

**Committee on the Peaceful
Uses of Outer Space***Unedited transcript*546th Meeting

Thursday, 16 June 2005, 10 a.m.

Vienna

*Chairman: Mr. A. A. Abiodun (Nigeria)**The meeting was called to order at 10.22 a.m.*

The CHAIRMAN: Good morning distinguished delegates and representatives, I now declare open the 546th meeting of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

This morning we will continue and hopefully conclude our consideration of agenda item 11, Space and Water, and continue our agenda item 6, Implementation of the Recommendations of UNISPACE III.

We will also begin our consideration of agenda item 13, Other Matters, and item 12, Composition of the Bureaux of the Committee and its Subsidiary Bodies for the Period 2006-2007.

At the end of this morning's meeting, Ms. Yolanda Berenguer of UNESCO, will make a presentation on "Space and Water for Life".

I would like to inform delegates that the Working Group on Space Debris of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee is currently holding its final intersessional meeting in Conference Room VII. The Chairman of the Working Group will present a progress report to the Committee this afternoon.

Ambassador Gonzalez, you have the floor.

Mr. R. GONZALEZ ANINAT (Chile)
(interpretation from Spanish): Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask you if I may and, through you, I would like to ask the Committee if I can make a statement on a non-paper that we have just received. And that is as a member from a developing

country, I will have travel, I have to go back to my capital at the end of the morning. It is just a brief statement. I have talked this over with the GRULAC countries. I would like to have this on record for the report. I will not be present when the report is discussed. Otherwise, I would have to ask my distinguished colleague from Colombia, as we have a position on this, to raise the question during the discussion on the report. So if I may, I would like to make a brief statement.

I know there is an agenda. I am willing to follow the order.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much Ambassador Gonzalez. You will have the opportunity this morning to make your intervention on the agenda. This non-paper which I assume is with the high-level. It is coming in as a second item this morning and you will have the opportunity at that time to do so. Thank you.

The Ambassador of Colombia.

Mr. C. AREVALO (Colombia)
(interpretation from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, it is not the high-level non-paper, OMNP/1 draft paper, *(continued in English)*... activities on the Committee. Are we talking about the same paper, Mr. Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN: No, we have not circulated that paper.

I give the floor to Ambassador Gonzalez.

Mr. R. GONZALEZ ANINAT (Chile)
(interpretation from Spanish): Thank you Mr.

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 D0708, United Nations Office at Vienna, P.O. Box 500, A-1400, Vienna, Austria. Corrections will be issued in a consolidated corrigendum.

Chairman. If the document has not been distributed officially. It has reached me and other delegations. I would like to say already that we have no intention of giving it consideration and if it is examined, we will definitely not approve it.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank Ambassador Gonzalez for his statement. You are a member of the G15. Is _____(?) prepared to be discussed at the G15 and I have taken the liberty of you being a member of the G15 to give you for your comments to me as the Chair but it is going to be discussed later. Thank you.

Space and water (agenda item 11)

Distinguished delegates, I would now like to continue our consideration of our agenda before us this morning and the first agenda is agenda item 11, Space and Water.

I now invite the distinguished delegate of Canada, Mr. Ouattara, to address the Committee.

Mr. T. OUATTARA (Canada): Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, this year again, the Canadian delegation is pleased to note that "Space and Water" is on the agenda. According to the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, millions die each year from water-borne diseases, while water pollution and eco-system destruction grow, particularly in the developing world.

In its recent Millennium Declaration, the United Nations called on all the nations of the world to halve by the year 2015, the proportion of people who are unable to reach, or to afford, safe drinking water and to stop the unsustainable exploitation of water resources, by developing water management strategies at the regional, national and local levels, which promote both equitable access and adequate supply.

During the Canadian delegation's statement last year, Mr. Chairman, we spoke of the Canadian Earth Observation satellite RADARSAT-1, and of its usefulness for managing or monitoring water issues. This year, we will highlight some new realizations concerning space and water activities undertaken by the Canadian space community.

Mr. Chairman, Canadian scientists used hyperspectral satellite and aircraft sensors for measurements of solar-stimulated fluorescence from phytoplankton chlorophyll, coupled with the

measurement of chlorophyll concentration via modelling of the blue-green colour changes produced by phytoplankton. The new information products will provide new maps of phytoplankton populations, the basis of food webs in lakes and in the sea, over wide and inaccessible areas.

Mr. Chairman, Canada has developed a new approach to integrating optical, LANDSAT, RADARSAT and ASAR radar imagery for quantifying the impact of land use and climate variability on groundwater recharge. This approach, funded by the Canadian Space Agency and Natural Resources Canada, is now being implemented in a number of key regional aquifers across Canada, in collaboration with provincial and municipal authorities.

Mr. Chairman, at the international level, Canadian experts and the Malaysian Centre for Remote Sensing and the Drainage and Irrigation Department developed a monsoon flood monitoring system in Malaysia, called GEOREX-Flood, to assist in disaster management by using RADARSAT-1 imageries. Non-specialists can access this system in near-real-time in remote regions and this system enables local authorities to undertake improved preventive measures to minimize the consequences of floods on affected populations.

A team composed of the Canadian Space Agency, the Natural Resources Canada, the Mekong River Commission, the private and academic sectors is implementing the Mekong River Basin Information System project. The Mekong River Commission member countries are Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Viet Nam. The goal of the project is to further develop the effective use of Earth observation for obtaining up-to-date and accurate resource data and for information dissemination and environmental management in the Mekong Basin.

The North-Eastern Brazil Groundwater Project, from 2000-2004, also known as PROASNE, is a technology transfer programme funded by the Canadian International Development Agency, designed to increase the long-term water supply for rural communities, thus reducing the hardship caused by drought and improving living conditions in general. The Earth Science Sector of Natural Resources Canada, the Geological Survey of Brazil and other partners worked together to ease widespread hardship in drought-prone regions. The Earth Science Sector scientists, in close collaboration with Canadian industry, have introduced new techniques to identify potential underground sources of potable water based on airborne geophysics and remote sensing and they

are developing new ways to pump, treat and distribute water over large areas using solar energy. Satellite imagery was used to map water-bearing geological structures, soil humidity, groundwater-related biomass concentrations and digital elevation, all of which will contribute to more successful groundwater exploration. As a means of improving the quality and accessibility of water in a long-term sustainable manner, Canadian experts are transferring this technology and expertise to Brazilian institutions involved with water resource development.

Mr. Chairman, under the ESA TIGER initiative, the Canadian Space Agency is funding five projects in four African countries. In Burkina Faso, the Canadian industry teams will use their extensive expertise to create viable Aquifer and River Basin Resource Evaluation products using Earth observation data. Working through the StéréoSat Africa initiative, the second TIGER project in Burkina Faso, initiated by the West Africa Regional Office of World Union for Nature, will focus on a water governance improvement project in the Basin of Volta.

In Egypt, a Canadian company is involved in the Nile River Awareness Kit, Nile RAK. The Canadian Space Agency-supported missions, including RADARSAT-1, play an important role in the Nile RAK project and will be used to promote sustainable Earth observation applications to water resource management in the Nile Basin.

In Kenya, another Canadian company is involved in the development and the demonstration of Earth observation technology for identify natural mosquito habitats and predicting malaria risk in Africa. The propose project is part of Kenya's Ministry of Health's National Malaria Control Programme that involves an interdisciplinary team in insect ecology, human health and tropical diseases. The objective of this project is to provide detailed maps, monitor changes to mosquito habitats, wetlands, and to develop malaria risk maps using topographic, larva ecology, human health, household and habitat data. This information will be an integral part of an overall larva control strategy to identify when and where larvicide can be applied to reduce the mosquito population.

Mr. Chairman, some Canadian experts will enhance existing methods of groundwater exploration in Northern Ghana through the application and integration of remote sensing-based approaches. RADARSAT-1 will be used to provide the primary synoptic view, with additional complementary information provided by optical satellite data.

Mr. Chairman, let me conclude by stating that I have provided only an overview of the capabilities of Earth observation and the work being conducted in Canada and at international levels using space technologies to monitor water. With global issues such as climate change, disease monitoring and safety concerns, that are increasingly impacting our day-to-day reality, satellite technology's role will extend beyond the applications known today. The improved capability of future technologies will assist us also in providing near-real-time information products, rendering them increasingly user-friendly and perhaps compatible with other data sources.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank you very much distinguished representative of Canada for your statement on agenda item 11.

And I call Mr. Leclerc, the distinguished representative of France, to address us on this subject.

