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**Committee on the Peaceful
Uses of Outer Space**

Report of the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities on its twenty-sixth session*

(Paris, 18-20 January 2006)

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* The present report was adopted by the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities at its twenty-sixth session, held from 18 to 20 January 2006.



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I. Introduction

1. The Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities held its twenty-sixth session at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) headquarters, in Paris, from 18 to 20 January 2006. Robert Missotten of UNESCO was elected Chairman. The list of participants is contained in annex I to the present report.
2. The Assistant Director-General of UNESCO for Natural Sciences opened the Meeting and welcomed the participants. He noted that inter-agency coordination among United Nations entities was necessary and strongly encouraged. The Assistant Director-General expressed support for outer space activities, especially those pertinent to the development of space technologies, which substantially contribute to the study and monitoring of the Earth and its resources. He highlighted the use of space technology for managing and conserving the World Heritage sites, managing water resources and mitigating and reducing disasters. The Assistant Director-General underlined the role of space as a tool in education for sustainable development.
3. The Meeting adopted the agenda contained in annex II below.

II. Substantive issues considered at the Meeting

A. Coordination of plans and programmes and exchange of views on current activities in the practical application of space technology and related areas

1. Discussion of current and future plans of common interest, including consideration of how the activities of organizations of the United Nations system in the area of space science and technology and its applications relate to their mandated programmes

4. The Secretary of the Meeting briefed participants on the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subsidiary bodies, bringing to their attention matters relating to inter-agency coordination. A representative of the Office for Outer Space Affairs of the Secretariat reported on the future orientation of activities of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, particularly new applications in the areas of disaster management, telemedicine and health. The activities carried out in 2005 had resulted in the establishment of networks of practitioners with whom the Programme planned to continue working in 2006 and 2007. The Office invited organizations of the United Nations system to participate in activities of interest to them.
5. Representatives of participating United Nations entities reported on their activities and plans for 2006, 2007 and beyond. Reports highlighted activities involving significant cooperation among United Nations entities.
6. The Meeting noted the activities of the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) in following up the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters,¹ which was adopted at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, held in Kobe,

Hyogo, Japan, from 18 to 22 January 2005. The Meeting noted that ISDR participated in many activities and initiatives at the policy level, such as the organization of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction and the Integrated Global Observing Strategy (IGOS), as well as in initiatives aimed at building local capacities in Nicaragua and Ecuador that were carried out in collaboration with the United Nations Organization Satellite (UNOSAT) service, which is coordinated by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and implemented by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). The Meeting also noted the participation of ISDR in the “Respond” initiative.

7. The Meeting noted the invitation of ISDR to United Nations entities to provide comments on the hazard profiles of the global information platform, in particular its country-level hazard maps. The Meeting also noted the invitation to provide hazard analysis in order to have a real impact in the field.

8. The Meeting noted the invitation of the Office for Outer Space Affairs to examine the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 and identify actions relating to the use of space applications for disaster reduction that could be within the mandated activities of United Nations entities.

9. The Meeting noted the early warning and assessment activities of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), in particular the ongoing preparation of the fourth Global Environment Outlook report, the *Global Environment Outlook Yearbook* for 2006 and various other regional assessments and reports, such as *Africa Environment Outlook* and *Carpathians Environment Outlook*. The Meeting also noted the publication of the atlas *One Planet, Many People*,² which had rapidly become the best-selling UNEP publication of all time. The Meeting further noted the inter-agency collaboration on such projects as the Project of Risk Evaluation, Vulnerability, Information and Early Warning (PreView) and the Global Risk Identification Programme (GRIP), involving ISDR, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other partners, such as the World Bank.

10. The Meeting noted the response of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the Secretariat, UNEP, UNOSAT and other entities to the Indian Ocean tsunami. The Meeting also noted the involvement of UNEP in the Global Land Cover Network, together with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and in the ongoing Environment and Security initiative undertaken jointly with UNDP, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The Meeting further noted the UNEP Division of Early Warning and Assessment regional centres’ capacity-building activities in response to the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building,³ such as training workshops on the Global Environment Outlook assessment and reporting, and related data/information management for developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

11. The Meeting noted various space-related activities of UNESCO, including the open initiative that had been jointly launched by UNESCO and the European Space Agency (ESA) on the use of space technologies to support the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage,⁴ which had attracted a significant number of participants from space agencies, space research institutions, universities and the private sector. The Meeting also noted that UNESCO would

expand the open initiative to include biosphere reserves and natural cultural heritage sites.

