the review of the pertinent Principles for the utilization of nuclear power sources in outer space with the enhancement of capacity in terms of space law, space debris, exchange of information on national law related to the space field and with the draft Protocol on Space Goods, amongst others.

We would take this opportunity also to inform others on progress achieved in terms of the follow-up to UNISPACE III and commitments made thereto.

First of all, it is my pleasure to say we are on a very advanced stage in establishing the Ecuadorian Commission of Space Development. This is the entity which will regulate and manage all applications of space science and technology in Ecuador so it is promoting programmes and projects related to the utilization of outer space for peaceful ends with its multiple applications and serve as a coordinating body, nationally and internationally, with other bodies working in this field.

The following projects have been carried out.

First, the study for the implementation of a system of surveillance and protection for Ecuador. This consists of setting up an infrastructure of geospatial data generating and processing technology for purposes of research and which will allow Ecuador to be able to make further progress in terms of communication services and surveillance. Also micro-gravity experiments have been carried out. The inclusion of space themes in our new educational curriculum following an educational reform. Fifth, the progress made in our tele-medicine programme based on the use of technology and communications on satellite connectivity to help foster our national capacity in terms of various treatment of patients in remote areas, setting up the network of centres of research, dissemination, diagnosis and treatment.

Likewise, Ecuador is currently contemplating future cooperation with CRECTEALC. There is also a series of events in fields such as the International Year of Astronomy 2009, the Charles Darwin Year, and the World Space Week.

However, in September of this year, we will be holding a Regional SPIDER Workshop for Latin America aimed at broadening capacities in terms of handling natural disasters.

Nevertheless, it is necessary to upgrade our financial support in order to support this important initiative.

Lastly, let me point out that the Government of Ecuador has given very determined support to the initiatives of the Pro Tempore Secretariat of the Fifth Space Conference of the Americas and the efforts deployed under its mandate in the Plan of Action under the San Francisco de Quito Declaration.

Let me also just say that we are very interested in the initiative you mentioned for a kind of a comprehensive United Nations initiative in this respect. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*): Thank you very much Ambassador Stacey for those remarks. Let me congratulate you further for the very good news that you have given us concerning the establishment of a regulatory body in Ecuador in terms of space. This shows an excellent part of the work that you have been carrying out, along with Ambassador Bazoberry, in promoting these activities in your country and in the region and this is a reason for pride for this Committee.

Now it is my pleasure and honour to invite the Minister of Transport and Housing of the Maldives, Mr. Abdulla Shahid, to address this Plenary. You have the floor Mr. Minister.

Mr. A. SHAHID (Maldives): Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman and delegates, I thank the Government of Austria and organizers of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, for inviting me to share my views to the Committee on Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in the city of Vienna.

On behalf of the Republic of Maldives, I am pleased to be here today, based on our belief that outer space remains the common region and legacy of all mankind that must be exploited only for productive human purpose in order to meet emerging new challenges and for sustainable development.

As a politician, and looking after the tsunami the construction process in Maldives has brought me closer to my people and their basic needs which led me to concentrate on the economic aspect which further made me understand that sustainable development through science was the key to their basic needs. Therefore, I believe that our sustainability lies with the development of science to save our fragile eco-system.

The application of space technology has penetrated day-to-day life of the Maldivian through satellite communications, meteorological services, global positioning systems, providing navigational aids to aircraft and other transport systems. But in our country, space is still considered a place of adventure and curiosity and tremendous actions by very brainy(?) people. The use of outer space has come to stay. It is part of the humanity with its benefits, excitement, threats and opportunities. My Government would like to make the best use of any available opportunity to capitalize on this.

The availability of space-based systems to help in forewarning disasters and this is during disaster relief operations have entered another dimension of expectations from space systems on nations to help others.

Dear friends, as you all discussed and put forward recommendations on space law and science, we are moving towards a new era of democracy and decentralization. It is a humble request on behalf of my Government to make available affordable space technologies for the people of my country looking from a small island perspective.

We have miles to go before we can develop our own technologies but we are ready as of now to adapt to the latest of technologies for a better future. I request the Committee to provide platforms for small nations like us to discuss on the adaptability(?) and implementation of such technologies.

I would strongly request the Committee to support my President's ambitious programme of carbon neutrality, aimed to be achieved in a decade.

Use of space technology in this aspect would help other nations to follow in the same footsteps.

I request the Committee to guide us in to the use of space technology in some of the major concerns by nation basis, namely emergency communication, water resources and public health, to name a few, and help us to develop sustainable solutions.

Transportation is a major challenge for my country so I was wondering if we could make use of space technologies to deliver necessary communications, be it emergency communication or in the education sector to the far-stretched islands of our county, approximately 300 in number.

I understand that international cooperation through access to space-based technology and building

capacities in my country is vital to address various sustainable issues. Hence, I look forward to the members support. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*): Let me thank on behalf of the Committee, you, Mr. Minister, for those words. Rest assured, Sir, that your presence here is very important for us and your appeal for the use of high-technologies in the case of a country facing all the problems of an island State, which are so numerous, over 300, is something that we hear very clearly and with, I think, the SPIDER Programme in particular. This is a contribution of the United Nations and the Office along these lines and a good one and we hope that this will, of course, have benefits for your country and people. Again, thank you very much Mr. Minister for your words.

I have already have some time remaining and it is my pleasure to give the floor to the Director of the European Space Agency who is going to speak to us through a video which has been prepared specifically for this session and which we very much appreciate and we are going to be taking this as a contribution to this inaugural meeting of the session.