Mr. C. LECLERC (France) (*interpretation from French*): Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, my delegation would like to present the following action to the Committee which is being undertaken in France in the context of space and water as part of what it has been doing by way of developing the use of space and space techniques for the benefit of society. The French Education Research Ministry has, *inter alia*, set up and supported the Earth space network and when it comes to the management of water resources, this network has piloted the two projects named Resource, Resources and Cash. The Resources project started in September 2002 involving the data collection company and localization using the CLS-ARGOS satellites, the CLS is part of the CNES and also the Office for Mine and Geological Research, that is a public body, and the AETS Advisory and Consultation company, this is called the European Applications of Technology and Surfaces which works in the areas of agriculture and environmental prediction and risk control.

The objective of the Resource project is the automatic collection on water and its quality, using space telecommunications and involving the implementation of modules being developed by CNES(?) via the ARGOS infrastructure.

The other project is called Cash, as I said, and the aim of this project is a method for operational follow-up and monitoring of the level of water in major rivers or lakes on the basis of altometric data, provided by using graphic(?) satellites. This is a programme

which goes back to July 2004 and it brings together the Institute for Research and Development, the Laboratory for Geophysical and Oceanographic Space Research and the regional company BRL and the CLS-ARGOS company, which I mentioned before. BRL is a regional management company. And the Cash programme is a precursor when it comes to the use of altometry(?) and this has meant that the French scientific community has been able to find the right structure in order to meet the needs of the management of water resources. And here we are talking about the following phenomena: quantifying and measuring quality of water resources and monitoring irrigated areas and irrigation practices, as well as the monitoring of water, _____ (*not clear*) or flood areas and also monitoring the level of dams.

In addition, information flows from space technology can be made more reliable and this means the overall coverage, the total coverage of a country or a region or a catchment area, and the point of this is to put decision-makers in the situation, I am thinking, for instance, of those responsible for a catchment area, to provide them for with neutral and homogenous geographical data.

Mr. Chairman, those are the points that my delegation wished to draw to the attention of the Committee under this agenda item, space and water.

Thank you Sir.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank Mr. Leclerc, the distinguished representative of France, for that contribution to agenda item 11.

Distinguished delegates, the next and final speaker on agenda item 11 is the father of the agenda item itself, Ambassador Lichem of Austria. Sir, you have the floor.

Mr. W. LICHEM (Austria): Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. Just to also express the sense of satisfaction that I feel about the discussion but beyond the discussion what is really happening in bringing space and water together.

I would like to recall here just that water has moved up and up in the international agenda as a priority, I think. It has been identified as being more pertinent in the global security agenda, not only because of two threats of old that have been expressed by downstream countries, vis-à-vis, upstream countries, in the past five years. But also the High-Level Panel appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to look into the new threats and

challenges to be faced by the community of nations has identified water as a potential source of insecurity, not only human insecurity, a term that the Canadian Government and Canadian intellectuals have been most meritorious in further developing, but also the traditional inter-State security that simply comes from slating the frustration of a series ungame(?) of having to share an apparently limited resource under the stress of growing demands.

Now, water, of course, has been and is also on the top of the development agenda. In fact, there can be no economic development, no social development, no environmental development without looking at water. And the great advantage of space-based data is, as a lay person here among experts, is that you understand much better the interrelationship between water and related natural resources. What our colleague from France has just stressed, that it is the watershed management that defines water availability and water quality but also has to come into the focus as we look at space and water.

I think we have to also express here our satisfaction about the pilot project that has been presented here for the Lake Chad Basin. I think this Committee should somehow be kept abreast of how the funding, the implementation and the successes of cooperation and the application of new technology to an age(?) but also in its quantity and a new challenge is being met. I think that the space and development cover which we have also extended over the item space and water is applicable in a multi-dimensional way also to the Chad Basin.

And as I mentioned development, you cannot use the term "development" without adding the adjective "sustainable". And when we come to the issue of sustainability, let me here mention something which might be of interest to this Committee in the future. Water resources management, natural resources management, depends in an, to some extent, unrecognized dimension on forestry management. And space there, simply also for the simple fact that where you have forests, you do(?) will have people and where you do not have people, you do not have data. So, in fact, space-based data can make a very significant contribution to managing forests and the management of forests will define the availability, development and use of water and there we are back to the entire circuit(?).

So the suggestion would be, and please allow me to do this in this informal way, the justice we have had this year, this wonderful Symposium to which I want to congratulate this Committee and the presenters

on Space and Archaeology, why do we not think about the possibility, this is a good way of working for a substantive committee, to have a side platform of exploring issues. Why do we not think of a symposium on space and forestry? And I can already now say that, in fact, either the United Nations Forest Forum comes through COPUOS or COPUOS will go to them, to build this bridge, that natural sustainable resource management and the capacities and incredible contributions to be made by space technology.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank you very much Ambassador Lichem for your statement on space and water. You challenged us in the last three years to address this subject and gladly enough Member States of the Committee have responded and that is very encouraging. I strongly believe that the Committee finds it so relevant in this area and will continue to do so. In the area of forestry, I understand that the discussion is ongoing and, therefore, hopefully this will be finalized before the adjournment of this meeting on the position the Committee needs to take or might take on space and forestry. So I thank you very much for your input.

Ambassador Gonzalez has asked for the floor. Ambassador Gonzalez, you have the floor please.

Mr. R. GONZALEZ ANINAT (Chile) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. First of all, I would like to express thanks to Ambassador Lichem who can claim paternity over this crucial question and that within the framework of the new threats to security and to human security in particular and that is not a minor issue. That is something which is possibly going to be debated at the High-Level Meeting, 14 to 16 September at the General Assembly.

What are resources, is a question which is fundamental for developing countries. Paradoxically, it is considered a soft threat when compared with terrorism which has greater scope possibly as a threat but going by UNDP reports on human development, it is clearly shown that non-access to water resources kills many more people every year than any terrorist activity. Terrorist acts, and by the way there is no international community definition as yet for terrorism, there is a social problem there of huge importance when it comes to equitable access to water resources. Getting a consensus also on how these water resources should be used, exploitation or utilization of water resources. There is imbalance, a global imbalance, looking for access for development(?) and this has to

be looked at in a holistic and understandable way with understanding. It should also take into account that thousands of children are dying because of no access to water. Many people, two billion perhaps are dying because they do not just get water, two billion. Anyway, many. And that means people who are dying everyday because they just do not have water. So the treatment of this, the inclusion of this question and that, sorry for stopping but _____ (*tape not clear*) interrupted me every time I have used or have had the floor.

In this Committee, for developing countries, this is of utmost important. We are talking about so many people who are dying, who are waiting for space technology to be used for these resources and for distribution on access where there is clear inequality. This is not just a matter of speculation. This is shown through empirical studies. There have been meetings, one in Graz last year, a very important meeting, and these show that this is an important issue.

I would like to look back to 2004, in Santiago, we had the Space Conference on Space and Water, with Ambassador Lichem, who gave a great presentation. There were other people from other parts of the world, Dr. Rees(?) Lee(?) was also there and I still have a copy of her speech. These presentations were well received, very good, and this shows the Office's contribution, very much appreciated in my country, and that in topics, questions are current, prudent issues, matters which need a follow-up. We are looking at new threats, as has been said, challenges, but they are also possibilities, there are options for a solution and these are making the international scene sombre these days. Anything that technology can contribute, and there is plenty, should be not only maintained but increased. And within that context, through willingness on the part of industrialized countries, we do not want just to hear about what is being done in some project somewhere, which might be successful, that is just not enough. Those might be acts of goodwill, yes, but countries that can benefit need to know more about water resources. There are advantages to be had, for industrialized countries as well. Space and water as a theme should also be seen in a broader context. This affects stability of international relations and the international scene. It creates insecurity, insecurity for individuals. What we want is measures to build confidence and confidence-building measures for them to binding, and I am going by experience we have had in Latin America with the Space Conference of the Americas, and clear binding legal rules, you can find solutions. This is not a minor issue. I am saying this with a sense of responsibility.

Now, and I would like to ask, Mr. Chairman, that this be reflected in the report.

The Legal Subcommittee deliberations on this and other topics must be expanded. We will not accept even one day being cut from the Legal Subcommittee, not even one hour. It has been rationalized already plenty to the point that rationalization has gone too far. Somebody from the European Space Agency came, made a statement and left. Another delegation came in, made a statement and it was on a painful issue but then they never came back. That is not rationalization. This is a question we have discussed among the Latin American countries and I can assure you, and I am saying this with candour, we often are candid, we, from Latin American countries, we will not accept that the next Chair of COPUOS have in mind the idea of cutting back the Legal Subcommittee. I am speculating perhaps. We are convinced that countries such as France, who will be chairing the Committee, with its great legal tradition and strong interest in legal affairs that France would never propose such a step. So we give our support to the forthcoming chair of COPUOS and that hoping to see further examination of legal issues such as the issue of space and water, for example.