12. The Meeting noted that the fifty-eighth World Health Assembly had adopted resolution WHA58.28 of 25 May 2005, entitled “eHealth”, aimed at promoting the use of information and communication technologies in health. The Meeting also noted that the resolution recognized the need for unified, concerted action in the area of e-Health and that, given the important role that space technology played in communications, the resolution represented a significant policy basis for promoting the use of space technology for improving health globally.

13. The Meeting noted the continuous use by the World Health Organization (WHO) of space-based technologies such as the Global Positioning System (GPS), remote sensing and geographical information systems (GIS) for public health applications linked to natural disaster risk assessment, rainfall monitoring, telecommunications, capacity-building and the development of databases and tools. The Meeting also noted the active participation of WHO in the development of the 10-year implementation plan of the intergovernmental Group on Earth Observations for the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), in the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, where a report entitled *Connecting for Health: Global Vision, Local Insight* was presented, and in the Epidemio project.

14. The Meeting noted that the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) was continuing its work on the African Geodetic Reference Frame (AFREF), in coordination with the Office for Outer Space Affairs. AFREF involves the establishment of a network of active GPS stations covering Africa with a density such that the maximum distance from any point to an active station is 1,000 kilometres. The planning for the subregional reference frames for Southern Africa (SAFREF) and North Africa (NAFREF) is well advanced, and some stations are already operational. Planning for the frame for East Africa (EAFREF) is also progressing, with a few operational stations in place, while work in respect of frames for West Africa (WAFREF) and Central Africa (CAFREF) is lagging behind. Further work will be carried out in March 2006 at a workshop for West African partners, to be held in Accra in conjunction with the meeting of the International Federation of Surveyors.

15. The Meeting noted various space-related inter-agency activities of UNOSAT, in cooperation with the European Commission, in the TANGO project that provides telecommunications capabilities to transmit satellite images and maps using cellular telephones in disaster areas. The Meeting also noted the active role of UNOSAT in acquiring and processing satellite data for United Nations entities.

16. The Meeting noted that the World Food Programme (WFP) had been using satellite imagery to obtain data on inaccessible areas in order to augment its field activities. The Meeting also noted that WFP had been using satellite data for decision-making with regard to the situation on the ground.

17. The Meeting noted the operational activities of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, as well as the establishment of GIS units at the country level. The Meeting took note of the success in establishing the Sudan Inter-agency Mapping Working Group, which developed compatible and reliable mapping products for use by United Nations operations and the international community.

18. The Meeting noted that the Office for Outer Space Affairs, in cooperation with the Government of Nigeria, had organized the United Nations/Nigeria Workshop on Space Law on the theme “Meeting international obligations and addressing domestic needs”, held in Abuja from 21 to 24 November 2005. The workshop was aimed at developing capacity in national and international space law and promoting education opportunities in space law.

19. The Meeting noted that the Office for Outer Space Affairs, in cooperation with the United Arab Emirates, ESA and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration of the United States of America, had organized the United Nations/European Space Agency/National Aeronautics and Space Administration on the International Heliophysical Year 2007, held in Abu Dhabi and Al-Ain, United Arab Emirates, from 20 to 23 November 2005. The workshop established mechanisms to make data gathered by various activities related to the International Heliophysical Year 2007 available to scientists and engineers of all nations.

20. The Meeting noted that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, as the principal member of the Open Geospatial Consortium, had hosted a meeting of the Consortium at United Nations Headquarters from 17 to 20 January 2005. At that meeting, geospatial technical issues and industrial standards were discussed, in particular the development of standards for geospatial and location-based services.

21. The Meeting also noted that a summer-school refresher course for graduate students and practitioners from East and Central Africa would be organized in cooperation with the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing and other partners, such as the Regional Centre for Training in Aerospace Surveys, the African Association of Remote Sensing of the Environment and the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development, in November 2006.