Let me ask the ESA delegation if they are ready for the video.

It would seem so. Let me give the floor to Mr. De Cooker.

Mr. C. DE COOKER (European Space Agency): As you know, Mr. Dordain was supposed to be here at your personal invitation. He regretfully could not make it and we have taped this message. And I think my Director-General starts speaking so I think I should stop talking. Thank you very much for your understanding.

(*Interpreter: There is no sound unfortunately.*)

(*Interpreter: There still is no sound.*)

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*): Well we have problems. We do not have any sound for these images. I hope that we can solve the technical problem, that our engineers up there can do this.

Video Statement

Mr. J.-J. DORDAIN (European Space Agency) (*interpretation from French*): Good morning one and all. I should have been with you this morning at the side of Chairman Ciro Arévalo to launch this important meeting in order to re-launch a global vision of outer space for the benefit of all. I had promised this to the Chairman because I certainly appreciate his vision. I appreciate his dynamic qualities. But unfortunately a couple of days ago, a Minister of one of the States members urgently asked me to be in Denmark today rather than in Vienna with you.

However, I have chosen to be in your midst in another way to demonstrate my commitment to the work in Vienna and in COPUOS and the commitment of ESA in a process that I am very attached to indeed.

My commitment for global vision is not something that just dates back from recent days. I was already present here in Vienna in 1999 during the UNISPACE III session when Gérard Brachet, who was then the CNES Director-General and I, myself, the Director of ESA Strategy, announced the creation of the Charter on Natural Disasters on the part of our two organizations.

And following the work of this Charter, the CNES and ESA have made available to civil protection authorities everywhere in the world their satellite data in case of natural disasters. Since then, this Charter has become a universal one in practically all of the space agencies in the world which has joined this Charter. Unfortunately, at present, this Charter is called upon more and more often, more than once a month actually, on the part of the authorities throughout the world because natural catastrophes and disasters are sparing no one worldwide. The Charter on Natural Disasters certainly is not the only global initiative because other initiatives have followed. In particular, I would like to refer to the Global Initiative on Environment Security, and GEOS, that is the Global Earth Observation System of Systems, in which Europe is participating through the GMES Programme. ESA, of course, has joined that Programme and become involved in it.

And furthermore, last year, the European Union, under Portuguese Presidency, extended the GMES Programme to Africa, with the African GMES Initiative. And there again, once again ESA has become involved and this is the price of much effort indeed.

Indeed, if there is a subject on which ESA can teach the world valuable lessons, that is the lesson of international cooperation because at present ESA has 18 member States cooperating on a daily basis, be they

small countries or large countries, they are all working together to common aims and successfully at that. But it certainly is also the Agency which is cooperating most with all of the space agencies throughout the world and all of the space powers of the world because we are cooperating for 40 years now with the United States of America, but also with Russia, with China, India, Japan, Canada, all the major space powers are partners. And we, furthermore, are also sharing our data with all the countries which do not have space infrastructures which require space data, be it to resolve health problems, agriculture issues, environmental issues, education problems. This is a duty on the part of the space agencies to share this data because the most important message that comes to us from outer space is that our future is global. There is no individual future. Nobody has more future than his or her neighbour.

In July we are going to be celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the Apollo 11 Moon landing. Forty years down the road, the fact that it is an American flag which was the first to wave on the Moon does not seem to me to be the most important message. I believe that the most important message is the fact that 27 men, there were no women there at the time, but 27 men came from Earth and they were launched into orbit, round the Moon, and they saw the Earth as though it were a small golf ball floating around in an enormous Universe. And I believe that this message is perfectly well summed up in the statement made by Bill Anders, who is a member of the Apollo 8 crew, who said, in December 1968, he was part of the first crew going round the Moon. When he returned from his visit of the dark side of the Moon, he said that this crew had got all the way to Moon to explore it and the most important thing was that actually what they discovered was the Earth. I believe that this message is of essential importance because it is through this message that we can truly understand that our future is global, that we have no alternative than to cooperate together for one and the same future. And I believe that it is with this message that you should convince this meeting and I am sure indeed that this meeting will allow us to re-start a truly irreversible process and to implement our vision of outer space.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*): I would like to thank ESA and in particular Mr. Jean-Jacques Dordain whose leadership is recognized. We are certainly to the fact that he has shared this message with us on international cooperation and that he has urged us to encourage the development of international work in this regard.

Let me also thank Mr. De Cooker and ask him to transmit all of our thanks to his Director for this participation. It is as if he had been here with us and that is the important point. And even more important was the message that really sums up the feeling of the international community in seeing this mission based on international cooperation as a kind of an irreversible process. Thank you.

OK, I think this has brought us to the appointed stopping time. Before we close this morning's session, let me remind delegations that the People's Republic of China is offering a Reception, F1 in the VIC Restaurant area. I also invite all delegations from the African continent to attend an information meeting for Permanent Missions of African States in Vienna, organized jointly with the International Aeronautical Federation and the Office for Outer Space Affairs, to be held between 2.00 p.m. and 3.00 p.m. in G0545, which is the room next to the Office for Outer Space Affairs office.

Again, the schedule of work for the Committee this afternoon. We will meet at 3.00 p.m. sharp to continue with item 4, our general discussion.

At 4.00 p.m. we will suspend the meeting to hold the Round Table on the Tenth Anniversary of UNISPACE III.

If there are any suggestions or observations on the proposed timetable.

I see none.

The meeting is closed and we will continue at 3.00 p.m. this afternoon.

The meeting adjourned at 1.03 p.m.