And finally, I would like to refer to the proposal from Ambassador Lichem, one of the two. It is of tremendous interest and this is something we talked about as well with members in the Latin American Group. We fully agree and we want to give it our clear support. Of course, if it were space and forests that would be even better because that is something which in many developing countries is of the greatest importance. But as I do have the floor, I am very sorry, I will be leaving. There are all sorts of parallel meetings that have been organized so I have not managed to do everything I wanted to. I do have some obligations.

I would like to ask that OMNP/1B distributed officially and that it not be pushed further. It should not be consider. It would not take us anywhere. We have talked about this. There might be a mandate to examine these questions for these last-minute working groups. For us, it just cannot be considered here on this question.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank Ambassador Gonzalez for his statement.

I now invite the Ambassador of Colombia for his statement.

Mr. C. AREVALO (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Thank you Mr. Chairman. I would like to endorse what was said by the Ambassador of Chile on several questions and I am doing this following consultations that we had in GRULAC. And first and foremost, I would like to congratulate Ambassador Lichem, as somebody with great vision, a far-reaching vision for questions such as water. These are matters which are fundamental for Colombia. Geopolitically this has become a stabilizing or de-stabilizing factor in everything that looking forward by decades, this also goes hand-in-hand with desertification, with migration. The question of people relocating yet goes hand-in-hand with agriculture reductions and, of course, where there is a shortage of water, this is of utmost importance, vital. It is fundamental, as is the connection with reforestation. Water and reforestation, in the case of Colombia, we are very much involved in reforestation in certain areas of the country which were wiped out or abused through illicit crops. This is a question which takes on fundamental importance. Also it is related to alternative development programmes in many areas of the world where forests are taking on new importance.

With that introduction, Mr. Chairman, I would like to refer to the manner we are dealing with questions in both Subcommittees, Legal and Scientific and Technical Subcommittees. Because of that, we cannot even think about less time or space for time allotted to these questions. Any cutback in the future potentially could mean a point of no return. That is how things seem to work in the United Nations. Instead of, if you reduce and try to put it back later on, it is very complicated. For developing countries, where huge efforts are being made to come to these meetings, the question of rationalization has to be seen within countries that have greater capabilities and capacities for attendance at these meetings. We believe that process of rationalization should be taken up within individual delegations because of importance of assistance and continuous attendance here at these meetings. On my right, I have a representative from a developing country who has come from very far away. There are other countries as well here and it is important to acknowledge all the efforts, the extra costs for many countries when it comes to attending these meetings. And it is a rule that should apply to all countries, without exception.

Mr. Chairman, I do not want to dwell any further. I know that there is the question of this non-paper OMNP/1 being distributed. I agree with Ambassador Gonzalez. It is a topic that is interesting, very interesting, but it is premature. The G15, I said

this in the G15, my colleagues know, I said this when the question with the long-term picture was taken up and my views have not changed. The existing G15 should have the possibility for further study, further in-depth, and if this question is to be dwelt with this morning, we can expand on what we have said, elaborate on our reservations. As I have said on other occasions, we do have to have a long-term view. The question is how. And in my mind, that is something that we have to think of a bit further.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank you Ambassador Arevalo of Colombia.

I give Cuba the floor. Madam, you have the floor.

Ms. L. PALACIOS (Cuba) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Thank you Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the Committee for raising this interesting and important question. It is interesting and important to all. It is the question of space and water. For me, it was very interesting to hear the various delegations tell their experience and with great pleasure I observed existing cooperation between developed and developing countries. The question in and of itself is quite complex. Many delegations have stressed the importance of it, how it can be a destabilizing factor, how it does influence life in a country and thus how it influences life on our planet Earth.

I wanted to tell you that my country is in a critical situation of drought in the eastern regions and we are eager and willing to hear of any proposals for cooperation in this area. Anything would be welcome.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of Cuba for her statement on this agenda item.

Distinguished delegates, references have been made to the papers that has been circulated. Those papers will come up when the appropriate agenda items are discussed. I thank the Ambassador of Colombia for his statement indicating that he is open for discussion when these issues are tabled. These are issues that were discussed at the G15 and they are coming on the appropriate agenda item this morning hopefully.

I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Bolivia who has asked for the floor.

Mr. J. BAZOBERRY OTERO (Bolivia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Thank you Mr. Chairman. I would like to greet you and the officers. It is the first time that I have asked for the floor in this important Committee. And on this specific question before us, I would like to endorse what was said by Ambassador Lichem of Austria. He took up two very important questions in the statement made. One refers to water resources as a threatening factor against human security. However, as I fully agree, he also said that the water question also has effects on questions between States regarding water resources.

I can be brief and I would like to say that space technology can also be helpful as deterrents in processes that involved conflict or problems within States regarding the use of water resources. As you know, the question of new threats, and this is something that was addressed by my dear friend from Chile, there are new threats, the ozone layer, disease, deforestation, drugs. And within the drug issue, there is the question of forest abuse in cocoa paste production. All these threats mean instability and at internally and at international level. But there are also the traditional threats in the multi-dimensional picture of threats, traditional threats, as Ambassador Lichem said, traditional inter-State conflicts and there is where I would like to focus.

I believe new technology, with everything it can offer, as the Ambassador of Chile has said, could be a factor helping confidence-building between States for better use of water resources.

I would also like to endorse what was said by the Ambassador of Chile and the Ambassador of Colombia on the question of the Legal Subcommittee. I agree with the need to have technology considered for use in reforestation.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished Ambassador of Bolivia for his statement.

Are there any other comments on agenda item 11 from delegates?

Professor Cassapoglou of Greece.

Mr. V. CASSAPOGLOU (Greece) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. Chairman, first of all, I would like to congratulate the delegation of Austria who took the initiative last year which is of tremendous importance and that especially for the people of Africa and the Far East.

I have had personal experience in Africa with water shortage. Cameroon, for example. I saw women running 18 kilometres just for a pot of water and it was not purified water even. I am just saying this to draw your attention to the fact that within UNESCO and in COMEST, there is an initiative as well on water in a subcommittee. Considering the forthcoming General Conference of UNESCO in October, we should cooperate, work together, so as to have the broadest possible scope for this initiative. So this does not just stay in Vienna. We have to make an effort. We have to help in this global activity.

That is the point I wanted to make and once again I would like to congratulate our colleague from Austria.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank you Professor Cassapoglou for your input.

Are there any other comments on agenda item 11?

Can I take it that we have concluded our deliberation of this agenda item?

It is so decided.

Implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III (agenda item 6)

Distinguished delegates, I would now like to continue our consideration of agenda item 6, Implementation of the Recommendations of UNISPACE III.

As you will recollect yesterday, CRP.15 was distributed to all of you on the High-Level Plenary Meeting that is coming up before the General Assembly in September this year. There were a number of comments and on the basis of your comments, we requested the Secretariat to take your comments into consideration and assist us in re-writing the text we had discussed. The Secretariat has done that and I circulated to you a document on the subject, which is a non-paper, non-paper number OMNP/1B(?), that to the High-Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly.

Before we begin deliberating on this paper, I would like to give the floor to the Director of the Office to introduce the paper.

Dr. Camacho, you have the floor.

Mr. S. CAMACHO-LARA (Director, Office for Outer Space Affairs): Thank you Mr. Chairman. There is actually very little to introduce. What we have done is to, as indicated, is take into account the comments that were made by delegations and to modify the text to include practically every comment that was made, if not literally, then in the spirit of what was intended by that particular delegation.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you Dr. Camacho.

Distinguished delegates, the floor is open for your comments.

Ambassador Gonzalez, you have the floor.

Mr. R. GONZALEZ ANINAT (Chile) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to congratulate the Office for Outer Space Affairs who gave us the English version. From what I understood, not much that I understood, it was a very good contribution. This document is an adequate reflection of yesterday's discussion and I do not think there should be any further problem.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank Ambassador Gonzalez.

I now invite Professor Cassapoglou of Greece.

Mr. V. CASSAPOGLOU (Greece): Thank you Mr. Chairman. Just to repeat what my colleague from Chile has just said. We are fully satisfied with the new wording of both bullets, the modification of bullet, paragraph 18 and the new one.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you Professor Cassapoglou.