22. The Meeting further noted that during the fifth meeting of the Committee on Development Information, to be held in 2007, a special session on Africa’s space programmes would be organized as follow-up to similar sessions held during the fourth meeting of the Committee on Development Information and during the African Space Leadership Conference, convened in Abuja from 23 to 25 November 2005.

23. The Meeting noted that, in 2006, meetings of the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development (RESAP) of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Regional Working Group on Meteorological Satellite Applications and Natural Hazards Monitoring and the Regional Working Group on Remote Sensing, Geographic Information Systems and Satellite-based Positioning would be organized under a common theme in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China. During those meetings, ESCAP would organize a workshop on drought disaster reduction in Asia as follow-up to a consultative meeting on the development of an Asian drought-mitigation cooperation mechanism, which was scheduled to take place in March 2006.

24. The Meeting noted that ESCAP, in cooperation with the ISDR secretariat and FAO, would organize a consultative meeting on the development of an Asian drought-mitigation cooperation mechanism. This activity would be carried out as follow-up to the recommendations of the Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction, held in Beijing from 27 to 29 September 2005.

25. The Meeting noted that within the context of the second phase of RESAP, ESCAP would continue to organize regional workshops and seminars on space technology applications for disaster reduction, poverty alleviation and community development, with the aim of building national capacity in using space-based technologies for improving the quality of life.

26. The Meeting noted that ESCAP would organize annual meetings of the Regional Working Group on Space Sciences and Technology Applications in 2006 and 2007.

27. The Meeting noted that ESCAP would continue to promote the operationalization of space technology applications, in particular for rural development, improved quality of life and efforts to bridge the digital divide. In particular, ESCAP would conduct studies aimed at developing policies and guidelines, to be adopted by ESCAP members and associate members, for the integration of space-based information and communication technologies in national development programmes.

28. The Meeting noted that in order to coordinate the development and use of GeoNetwork, an Internet-based spatial information catalogue that allows storage of data, documentation of spatial information with standard metadata and easy data-sharing protocols, FAO had organized the first GeoNetwork workshop, held in May 2005. The workshop focused on the evaluation of the spatial data management frameworks as they are set up by different agencies, on the basis of the GeoNetwork open-source software.

29. The Meeting noted that in 2005, the UNEP Division of Early Warning and Assessment and the Global Resource Information Database (GRID)-Sioux Falls (United States) had hosted 27 visiting scientists from 15 countries as part of its capacity-building efforts to train and equip individuals from developing countries to assess and monitor environmental conditions and trends.

30. The Meeting noted that in 2005 UNESCO, in cooperation with the Office for Outer Space Affairs, had organized workshops, as part of its Space Education Programme, in several cities in Nigeria. UNESCO had organized a similar workshop in Colombia, in cooperation with the pro tempore secretariat of the Fourth Space Conference of the Americas. The Meeting noted that in 2006 similar workshops would be held in the Syrian Arab Republic and Viet Nam.

2. Consideration of matters to be included in the report of the Secretary-General on the coordination of space-related activities within the United Nations system: direction and anticipated results for the period 2006-2007

31. The Meeting had before it the draft report of the Secretary-General on the coordination of space-related activities within the United Nations system: directions and anticipated results for the period 2006-2007.⁵ It was the thirtieth report on the subject, containing information received from United Nations entities on major new initiatives and/or activities involving two or more United Nations entities.

32. The Meeting recalled that the maximum length of reports originating from the Secretariat was 8,500 words (16 pages), noting that the application of this restriction included the reports of the Secretary-General on the coordination of space-related

activities within the United Nations system, and that the above-mentioned report should thus adhere to that limit.

33. The Meeting reviewed and amended the draft report. The Meeting was informed that the final text of the report would be considered by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its forty-third session.

34. The Meeting agreed that the report should identify key initiatives and activities that promote, enhance and contribute to inter-agency cooperation and coordination.

35. The Meeting agreed to develop precise guidelines to assist United Nations entities in preparing their input for the Secretary-General's report and to assist the Meeting in keeping the report within the prescribed page limits. The Meeting agreed that the draft guidelines would be developed jointly with all of its focal points during the intersessional period.

36. The Meeting agreed that the Office for Outer Space Affairs should prepare the preliminary draft of the guidelines and post them for discussion on the web board of the Meeting by mid-March 2006. The Meeting agreed that agreement should be reached on the draft guidelines prior to the call for submissions for the next report of the Secretary-General, in September 2006. The Meeting further agreed to review and adopt the guidelines at its twenty-seventh session, in 2007.

3. Consideration of matters to be included in a report on new and emerging initiatives and applications for space-related inter-agency cooperation

37. The Meeting recalled that, on the basis of a proposal made in 2003, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee had invited United Nations entities to submit annual reports to the Subcommittee on specific themes. The Meeting also recalled the agreement reached at its twenty-fifth session, in 2005, that a separate report should be prepared on the theme "New and emerging initiatives and applications for space-related inter-agency cooperation" for submission to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its forty-third session, in 2006 (A/AC.105/842, para. 19).

38. The Meeting agreed to suspend the preparation of that document at its current session with a view to evaluating, at its twenty-seventh session, the need for and value of the information to be presented in a second report, and to consider the reorientation of the report towards specific thematic areas.

4. Methods to strengthen further inter-agency coordination and cooperation in space-related activities

39. In discussions of their current and future plans, the Meeting participants identified several areas of common interest for increased inter-agency coordination and cooperation.

40. The Meeting took note of the need to devise methods to increase inter-agency collaboration in the area of space-based applications in support of United Nations operations such as peacekeeping, emergency response, food security and early recovery. In doing so, the participants in the Meeting committed themselves to continuing discussions on how to establish effective ways to increase the sharing of information and satellite data and applications.

41. The Meeting agreed to strengthen coordination and cooperation to facilitate space-based Earth observations, space technologies, remote sensing and GIS to identify, assess and monitor natural and biological hazards and vulnerabilities and enhance early warning for disaster reduction, as requested at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction and in its main outcome document, the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015. ISDR will facilitate the global information platform for disaster reduction and a web-based portal to disseminate the products of this collaboration and good practices. United Nations entities will also continue discussions on this matter.

42. The Meeting noted that the theme of its second informal open session, for an exchange of information between the representatives of United Nations entities and the representatives of member States of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, would be “Space technology for sustainable development and disaster management: opportunities within the United Nations system”. The Meeting agreed that the Chairman should highlight the benefits of the Meeting in his opening remarks. The Meeting finalized the agenda of the informal open session (see annex III).

B. Ways and means of establishing inventories of space-related resources, in particular data sets, space-based devices and educational and training materials

43. The Meeting recalled that it had agreed at its twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth sessions that it was important to create, with the participation of members of the Committee, inventories of equipment, educational and training materials, satellite data sets and other capacity-building resources provided by United Nations entities that carried out national or regional technical cooperation projects. The Meeting also recalled that it had agreed that the resources in the inventories should be available to all entities of the United Nations system in order that future technical cooperation projects or other development activities might build upon existing capacity.

44. The Meeting noted that the Office for Outer Space Affairs had set up a web page to provide links to resources in the following categories: equipment; educational and training materials; satellite and other data; and capacity-building resources. The Meeting agreed to include a category on space-related publications within the United Nations system.

45. The Meeting agreed that in order to populate the web page, United Nations entities should provide the Office with information on links to relevant web resources that could be included in the online inventory of space-related resources.

46. The Meeting agreed to review the status of the online inventory of space-related resources at its twenty-seventh session under an agenda item on public outreach and information exchange to promote inter-agency cooperation.

C. Involvement of United Nations entities in the Charter on Cooperation to Achieve the Coordinated Use of Space Facilities in the Event of Natural or Technological Disasters

47. The Meeting noted that since the United Nations had in 2003 been granted access to the Charter on Cooperation to Achieve the Coordinated Use of Space Facilities in the Event of Natural or Technological Disasters (International Charter “Space and Major Disasters”) as a cooperating body, the Office for Outer Space Affairs had triggered the Charter 22 times in respect of a range of major disasters, pursuant to requests of UNOSAT. The Meeting noted with appreciation that the Charter had continuously provided satellite data that were used for various humanitarian relief operations.