Italy, Professor Marchisio, you have the floor.

Mr. S. MARCHISIO (Italy): Thank you Mr. Chairman. We would like to express our satisfaction with the new wording of the High-Level Plenary Meeting action of our Committee. We support this proposal.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much Sir.

I give the floor to the distinguished Ambassador of Colombia.

Mr. C. AREVALO (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Mr. Chairman, we, too, would like to congratulate the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs. We believe that this is a clear or understandable way to understand the comments made by delegations and I think this point does reflect it very clearly.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank you Ambassador of Colombia for that statement.

Distinguished delegates, are there any other comments on the paper before you on the High-Level Plenary Meeting.

If not, can it take it then that you are accepting and adopting this proposal?

It is so decided.

Let me state that the goal of this paper is not to present it to the General Assembly by this Committee but the goal of this paper is to encourage and appeal to all members of this Committee to implore their own delegations that will be participating in the High Panel to reflect space as an indispensable entity or tool in human development activities and to have this included in their formal statement. Or, if you do not want to include this, at least the spirit and the meaning of what we are proposing here, we would like to see that in the statements of your delegations. So we are counting on your support and we hope this will be done. Thank you very much.

Distinguished delegates, still on agenda item number six, we were ready to discuss earlier in the session the Strategy of the Office for Outer Space Affairs to implement the recommendations of UNISPACE III, as requested by the General Assembly.

In this connection, the Office has circulated to you, I believe, CRP.17 on the Strategy of the Office for Outer Space Affairs in implementing the actions called for in the Plan of Action of the Committee on the implementation of UNISPACE III recommendations.

Accordingly, I invite Dr. Camacho to introduce CRP.17. You have the floor.

Mr. S. CAMACHO-LARA (Director, Office for Outer Space Affairs): Thank you Mr. Chairman. Again, there is little that I would add to introduce the document. This is the full text that would be included in the report of the Committee. It reflects in a summary version what was contained in Conference Room Paper 12 which was the proposed strategy from the Office and the comments that were made. You will note that at the very end there is the phrase where it says "the Committee recommended that ..." so that would be what we would hope we might indicate in the discussion that might follow.

Thank you very much Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank Dr. Camacho for his statement.

Distinguished delegates, I invite any comments on CRP.17 from the floor.

Professor Cassapoglou.

Mr. V. CASSAPOGLOU (Greece): Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask to give us some time to study the text of CRP.17 in connection with CRP.12 because I think we are not ready to comment on that.

Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank you Professor Cassapoglou.

The Ambassador of Colombia.

Mr. C. AREVALO (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. In principle, we do not have any difficulties with CRP.17. We believe that basically it covers what did happen at the session but there are two comments that I would like to have noted.

The first is related to the Education Centres. There was some concern that has been expressed at various sessions and that on the need for the Centres, and I am concentrating on Latin America, that they have tighter links with the Interim Secretariat of the Space Conference of the Americas. We have not managed to achieve that unfortunately. That does not mean that we want to in any way demerit what they are doing. We would want to hear from the Directors of the Centre.

And another point, and that is related to the opening of the governing bodies of the Centres to

greater participation from the region. In other words, countries that may wish a position in the Advisory Group or in the executive bodies, even if its virtually only. It does not have to mean physical presence, it is just that, speaking on behalf of the Interim Secretariat, we feel like orphans of these Centres. This has to be remedied in some way. And I would ask that there be a sentence included here to express that. It is something that we have already said.

And my attention was also drawn by the presentation given by the delegation of India on the Education Centre that they have and the manner in which it is structured. I believe it is very good that democratic structure with the directing bodies and showing composition of the various countries, the make-up from countries in the region covered. This is one way how we could remedy this shortcoming that we have encountered.

And also on various workshops, the second to last paragraph on the first page, we are a little concerned here. It says that the Office will have to gradually reduce the number of workshops organized and training courses as well. These courses are of tremendous value. We experience this. I do not think that there is any Latin American country that could say the contrary. We are strong on the impact of these issues.

I am not going to go through examples but space as a topic, the presence of experts, seminars and workshops are of so much importance. It has been shown that they are doing very good work. I really do not know how that could be argued against. What we have to say is that countries find these very valuable and it would be terrible if these were to be reduced.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished Ambassador of Colombia.

I now invite the Ambassador of Chile.

Mr. R. GONZALEZ ANINAT (Chile) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. More orphans. As I always do, I will agree with the concern expressed by the Ambassador of Colombia. We have not had any description, as far as I can remember, of the important work that I am sure that is being done in Latin America by the Centre in Brazil and Mexico. I think it is very elementary that that Centre work together with the Interim Secretariat of the Space Conference of the Americas.

The Ambassador of Colombia mentioned that it is not the question of any demerit on the content, as he said, just to use his language, I keep learning. This is a very valuable document but there should definitely be a reference, an appeal even, to the Directors of the Latin American Centre that there be contribution, cooperation. We have not had any information at all and we will be at the Fifth Space Conference of the Americas.

The workshops and training courses. As our colleague from Colombia said, these training courses, I think I know what they are, our colleague from Colombia used the English word, I am guessing. But we do not want to see those reduced either. I do not think that would do any good for the international community and especially for developing countries. I am thinking back a few years. I have one example of a workshop in my mind on global positioning systems. This was very successful in Chile and there were others. So we are cutting back these workshops? But at the same time, we have papers coming out creating strange working groups.

And it would also seem, I do not know, that there is someone who might have the intention of going counter to the Napoleonic code and cutting back the duration of the Legal Subcommittee. We will end up with nothing. We might as well just stay at home with our computers and send e-mails back and forth. That would be one way. Cutting back on these workshops, they have been so successful. The Office has made great efforts there. I really do not think that is good news. And I think there should be a clear appeal here. In the case of the Centre for Latin America and the Caribbean that there be information given to countries involved. These are all the countries on the continent.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished Ambassador of Chile.

I now invite the distinguished representative of Cuba.

Ms. L. PALACIOS (Cuba) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Thank you Mr. Chairman. At this point I would like to agree with what was said by the Ambassador of Chile, my dear friend Raimundo, and the representative of Colombia as well. Reducing the workshops, if you take into account the situation that we are facing, if the idea is to hand these over to the Space Education Centres, thinking of CREDULAR(?), we could have some advantages. I have already seen

in recent years that the Centres in Asia and Africa that have well-organized Centres, they are the ones that have more workshops. In the case of Latin America and the Caribbean, if you look at our Space Education Centre, they have fewer workshops. So if the budget is handed over to those Centres and if they are well-organized Centres, with good representation, where there is active participation from all the different countries, then the results would be positive. But we have difficulties with our Centre. So any reduction of workshops could mean a disadvantage for our countries and that should be taken into account.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Cuba.

I now invite the distinguished representative of Argentina to take the floor.

Mr. S. SAYUS (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. My delegation would like to endorse what was said by Colombia, Chile and Cuba. We believe that it is very important that these regional workshops be held. My country has had several. In September there is one planned with the United Nations on health applications and looking at CREDULAR(?). Argentina is the country where the Centre did its first international activity. We had an event in Córdoba, a seminar on Space Education in the Environment and we had a seminar for the region with participation of the National University of Córdoba at the time. But there is definitely a lack of coordination and dialogue in the region. We need a more intensive connection so that we can have all the countries of the region included.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank you Sir for your input, distinguished representative of Argentina.

I now invite the distinguished representative of the United States, Mr. Ken Hodgkins.

Mr. K. HODGKINS (United States of America): Thank you Mr. Chairman. First let me express our appreciation to the Secretariat for preparing CRP.17 and we largely agree with the contents of the paper. I did have one specific change that I would like to suggest. It is on page 2, the first full paragraph, beginning with "the view was expressed ...". I think that this paragraph would reflect the correct view if we deleted the word "only" in the second line before "guarantee" and put "not" so it

would read "the view was expressed that in and of itself reducing the number of workshops would not guarantee an increase in staff resources". I think that was the gist of the thought that I think is trying to be expressed in that paragraph.

The second comment I would like to make is I would suggest, and perhaps when we could discuss this under other matters or it could be reflected in the report in some place but my delegation feels very strongly that the countries sponsoring the regional workshops really should report regularly, the countries that are sponsoring the Centres should report regularly to the Committee on what they are doing. We had a very good presentation from India concerning the Asia and the Pacific Centre. But I would suggest that under the agenda item 7 of our agenda, that is the item dealing with the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, that the countries of India, Brazil, Nigeria, Morocco and Mexico come together and report on what is happening at those Centres each year. I think that that is not an unreasonable request, given the fact that the Committee and the United Nations is lending support so that we have a total view of what the Space Applications Programme is doing in addition to the workshops and the consultative services that they provide.