48. The Meeting noted that the Charter had a direct impact on the way the United Nations operated during natural and man-made disasters. The Meeting also noted that staff working in the United Nations humanitarian relief agencies were aware of the Charter and how it could be used. The Meeting further noted that the availability of and the opportunities provided by the Charter should be further publicized among the United Nations entities dealing with humanitarian relief efforts.

49. The Meeting noted that the Charter Board had been requested to urgently enhance and expand the Charter, in order to further assist the United Nations in enhancing its coordination of international disaster response by fully meeting the requirements of the humanitarian community.

D. Space-related outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development

50. The Meeting had before it a document prepared by the Office for Outer Space Affairs containing a list of space-related initiatives and programmes of States members of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and within the United Nations system that responded to recommendations contained in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August to 4 September 2002.⁶ The list was updated and prepared on the basis of information provided by States members of the Committee and the entities of the United Nations system pursuant to the agreement reached by the Meeting at its twenty-fifth session.

51. The Meeting noted with appreciation that the Office for Outer Space Affairs had created a user-friendly website that facilitated navigation between various initiatives and recommendations of the World Summit.

52. The Meeting agreed that the Office for Outer Space Affairs should bring the list, and the benefits to be derived therefrom, to the attention of the GEOSS secretariat, whose work was closely associated with the outcomes of the World Summit.

53. The Meeting noted that the updated list would be submitted to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its forty-third session, to be held in Vienna from 20 February to 3 March 2006, and to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space at its forty-ninth session, to be held in Vienna in June 2006. In that regard, the

Meeting agreed that United Nations entities would provide updates and changes by 15 February 2006 for the submission of the list to the Subcommittee and by 15 May 2006 for the submission of the list to the Committee.

E. Electronic information-networking in the United Nations system

54. The Office for Outer Space Affairs briefed the Meeting on the website dedicated to the coordination of outer space activities within the United Nations system (www.uncosa.unvienna.org). The main resources of the website included the file transfer protocol, which was available for use by agencies, information on the work of the Meeting and other information pertaining to the coordination of outer space activities among United Nations entities. The Meeting expressed its appreciation to the Office for hosting and maintaining the website.

55. The Meeting agreed that the focal points of the Meeting should provide the Office with updated information on their space-related programmes and activities, including relevant website addresses, and on upcoming activities, for posting on the site.

56. The Meeting noted the usefulness of the web board set up by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) to exchange views and drafts of the documents prepared for the Meeting. The Meeting encouraged the focal points of United Nations entities to use the web board in preparing for future sessions of the Meeting. The Meeting noted that the next topic of discussion on the web board would be the guidelines for future reports of the Secretary-General on the coordination of space-related activities of the United Nations, to be provisionally agreed upon prior to the invitation for submissions from United Nations entities for the next coordination report. The Meeting expressed its appreciation to ITU for maintaining the web board.

F. Implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

57. The Office for Outer Space Affairs briefed the Meeting on the status of the implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III), including information on the Plan of Action proposed by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in its report on the five-year review of the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III (A/59/174) and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 59/2 of 20 October 2004.

58. The Meeting noted that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee had agreed to focus its discussion on three actions called for in the Plan of Action: maximizing the benefits of existing space capabilities for disaster management (A/59/174, paras. 252-264); maximizing the benefits of the use of global navigation satellite systems to support sustainable development (paras. 265-269); and enhancing capacity-building in space-related activities (paras. 299-310). The Meeting also noted that the Office for Outer Space Affairs had presented its strategy in such a

way as to include in its programme of work those actions proposed in the Plan of Action for implementation by the Office.

59. The Meeting noted that of the 12 action teams that had been established by the Committee to implement the recommendations of UNISPACE III, five had continued their work after the review by the General Assembly in order to implement the recommendations that had resulted from their work since 2001.

60. The Action Team on Disaster Management had recommended the establishment of a disaster management international space coordination organization. The Committee and the General Assembly had endorsed the proposal that a group of government experts should prepare a study on the feasibility of establishing such an entity. The Meeting noted that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee would consider the study at its next session.

61. The Action Team on Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS) had recommended, and the General Assembly had endorsed the recommendation, that the operators of GNSS and their augmentation systems be invited to establish an international committee on GNSS. The Meeting noted with satisfaction that during an international meeting held on 1 and 2 December 2005, the International Committee on GNSS (ICG) had been established as an informal body that would promote the use of GNSS while facilitating the interoperability of the GPS of the United States, the Global Navigation Satellite System (GLONASS) of the Russian Federation and the future Galileo system of the European Union. The achievement of the latter would facilitate building capacity in the use of GNSS and result in cost savings for users.

62. The Meeting noted that the Action Team on Near-Earth Objects, the Action Team on Weather and Climate Forecasting and the Action Team on Sustainable Development were continuing their work with a view to further refining and implementing their recommendations.

63. The Meeting noted that the Committee had agreed on steps to align its work more fully with the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development. The Meeting noted with satisfaction that the General Assembly had invited the Division for Sustainable Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat to brief the Committee on the work of the Commission so as to enable the former to identify ways in which space science and technology could better contribute to the work of the latter.

G. Participation of the entities of the United Nations system in the process of the Group on Earth Observations

64. The participants in the Meeting provided information on the process of the establishment of the Group on Earth Observations (GEO), the strategy of the proposed GEOSS and the 10-year plan to implement it. The Meeting noted that GEO was a recently established intergovernmental group of approximately 60 countries that were members (i.e., participating in the making of decisions on GEO activities) and approximately 60 participating organizations, including many entities of the United Nations system.

65. The Meeting noted that a matter of concern was that the long experience of the entities of the United Nations system in assisting their respective user communities was not being fully reflected in the 10-year implementation of GEOSS and that this might lead to duplication of efforts.

66. The Meeting noted that four agencies—the World Meteorological Organization, UNEP, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO and FAO—had agreed to set up a consultation mechanism, the United Nations Inter-agency Coordination and Planning Committee, to coordinate the four agencies at the level of executive heads, at the level of directors and at the level of task forces. These agencies coordinated positions on common issues related to the in situ global observing systems and to their participation in the IGOS Partnership.

67. The Meeting agreed that it was highly desirable for the agencies members of the Inter-agency Coordination and Planning Committee to include other United Nations entities in their consultations. The Meeting also agreed that the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities provided an excellent platform for consultations, and further agreed that the Office for Outer Space Affairs could be given the mandate to coordinate a consultation process within the Meeting with respect to issues related to GEOSS.

H. Lessons learned from applications of space technologies in support of disaster relief efforts

68. The Meeting noted the interest of a number of entities in reviewing the lessons learned from the application of space applications in disaster management and reduction. The Meeting also noted the importance of such a discussion, as in some situations, once an emergency had been successfully dealt with, there was no follow-up with regard to what improvements could have been made in the use of space applications for disaster management and reduction.

69. The Meeting noted with appreciation that UNOSAT was prepared to share its experience with the use of satellite data for disaster management and humanitarian relief operations. The Meeting also noted that an analysis of relief operations in response to the Indian Ocean tsunami had been done in the context of preparations for the implementation of the global tsunami warning system by IOC. The Meeting further noted that UNEP had published an environmental assessment of the areas hit by the tsunami along the Indian Ocean coast and the final report of the task force that dealt with the assessment of the environmental effects of the tsunami. Both documents contained information on lessons learned from the use of space-based data in disaster management.

70. The Meeting agreed that its consideration of this item was very valuable. The Meeting also agreed that during its next session United Nations humanitarian agencies should be specifically invited to discuss the lessons learned from the application of space-based data for disaster relief efforts.

I. Brochure entitled “Space solutions for the world’s problems: how the United Nations family uses space technology for achieving development goals”

71. The Meeting noted with appreciation that, in accordance with an agreement reached at its twenty-fifth session, the Office for Outer Space Affairs had revised and printed the brochure entitled “Space solutions for the world’s problems: how the United Nations family uses space technology for achieving development goals”. The Meeting also noted with appreciation that the brochure had also been produced in French and Spanish.

72. The Meeting noted that the revised brochure was distributed to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space at its forty-eighth session, to the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), during its consideration of agenda item 29, entitled “International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space” at the sixtieth session of the General Assembly, and to the UNESCO General Conference.