So that would be my recommendation for the Committee to consider that at each Committee meeting there be a sub-item under the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee for reports from the Regional Centres on the accomplishments and their future activities.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of the United States and while your comments are still fresh in our minds, let me say that your proposal on the annual report by host countries of the Regional Centres could be reflected as a note(?) for (c). Any major objection to that from the floor and the Secretariat and he(?) will reflect that in the report as a request from this Committee to those host countries. I think an appropriate request.

Having said that, I will give the floor to the distinguished representative from India.

Mr. B. N. SURESH (India): Thank you Mr. Chairman. The Indian delegation appreciates the point brought out in CRP.17 but we have one very specific comment. You know that workshops and training courses which have been organized annually. It has been helping enormously in capacity-building. What is proposed in this paper is that we cut down organizing these workshops and symposia from the Office and

then transfer them to the Regional Centres. The important thing is that Regional Centres have their own workload and how the _____(?) transfer from the Office to these Regional Centres, I think that requires careful examination. The idea indeed is OK but then the implementation of _____(?) must be _____(?).

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of India for his statement.

Are there any other statements on this issue?

Spain, you have the floor.

Mr. J. M. LÓPEZ-AGUILAR (Spain) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. Just briefly. I wanted to complete information given by the representatives of Chile, Colombia, Cuba and Argentina. I would like to tell you about my personal experience. I was pleased to represent the European Space Agency in two group seminars, Rio de Janeiro and Cartagena in Colombia and I can tell you there was quite a reception, interest shown. These were very important meetings. So this is my personal experience that I wanted to add here because in the context of this document, I think we should also take into account opinions of other delegations, Spain, at this moment.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of Spain for that statement.

Any other statements from the delegates?

Greece, you have the floor.

Mr. V. CASSAPOGLOU (Greece): Thank you Mr. Chairman. I have to express also appreciation for the document 17 and the document here. First of all, I agree with the remarks made by our United States concerning the annual reports of the States responsible for the Regional Centres. Until now we have not yet received such reports with the exception of India, if I am not wrong. So I think it is a kind of, at least, more a little political obligation from the part of States adhering, let us say, the responsibility in hosting these Centres to address to the Committee in their Scientific and Technical Subcommittee the reports of their annual activities which is, in my view, very important, to appreciate their role.

And secondly, Mr. Chairman, concerning the second part of paragraph 5 of the CRP.17, it reads "to enhance the Office's capacity to provide technical and legal advisory services and initiate pilot projects, the Office ...". At the end, "the Committee also noted that the Office would need to increase its contact(?) with founding entities". I would like to have some clarification what exactly means founding entities. Is it private banks? It is other sponsors of the private sector? What exactly means founding entities?

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of Greece for that statement.

Any other statements from the floor please?

Nigeria.

Mr. J. CHABO (Nigeria): Thank you Mr. Chairman. On behalf of the Nigerian delegation, we just want to say that we also express our support for the comments by the distinguished delegate from the United States. It is suffice to mention that indeed Nigeria actually very much in detailed form did say something about its Centre in Nigeria. In this context, I wish to refer you to the comments made by Mr. J. A. Ologun. Indeed, we will take up the challenge but I believe we did say something _____(?) like I said, not in detailed form that the distinguished delegate from India had made a presentation. Please take a note and in future, there will be briefing on the activities of the Centre.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of Nigeria for that statement.

I now invite the distinguished representative of the Russian Federation.

Mr. P. G. DZUBENKO (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. This is a very simple task and I would like to start by congratulating the authors of this paper, CRP.17. I think that these efforts have been very productive.

And secondly, Mr. Chairman, I would like entirely to endorse the question put by our Greek friend and I would also like to hear an answer to that question.

And thirdly, Mr. Chairman, I have to say, what is this paper going to lead to? That is what I would like to ask you Sir.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of the Russian Federation.

I think at this point it is important for me to go back to the Office and invite the Director of the Office to speak to us. Accordingly, I invite Dr. Camacho to take the floor. Dr. Camacho.

Mr. S. CAMACHO-LARA (Director, Office for Outer Space Affairs): Thank you Mr. Chairman. I am going to try to clarify the intention of the proposal and, of course, if the proposal is not something that the Committee would like to go forward with then we would go back to what we are doing right now. I will also try to clarify the relationship between the Office and the Centres and I will make comments on some of the other questions that we are raising.

In the case of the region of Latin America and the Caribbean, in the case of all the regions actually, but the Centres are independent. They do not depend on the Office. We do not tell the Centres what to do. We work with the Centres. We are observers on the Governing Boards which means we do not vote. But, of course, we do have an element of moral authority. So what we have been trying to do with our Centres is to get all to function in the same way that they would have, in my view and in the view of our colleagues, rightly said by the distinguished Ambassador of Colombia. They should have a Governing Board that represents those that have signed an agreement with the Centre. And we are working with the Governments of Mexico and Brazil so that they get to that point. What I could say it is not the lack of will. There have been some complications in getting them started and getting the funding ready and getting everything to work. So it is not a lack of will. It has been a lack of having the resources and having it moved.

But one of the things that we will do is we will transmit this to the Centres. We will write to them and say this was expressed by Latin American governments at this session. We will put it in a proper way and we will bring it to their attention.

In the case of reporting of the Centres, partly what I said applies again but I do want to clarify some things. The presentation by India has been mentioned and there were no other presentations, physical(?) presentations _____(?). The reason that we

had invited India to present because this year is the tenth anniversary. So to celebrate, to give it _____ability(?) of what it has accomplished in 10 years and it fits with the item that we have on space and education. So we invited India that they would prepare a presentation on their accomplishments. So it was because of the anniversary and not because we did not invite the others.

Last year we did invite the Centres so we did have all of them. And when we are not having them here present, it also takes resources to come physically. We have invited them to report either to us and we help them _____(?) and then we have distributed to you or we ask them to provide their reports in _____(?) form which we distribute at the back of the table.

The other part the distinguished representative from Nigeria said, normally the Centres send the message to the delegation that is included in this statement asking what has been done.

Having said that, one of the comments I would make would be that we might have, if the Committee does take the proposal that the United States, to have a sub-item on the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee that has reporting by the Centres. This does not even have to be a sub-item. It could be like the national _____(?). We might on a regular basis ask the Centres to report.

I think that would be more or less how I would want to say at this point about the Centres. And regarding the reduction on workshops versus the pilot projects or technical advisory services. What we have seen is that after we have a workshop then those that participate say, OK this is very good but it was a point event(?). When we go back, nothing happens. And then they say, can you not help us to put into practice what we learned? And we can do very well on that. In trying to react to what we hear a lot, and say how can we do it? We do not have the staff or the money to be able to move any of these activities forward. So we thought what we might be able to do is instead of doing 12 or 13 workshops, we might do 11. When we do 11, and the number is very variable, because we do 11 when we get the sponsorship. If we do not get the sponsorship, next year we will do 10 and they will have nothing to do with a reduction apropro. It will not be a reduction that we would be doing programmatically. It would be that the funds are not there. So when we say we will reduce one or two, it would mean for the resources that we have, we might use the money and the staff that we would have to try to launch a pilot project somewhere. When I say launch, it means just getting it off because we do not

have the money to fund it and we do not have the money to follow it up. So all we would do with this is continue checking with those that we brought together to launch the project.

I am going to use this at this moment then to reply to the comments made by the United States regarding the change of the word "only" to "not". Now I see that the drafting should change a little bit but "only" is correct, "not" is not correct. Because what happens is if we reduce workshops, then we do increase staff resources. That part we do increase. And we do increase the part of the funding. We release the money, we are going to increase our disposable resources by the amount of the funding that would come from the regular budget. So that is a real, it would be a decrease which is what the delegation of the United States said and I agreed when we discussed it. It would be a decrease in the voluntary because if the workshop is not _____(?), you do not have a workshop to offer. That would mean that there would be no voluntary contributions to support that workshop. So that would be a decrease in the voluntary contributions.

And what we are going to try to do is to use and increase _____ (*not clear*). With ESA, we co-sponsored, let us say, five workshops a year. So we would tell ESA, we would discuss with ESA, would you be interested in doing follow-up to workshops that we did last year in country X, and of the money you that you are going to give us, instead of having five workshops that we co-sponsor, would you consider co-sponsor for and co-sponsor with us a launching of a project? That is what is meant there. If we are successful in getting ESA or anybody else to agree to that, then we will not have a reduction in the voluntary contributions. If we are not successful, then that would mean a real reduction and this is something that we would be evaluating as we move along. We are not going to go like this. And the other part that I mentioned also is that we are going to keep our commitments that we have for the next two years. We are not going to say, we are not doing the workshops that have made the commitment.

And I think, Mr. Chairman, I have covered everything. I am sorry if I was a little bit long but, of course, it is up to the Committee to make the recommendations as to whether we should do it or not do it.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank you Dr. Camacho for that explanation.

Professor Cassapoglou, you asked for the floor again? Please be very brief on this subject.

Mr. V. CASSAPOGLOU (Greece): Thank you. First of all, I have not received a response to my comment concerning the end of paragraph 5. Thank you. And then I have to make some remarks on the remarks of my friend, Dr. Camacho.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: You noted that he omitted that and he is ready to respond.

Mr. S. CAMACHO-LARA (Director, Office for Outer Space Affairs): I am very sorry. I apologize to you, my friend Professor Cassapoglou. What is meant entities is to mean practically anybody, the regional banks, UNDP, a government, space agencies, a commercial company, practically everybody.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you Dr. Camacho.

The Ambassador of Colombia.

Mr. C. AREVALO (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Just briefly Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank Dr. Camacho for the explanation given. Having listened to him, we understand the difficulty of coordinating various components in the process when it is a matter of reducing workshops. Dr. Lee(?) was clear with the idea of a sustainable process and that is the idea that a pilot project in the long term could have a multiplying effect, more of an impact than one workshop in the case of success. So we understand the idea of seeking new sources. This fits with additional contributions and it is not easy to find these but we do support the proposal, not manner. I am also grateful for the understanding on the question of the Latin American Centre and that the Office showed the concern directly to the Director of the Centre.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Ambassador of Colombia for his statement.

You have not finished. I thought you had finished. OK, Ambassador of Greece, you have the floor.

Mr. V. CASSAPOGLOU (Greece): I am not Ambassador yet. I am just a representative. Thank you. As it concerns the end of paragraph, I prefer to replace the word, in my poor English, to replace “some entities” with something “funding opportunities” or “funding possibilities” but not “entities”. That is what we would like to add.

As it concerns now the, not the obligation, but the duty of Regional Centres to report to the Committee or to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, I would like to remind you that, of course, it is not *stricto(?) senso(?)* legal obligation but in any case from the fact that the Centres are affiliated to the United Nations. There is a kind of, let us say, legal ties connecting the Centres with the United Nations system, and especially the Committee.

Although this view, it is my view a duty for these Centres to report to us every year on their activities. *Primo*.

Segundo, it is not a national activity of the hosting State. The hosting State acts as a kind of regional representative of the United Nations activity. It is in the framework of the so-called regionalization of the international organizations activities and I can also quote the example of the ITU, the regional representatives. There is not(?) so a national obligation of Mexico, Morocco or for India or Brazil and Nigeria to report. They act as representatives as an international obligation on the regional level. That is what I would like to remind you. They are a kind of trustees. That is what I think is very important and if it is necessary to reflect this idea in this document. That is all what I want to say and maybe we can put somewhere the States hosting the Centres are invited to provide the Committee with the annual report of all the activities of the Centres.

Thank you very much. I was very, very brief.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much Professor Cassapoglou.

I invite the distinguished representative of Brazil.

Mr. C. E. DA CUNHA OLIVEIRA (Brazil) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, unfortunately I was not here when other delegations took the floor to address the question of activities of the Regional Centres, including the activities of the Latin American Centre, which is in Brazil and Mexico. And for that reason, I

feel somewhat awkward in reacting to the various comments that were made on activities of that Centre.

In the context of the Group for Latin America and the Caribbean, there are really good exchanges of views and information on questions of interest in the region and I can assure you my delegation will continue with the exchange of information, with the dialogue, with any delegations who took the floor to address this matter, for activities of the Centre and in the interest of the whole region.

Mr. Chairman, it just so happens that I have information given to me on the Latin American Centres' activities and I am more than willing to transmit this information as soon as it is requested.

On the comments made by the delegation of Greece in connection with the explanation given there by the Director of the Office, Mr. Camacho, Mr. Chairman, I understand that it is in the interest of all delegations present that information on the Centres' activity be transmitted in an open and transparent way as possible. However, I do not see it as an obligation, as indicated by the distinguished representative of Greece. It is something that should actually be defined in the constituent texts of the Centres. I am not fully familiar with such texts but it is a good idea that the information be transmitted. It should not be seen as an international obligation, however, as was suggested.

That being said, once again, as I said, the points will be taken into account as made and I can share the information I have with any delegations interested.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of Brazil for his statement.

I now invite the distinguished representative of Mexico to address us.

Mr. A. VIVANCO CASTELLANOS (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Thank you Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to pick up on the last point made by Brazil on the legal nature of any obligation for informing on activity of the Centre. I do not think this is really the right place to go into a legal analysis of the nature of any such obligation. I think that goes beyond the boundaries of this discussion here.

However, we do understand the interest of members of the Committee on activity and in the future

we will make sure that the activity be reported for the Centres.

In the case of Mexico and the Mexico Centre, I would like to pick up on what Dr. Camacho said. There were, indeed, problems in setting up the Centres, and the one in Mexico in particular, because of financing matters and sometimes this might have affected developments in activities as planned for the Centre.

Of course, we will try to report on activity, as was done at the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee this year.

And that is all that I wanted to say for now. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of Mexico for his statement.

Distinguished delegates, please I would like us to move ahead. We have made comments on this document. The Secretariat has listened to you and the United States has made a proposal. All these proposals, I have even brought a proposal for adoption and it has not been objected to. So can the Secretariat go ahead and enter or reflect all your responses in the document and we accept the document then as amended?

Is that agreed?

OK, the Russian Federation has the floor.

Mr. P. G. DZUBENKO (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. We do not essentially have anything against this document but we would like to ask you in which way you intend we should adopt this document, as amended, if we have not seen it. How can we adopt it as amended? We have not seen it.

Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of the Russian Federation. Probably can we, therefore, suspend further consideration? Let me ask the Office to respond please.

Mr. S. CAMACHO-LARA (Director, Office for Outer Space Affairs): Thank you Mr. Chairman. The text that is in CRP.17 is what would be going to the report except for the part that should be coming from this discussion. That would follow the last part which says “the Committee recommended that ...” and

the recommendations that we were seeking were of the type that were coming out right now were “... a discussion was held on whether to do less workshops...” and it seems that that is, at least, what I got from the context is that the Committee does not want us to do less workshops, they want us to keep the number of workshops. That we should then not put the emphasis on pilot projects unless there were additional resources. At least that is the sense, that is the conclusion, that is what would go there regarding that item.

And regarding CRP.12, there are a number of proposals that are indicated there as activities, actions that we can implement and include into the Programme of Work of the Office with the resources that we have. So there is a paragraph here that says “the Committee welcomed that the Office could integrate within its existing resources, many of the actions contained in the Plan of Action”. Perhaps there would be, if you agree, that would be, that is one of the recommendations. In fact, that is not a recommendation because it has already been done. It is just noting that it can be done. But it is a consideration by the Committee of the strategy that the Office has put forward. At this point it is a strategy. We need to see also, as mentioned in my introduction of CRP.12, that we need to see also the areas that the Committee is going to be working on because our Programme is then going to try to support those areas. An example, there is another text that is coming up but I will tell you right now. The Committee was asked by the General Assembly to contribute to the Commission on Sustainable Development. What is going to be coming, the General Assembly also requested that the Committee indicate _____(?) of priorities of the Programme on Space Applications and a proposal that you will be receiving from us will be that some activities of the Programme on Space Applications could be on the implementation side of the theme _____ (*not clear*). The cluster themes of information on sustainable development takes a _____(?) policy(?). The Committee contributes to that. That policy here then says “these are the actions that should be taken” and makes a number of recommendations. The Programme could take these as we are doing with water right now. The Commission on Sustainable Development has worked on that cluster and the Programme is taking actions from this. So there will be a proposal of this nature that will be in front of you a little bit later today.

And once we have seen where we can work with the Committee, then we will see these are the specific activities that we can incorporate. Right now what you have in front of you are categories of

activities. It is included in the final action of the Committee and the Office has been asked to do that work. So what we have done is to tell you this is what we can do, with existing resources. This is what we can do if we have additional resources. I do not know if that applies to the questions of the distinguished representative from the Russian Federation.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank you Dr. Camacho for your statement.

I invite the Ambassador of Chile. No? OK. I invite the distinguished representative of Argentina. Excuse me wait a minute, excuse me. The Russian Federation wants to provide an immediate response to the Director. You have the floor Sir.

Mr. P. G. DZUBENKO (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. I simply wanted to make one thing clear. What I said should not be taken as criticism in any way of CRP.17.

And very briefly, I would like to say secondly that we are looking forward to assistance provide by the Office for Outer Space Affairs at the workshop that we wish to organize in 2007 in the Russian Federation. And perhaps, not everybody remembers, but this is going to be talking about space matters to look into human health. And, as I say, we are looking forward to the support of and cooperation with the Office for Outer Space Affairs and personally with Dr. Camacho.

And, Mr. Chairman, the one thing I would like to hear from you, Sir, you particularly, is what are we going to have at the end of CPR.17 where we read that "the Committee recommended that ...", that and then ..., what comes after that? Could you clarify that for me? I would be most grateful.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: OK. I will come back to you Sir.

Argentina, you have the floor.

Mr. S. SAYUS (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Thank you Mr. Chairman. The comment I have is in relation with activity in the region and that looking at the Office and the Regional Centre. For years we have enjoyed excellent relations with the Office for Outer Space Affairs. We have organized workshops in my country on emergencies, basic

science, as I have said, there is the health one ahead and the agenda was always agreed with the Office and with the European Space Agency, our major sponsor. All that within a democratic framework, taking into account not only our interests but other countries in the region as well.

I can see the interest through this document of transferring responsibilities to the Regional Centres. We see the Regional Centres, in principle, as defending more of the host country of the Centre as opposed to the full region. So we do not feel fully represented. That is why we would like to continue with that excellent relationship that we enjoy with the Office continue working with the Centre as well. However, with the good relations we have with the Office, we would not want necessarily to swap that with the Centre which may not represent the entire region.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of Argentina for his statement.

I would like this opportunity to respond to the request from the Russian Federation. Indeed, and in fact, I have spoken to the Bureau, to the Secretary, that I wanted to respond, to contribute to this debate, as a United Nations delegate, because I do not want to influence the debate as Chairman. But since you have asked me to respond to you as Chairman, I am going to respond in both capacities. But more importantly, I will be responding in my personal relationship as the former United Nations Expert with the establishment of the Centres because they were established under my service.

When we established the Centres, we were very clear about what we wanted. When I came into office I invited my colleagues and I said to them, the Programme on Space Applications has been known for organizing workshops and training courses. Most of these are short-term. We are unable to track the participants and we do not know what they do and whether the knowledge they gained from these short-term programmes actually have any influence on the development of their respective countries. And that the Programme itself should establish something that we give it a greater credibility. And everybody, including Sergio here, all agreed with me and we sat there working and I spoke to all of you and you may not have been here then but I spoke to this Committee, through the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, as well as through this Committee, in my capacity as the United Nations Expert then, that we need to have these

Centres in order to provide one thing, long-term indigenous capability at the local level.

If you go back, and I do not expect you to be able to find most of them, but if you go back to my statements, it made it clear for UNISPACE '82 up to 1990. I continued to let you know the focus of these Centres in the four principles areas of communication technology, satellite meteorology, remote sensing and basic space sciences, that it will focus essentially on educating the educators, help the Member States to undertake projects and should be the focal point for most of the training courses and seminars being organized in each region. And with the passage of time, the ongoing short-term activities of the Programme, in the form of seminars, symposia, training courses, should be transferred to the regions through these Centres. And what the Office has done is to come back and tell you it is our opinion that we have reached this stage because, as we said here, there are thousands of recommendations that the money(?) (*not clear*) for more the symposia, training courses, seminars, that are not being implemented. If we can come up with some reasonable amount of money, should we be organizing more training courses or should we be diverting them, with the support of the sponsors, to the implementation of these projects?

The Russian Federation has asked me to come up with my own recommendation. This is not the Committee's recommendation, my personal recommendation will be as follows. I fully agree with the Office in many respects. And I believe the Centres need to take on more responsibility and they need to be more visible in their regions. Accordingly, if a country in the region is sponsoring a training course, workshop, seminar, the Centre should be fully involved. I do not want to go into the details but the Centre should be fully involved. If a Member State, like the United States or France, outside the developing countries, or ESA, is sponsoring a training course in the region, then it should be done also in collaboration with the Centres. OK. And there would be a period, of what I call, transformation for these to really take place and in about three years, the Office may eventually wean itself off from some of these activities and get the Centres rolling because it will have brought them up to a level where they can perform to meet "international standards".

And once this is done, if it is done appropriately and the Office knows what to do, then some resources will then will be freed, depending on the level of association carried out by the Office, with the external donors, in particular, from the

industrialized countries, to release money for some of the projects they would like to see implemented.

So this has been my own personal, not as your Chairman, not even as a representative of Nigeria, but my own personal recommendation as someone who was responsible for establishing most of the Centres and for developing and study(?) originating documents.

Thank you.

Any other comments please, now I am your Chairman?

Canada has the floor.

Mr. T. OUATTARA (Canada): Thank you Mr. Chairman. I would like to please French people here. (*Continued in French*) What I would like to do is raise other concerns. As a representative of the Canadian Space Agency dealing with Africa, I also deal with Latin America and the same issue has arisen in that regard of this arising. And I have had problems with Centres affiliated with different programmes under the aegis of the United Nations Office and having listened to the Chair, and one of the founders, therefore, of the Centre in Nigeria, and I would like to say that, we, the Canadian Space Agency, we are prepared to collaborate with Centres in the African region but we would like a lot of things to be clear. There are two United Nations Centres in Nigeria, if I take that example, there is the one that is affiliated to the UNODC and then there is the other United Nations Centre.

Now, there is the question of the promotion of the space affairs for the development of Africa and when we look at the objectives and look at the mandate, the situation is slightly different, we can see differences, but when I get requests from the two relevant bodies, they are almost the same request. In the recommendation that you wish to make here, I would like to see wording that would cause the Centres not to overlap in their activities. The aim would be to harmonize matters in the interests of the various regions, whether this be Latin America or Africa or Asia. That is my first concern.

And secondly, I would like to tackle the National Centres themselves because within these countries and regions, there are some very strong National Centres. I am thinking of the Royal Centre in Morocco and I am also thinking of the Regional Centre such as the SETAR(?) in Tunisia. So there are some Regional Centres, some of which are very strong, others less so, but what can we do to make sure that we

do not disperse our efforts to make them more effective in our activities. This is an issue which keeps coming back to me but I have never got the answer and I would like to take this opportunity here, amongst this august assembly, having listened to a number of statements, to try to push things in the right direction.

Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of Canada.

I invite the distinguished representative of Japan.

Mr. M. MIYAKE (Japan): Thank you Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much for your personal idea to share. Of course, we need more close relationship with the Regional Centres between our Centre and our activities and the Regional Centres' activities. Also our Space Agency has some specific purpose to have a relationship with each(?) especially _____ (*not clear*) to collaborate such a capacity-building matter, using our Japan satellite data and so on. We still need to try and understand some _____(?) harmonize the regional activity and _____(?) the _____ activities. _____ (*not clear*) should be involved with it here so for us to establish the relationship.

And, of course, we understand that the Office for Outer Space Affairs has some initiative to draw up(?) the pilot projects with the developing countries and we are also conducting some pilot projects and we need more close discussion and coordination on how to share the contributions to the developing countries. So we think we need more scheme or some communication opportunities to share the thoughts(?) our country's activity and each regional country, Regional Centres' activities and the Office for Outer Space Affairs initiatives.

(Note from typist: this speaker was difficult to understand)

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of Japan for that statement.

Distinguished delegates, please give me one second to speak with the Secretariat.

Distinguished delegates, I want to take this particular information with what we are talking about

right now in terms of the strategy the Office is proposing to you. As you recall, the Expert on Space Applications at the beginning of this session, informed the Committee that the overall strategy for the implementation of the Programme on Space Applications was to focus on several priorities in thematic areas with specific topics addressing sustainable development for developing countries. And Dr. Camacho alluded to these in his response during this debate.

Currently the priority areas of the Programme are: (a) use of space technology for disaster management; (b) satellite communication for tele-education and tele-medicine applications; (c) monitoring and protection of the environment; (d) management of natural resources; and (e) education and capacity-building, including basic space sciences and space law.