73. The Meeting noted that information in relation to food security, disaster reduction and peacekeeping operations should be included in the next version of the brochure. The Office for Outer Space Affairs should coordinate the preparation of the next version of the brochure upon receipt of new and/or updated information and related images from interested United Nations entities, provided that some of the participating entities would support the printing costs through nominal financial contributions.

74. The Meeting requested the Office for Outer Space Affairs to develop and distribute a plan for revising the text of the brochure. The Meeting agreed that, if given the necessary financial support, the Office should finalize and print the next version of the brochure in time for the twenty-seventh session of the Meeting.

75. The Meeting noted with appreciation the offers of UNEP and WHO to examine the possibility of contributing to the production of a revised version of the brochure by assisting with the translation of the text into Arabic and Russian.

III. Other matters

A. Enhancement of the participation of United Nations entities in the work of the Committee, its subcommittees and the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities

76. The Meeting noted that the General Assembly, in its resolution 60/99 of 8 December 2005, had requested entities of the United Nations system to continue and, where appropriate, to enhance their cooperation with the Committee and to provide it with reports on the issues dealt with in the work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies.

77. The Meeting noted that participation in the work of the Committee by United Nations entities provided a great opportunity for the Meeting to liaise directly with States members of the Committee with regard to any space-related initiative that would require participation at the national level. The Meeting also noted that the

Committee welcomed cooperation with United Nations entities, as evidenced by the interest of member States in the informal open sessions of the Meeting that had been held immediately following the regular sessions of the Meeting in the past three years.

78. The Meeting welcomed the fact that the General Assembly, in its resolution 60/99, had encouraged entities of the United Nations system to participate fully in the work of the Meeting. The Meeting noted that, at the request of the Inter-Agency Meeting at its twenty-fifth session, the Office for Outer Space Affairs had sent letters to the regional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat, the World Bank Group, UNDP, the United Nations Children's Fund, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, FAO and the International Maritime Organization, with a view to encouraging their participation in the sessions of the Meeting.

79. The Meeting noted with appreciation the efforts of the Office for Outer Space Affairs to promote the sharing of information relating to the work of the Meeting through the publication of the brochure "Space solutions for the world's problems: how the United Nations family uses space technology for achieving development goals" and through regular electronic and official communications.

80. The Meeting agreed that the Office for Outer Space Affairs should be requested to approach the United Nations entities that do not attend the sessions of the Meeting to identify focal points within those organizations to whom the Office would forward all documentation and communications pertaining to the work of the Meeting. The Meeting also requested the Office, as the secretariat of the Meeting, to forward copies of all official communications to those focal points.

81. The Meeting noted with appreciation that the representative of UNEP would contact a representative of the UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery in Geneva to encourage the participation of UNDP in the work of the Meeting.

B. Future programme of work

82. The Meeting agreed that, at its twenty-seventh session, in 2007, it would consider the following items:

1. Coordination of plans and programmes and exchange of views on current activities in the practical application of space technology and related areas:
 - (a) Current and future plans of common interest, including consideration of how the activities of organizations of the United Nations system in the area of space science and technology and its applications relate to their mandated programmes;
 - (b) Draft guidelines for inputs to the report of the Secretary-General on the coordination of outer space activities within the United Nations system;
 - (c) Structure of the report of the Secretary-General on coordination;

- (d) Report of the Secretary-General on the coordination of space-related activities within the United Nations system: directions and anticipated results for the period 2007-2008;
 - (e) Preparation of a report on initiatives and applications for space-related inter-agency cooperation;
 - (f) Means of strengthening further inter-agency coordination and cooperation in space-related activities.
2. Space-related outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.
 3. Implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.
 4. Use of the Charter on Cooperation to Achieve the Coordinated Use of Space Facilities in the Event of Natural or Technological Disasters by the United Nations system and methods to increase operational collaboration in the use of space technology in emergency response.
 5. Lessons learned and good practices in the use of space technologies for relief efforts and disaster reduction.
 6. Participation of the entities of the United Nations system in the process of the Group on Earth Observations.
 7. Public outreach and information exchange to promote inter-agency cooperation.
 8. Other matters.
83. The Meeting agreed that, in order to take into account major events or changing circumstances over the course of the year, United Nations entities could propose new items for inclusion in its agenda during the intersessional period.
84. The participants expressed their appreciation to UNESCO for hosting the twenty-sixth session of the Meeting. The Meeting recalled its agreement that the venue of the annual sessions should alternate between Vienna and other cities and noted that its twenty-seventh session would be held at the United Nations Office at Vienna from 17 to 19 January 2007. The Meeting noted with appreciation that UNOSAT had offered to host the twenty-eighth session in Geneva in 2008.