I believe that it is essential that the Programme operates within a certain amount of predictability. This will enable it to plan both in the short-term but also in the long-term, especially with regard to those thematic areas where it will be important to complete the series of activities that aim at achieving specific objectives. In addition, I would also like to suggest that the Programme be requested to include, to the extent feasible, water among its thematic priority areas in order to make a contribution to the work conducted or to be conducted by the Commission on Sustainable Development.

Accordingly, I have initiated these five thematic areas and I am hereby, therefore, proposing to this Committee to confirm that the Programme should continue to focus on these thematic areas in its activities.

Do you have any comments on that proposal?

Agreed?

Agreed.

Distinguished delegates, I would now like to suspend or adjourn this meeting so that we can hear the presentation scheduled for this morning from UNESCO on "Space and Water for Life". And I will ask the representative of UNESCO to get ready to make this presentation.

Distinguished delegates, this afternoon, we will continue our consideration of agenda item 6 and hopefully conclude it with the paper that has been presented to you. Then we will also resume our

consideration of agenda item 7, and at that time, we have the Chairman of the Working Group on Space Debris of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee to report to us about the ongoing intersessional sessions.

And then we will begin our consideration of agenda item 12, Composition of the Bureaux of the Committee and its Subsidiary Bodies for the Period 2006-2007.

And at the end of the afternoon meeting, there will be two technical presentations. One from Japan by Mr. Toshihiro Ogawa and his presentation will focus on "Japan's Activities Related to Space and Water". And the second one by Mr. Andreas Neumann of Germany and his presentation will also focus on the title "Looking From Space on Oceans and Inland Waters".

And finally, this afternoon, we will take up and begin our consideration of Other Matters.

I hope this schedule of work is agreeable to all of us.

If so, this meeting is adjourned until 3.00 p.m. But now I am vacating the Chair so that UNESCO can make its presentation.

Professor Kopal?

Mr. V. KOPAL (Czech Republic): Thank you Mr. Chairman. ... to you and the Director of the Office. What is this, in a preliminary way, the schedule of consideration of the report? It means when the draft report will be distributed, could it be still something this evening or only tomorrow morning and what do you intend, how do you intend to proceed tomorrow?

The CHAIRMAN: If I can quickly summarize even without speaking to the Secretariat because I know they are working hard. I am going to give the Secretariat the floor to answer that question as soon as we come back from lunch and whatever is available with them, when we come back from lunch, they will provide it but they will respond to that question because we need to give them time to reflect on the questions you asked.

Thank you very much.

Ms. Berenguer, you have the floor.

Ms. Y. BERENGUER (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization):

Thank you Mr. Chairman. Having had to pleasure to address the members of COPUOS in my capacity as the Assistant Focal Point for Outer Space Activities in UNESCO, and I will just give a brief overview of our activities concerning water.

Firstly, may I remind the members of this Committee that our mandate is to promote international peace and security through cooperation in the fields of education, natural sciences and social sciences, in culture and in communication.

In the sector of natural sciences, there is a Division of Water Sciences which implements the International Hydrological Programme and this has been going on for the last 30 years. The focus is on research in wetland monitoring, aquifer resources, groundwater distribution and river basins.

In 2002, when the World Summit on Sustainable Development was held in Johannesburg, there was an article which called for the improvement of water resource management and scientific understanding of water cycles through cooperation in joint observation and research.

The European Space Agency, ESA, took upon this recommendation and has launched the TIGER project. The TIGER project aims to develop sustainable Earth observation information services for integrated water resource management in developing countries, with a focus on Africa.

The purpose of this project to place in 2002 immediately after Johannesburg and by 2004, cooperation has been launched with UNESCO, which is called the SHIP project. So it is called TIGER/SHIP project. UNESCO is using space technology for the first time in its research and the cooperation is based on providing scientific expertise in hydrology, education and capacity-building. The TIGER project Secretariat will be based at the UNESCO Nairobi Office. Emphasis of the TIGER project, as I said, will be in the African region.

And this is what is happening at the moment. Regional TIGER workshops have been held and there has been a call for pilot projects. In a day, that is tomorrow, a Steering Committee Meeting will be held to select 50 projects which will be implemented by next year. These 50 projects were collected from 95 projects that were submitted by African countries. And in three months, there will be Donors Conference which will be one of the components of the Space for Water Summit, in order to launch the pilot projects. So ESA actually will help in providing the procedure, the

process, the initiative of these pilot projects but it would be necessary to have funding from international fund banks, and international agencies.

UNESCO is also preparing a handbook for practitioners on space technology for water management.

And these are our contributions at the moment in the framework of the TIGER and SHIP project. The list of 30 projects that have been accepted is on the website which I will give to the members at the end of this presentation and these 30 projects will be discussed, as I said, at the Steering Committee which will take place tomorrow, Friday.

UNESCO, in cooperation with other United Nations agencies, have proposed the launching of the United Nations Decade on Water for Life and this has been approved early this year during the Commission on Sustainable Development Meeting, in April, which was held in New York.

One of the thrusts of UNESCO's input to this Decade is the International Flood Initiative, which is in cooperation with WMO and the United Nations University. As we all know, floods, due to flash and river and coastal floods, _____(?) floods, is the most taxing(?) of water-related natural hazards. The annual cost to the world economy, due to flood-related disasters, is between \$50-60 billion.

So UNESCO will be assisting in the ..., the valuable(?) principles of this initiative is that it is not possible to completely eliminate floods, their negative impacts can be reduced through an understanding of flood risks. This initiative was launched during the United Nations World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe, which was quite timely because of the unfortunate tsunami incident. And Japan, the Prime Minister of Japan, gladly supported this initiative and had proposed the creation of the International Centre for Water Hazard and Risk Management, which is based Tsukuba.

This Centre is going to be formally opened immediately after the General Conference of UNESCO in October this year and there will be positions open to 20 hydrogeologists at the international level.

One thing that should be noted about this Centre is that there is no space technology component yet and I believe that this is an opportunity for COPUOS to look into this and with the cooperation of the Japanese delegation, to try to have preliminary discussions to have a space component in this Centre.

I would like to add as well for the United Nations Decade on Water for Life, Spain has offered to hold the Secretariat and this will be in Saragossa.

So this initiative has been gladly accepted by the United Nations agencies.

Just to end my presentation, at the moment we have only two big initiatives concerning water which has space technology components. So just to give you, these are websites related to our initiatives and these are two programme specialists dealing with these two international programmes, Ms. Aureli and Ms. Lipponen. And I would like to be able to give you any experts' advice or response, please contact them. They will gladly give a more concrete response to you concerning possible cooperation, especially for the African countries.

Thank you Mr. Chairman for giving me this opportunity.

The CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much distinguished representative of UNESCO for this great information on space and water for life.

I now request delegates who might wish to have any questions for lady to please go ahead with their comments or questions.

Yes Sir? Mr. Ouattara of Canada.

Mr. T. OUATTARA (Canada): Thank you for the presentation. I would like to know if it is possible to highlight the relationship UNESCO has with the Sustainable Development Division of ECA because they are also working on water issues concerning Africa? Because you spoke about the TIGER project and I am a little bit confused when I received two weeks ago some requests coming from two organizations under the United Nations, _____(?) is very complicated for a guy to decide for the same topic. Do you have some relationship with the Sustainable Development Division of ECA?

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: Ms. Berenguer, you have the floor.

Ms. Y. BERENGUER (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization): Thank you. Yes, we do have strong relations, as a matter of fact, close relationships with ECA. Unfortunately, and I am very sorry to say that I was not

able to mention it. We have relations with practically all the regional organizations, all the water-related incentives and initiatives and programmes in Africa and, I forgot to mention, also with the Canadian Space Agency.

The CHAIRMAN: OK.

Japan, you have the floor.

Mr. M. MIYAKE (Japan): Thank you Mr. Chairman and thank you very much for your very nice presentation on this matter. With regard to the tsunami, Japan has several initiatives to conduct the disaster reduction and monitoring so those activities are not so familiar with the specific State(?) activities. So your information is very useful for us. And we also, Japan and the Ministry of Science Technology and JAXA now try to have a more good relationship with the existing disaster reduction organization in Japan. As you said, I hope we can set up some meeting and coordinate something on this matter in the future.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the distinguished representative of Japan for his comments.

Any other comments on this presentation?

I see none.

Madam, on behalf of the Committee, I want to thank you for contributing this useful information to our deliberation on space and water.

And with that, I would like to bid all of you have a good lunch and we will meet at 3.00 p.m. Thank you.

The meeting adjourned at 12.56 p.m.