Notes

- ¹ A/CONF.206/6 and Corr.1, chap. I, resolution 2.
- ² *One Planet, Many People: Atlas of Our Changing Environment* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.III.D.37).
- ³ UNEP/GC.23/6/Add.1 and Corr.1, annex.
- ⁴ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1037, No. 15511.
- ⁵ To be issued as A/AC.105/858.
- ⁶ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

Annex I

List of participants at the twenty-sixth session of the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities, held in Paris from 18 to 20 January 2006

Chairman: R. Missotten (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)

Secretary: N. Rodrigues (Office for Outer Space Affairs)

Assistant Secretary: S. Sulaymanov (Office for Outer Space Affairs)

United Nations Secretariat

Department of Peacekeeping Operations	K-S. Eom
Office for Outer Space Affairs	S. Camacho
Economic Commission for Africa	C. Ezigbalike
Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction	P. Basabe M. Cocchiglia

United Nations programmes and funds

United Nations Environment Programme	R. G. Witt
World Food Programme	M. Haile
United Nations Institute for Training and Research/United Nations Organization Satellite service	A. Retiere F. Pisano

Specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	Y. Berenguer
International Civil Aviation Organization	J. Vanier
World Health Organization	S. Ebener
World Meteorological Organization	J. Liu

Annex II

Agenda for the twenty-sixth session of the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities, held in Paris from 18 to 20 January 2006

1. Opening of the session.
2. Election of the Chairperson.
3. Adoption of the agenda.
4. Coordination of plans and programmes and exchange of views on current activities in the practical application of space technology and related areas:
 - (a) Discussion of current and future plans of common interest, including consideration of how the activities of organizations of the United Nations system in the area of space science and technology and its applications relate to their mandated programmes;
 - (b) Consideration of matters to be included in the report of the Secretary-General on the coordination of space-related activities within the United Nations system: directions and anticipated results for the period 2006-2007;
 - (c) Consideration of matters to be included in a report on new and emerging initiatives and applications for space-related inter-agency cooperation;
 - (d) Means of strengthening further inter-agency coordination and cooperation in space-related activities.
5. Ways and means of establishing inventories of space-related resources, in particular data sets, space-based devices and educational and training materials.
6. Involvement of United Nations entities in the Charter on Cooperation to Achieve the Coordinated Use of Space Facilities in the Event of Natural or Technological Disasters.
7. Space-related outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.
8. Electronic information-networking in the United Nations system.
9. Implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.
10. Participation of the entities of the United Nations system in the process of the Group on Earth Observations.
11. Lessons learned from applications of space technologies in support of disaster relief efforts.
12. Brochure entitled "Space solutions for the world's problems: how the United Nations family uses space technology for achieving development goals".
13. Other matters.

Annex III

Agenda for the informal open session of the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities, held in Paris on 20 January 2006

Theme: “Space technology for sustainable development and disaster management: opportunities within the United Nations system”

Introductory remarks	Chairman of the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities
Introduction of participants	All participants
United Nations initiatives and activities in sustainable development that involve space applications	
Space Education Programme	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
Open initiative on the use of space technologies to support the World Heritage Convention	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
Achieving food security through the use of space applications	World Food Programme
United Nations initiatives and activities in disaster management through the application of space technology	
Update on the Charter on Cooperation to Achieve the Coordinated Use of Space Facilities in the Event of Natural or Technological Disasters (International Charter “Space and Major Disasters”)	United Nations Organization Satellite service
Developments related to the establishment of an international space coordination entity for disaster management	Office for Outer Space Affairs
Disaster reduction and some applications of space technology	International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
Discussion	All participants
Summary of issues of interest and concern to United Nations entities and members of the Committee and concluding remarks	Chairman of the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities