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Item 14 of the provisional agenda*

Space and global health

Proposed multi-year workplan of the Working Group on Space and Global Health of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee

**Working paper prepared by the Chair of the Working Group on
Space and Global Health**

* A/AC.105/C.1/L.373.



I. Establishment of the Working Group on Space and Global Health

1. The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee endorsed, at its fifty-fifth session, the agreement of its Working Group of the Whole to establish a new item on the agenda of the Subcommittee, entitled “Space and global health”, under a multi-year workplan yet to be determined. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, at its sixty-first session, noted the crucial role of space data and technology in the public health domain and welcomed the establishment of the new agenda item.
2. The Committee also agreed that a working group under the item on space and global health should be established, with Antoine Geissbühler (Switzerland) as Chair, and that the working group should be convened at the fifty-sixth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, in 2019. The Committee also agreed that the Chair of the newly established working group, together with the Secretariat, would present to the fifty-sixth session a proposal for a multi-year workplan for the working group, taking into account the role of the Expert Group on Space and Global Health, which had been established in 2014 and held four meetings in the period from 2015 to 2018.

II. Proposed method of work

3. The Working Group on Space and Global Health will work with a view to achieving the following vision: enhance the capacities of States Members of the United Nations in meeting the health-related sustainable development goals through the increased use of space science, technology and applications for global health; and strengthen the collaborative engagement of Member States, international intergovernmental organizations and international non-governmental organizations with a view to achieving tangible and long-lasting solutions regarding the contribution of space to the global health agenda.
4. The Working Group will take into account considerations in the Committee and its subcommittees on space and global health, the work done under thematic priority 5 (Strengthened space cooperation for global health) of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE+50); the work completed by the Action Team on Public Health of the Committee (action team 6), which was set up in 2001 and issued its final report in 2011; the action team 6 follow-up initiative, which was launched in 2012 and issued its final report in 2015; and the Expert Group on Space and Global Health.
5. The Working Group will meet during the annual sessions of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee for the duration of its multi-year workplan; interpretation services will be provided. The Working Group may hold informal consultations on the margins of those sessions, convened by the Chair of the Working Group, as needed.
6. The Working Group will engage with permanent observers of the Committee in accordance with the rules of procedure, methods of work and established practices of the Committee.
7. The Working Group will take advantage of the establishment of a Group web page on the website of the Office for Outer Space Affairs to assist it in its work under the multi-year workplan.
8. The Bureau of the Working Group on the “Space2030” agenda will, in accordance with the methods of work of the Group, liaise with the Chair of the Working Group on Space and Global Health with a view to creating synergies and avoiding duplication of effort. The Chair will report back to the Working Group on possible synergies.

III. Proposed multi-year workplan

9. The indicative multi-year workplan under the item “Space and global health” for the period 2019–2022 is as follows:

2019

- (a) Agree on methods of work and workplan;
- (b) Develop a questionnaire, to be circulated by the Secretariat, to elicit the contributions of States members of the Committee, international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations with permanent observer status with the Committee, United Nations entities, the Group on Earth Observation, the World Organization for Animal Health, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and Doctors Without Borders, on experiences and practices in the use of space science and technology for global health, and on practices and initiatives, current or planned (concepts, science, capacity-building and operations) in the use of space (technology, applications, practices and initiatives) in support of global health and for attaining the health-related Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

2020

- (a) Review contributions received in response to the questionnaire. Hold a general exchange of views on possible existing gaps in national, regional and international capacities in using space science and technology and their applications for global health;
- (b) Prepare possible contributions by the Working Group to the Working Group of the Committee on a “Space2030” agenda;
- (c) The Chair of the Working Group to prepare a draft set of recommendations on specific topics of interest within the health and space domains that could provide an orientation for analysing possible existing gaps in national, regional and international capacities in using space science and technology and their applications for global health, taking into account the “Space2030” agenda, with a view of presenting those recommendations to the General Assembly in the form of a draft resolution;
- (d) The Secretariat to continue to invite contributions to the questionnaire;
- (e) The Chair of the Working Group to prepare a first draft of the report of the Working Group to the Subcommittee.

2021

- (a) Review the draft set of recommendations presented by the Chair of the Working Group on current uses of space (technology, applications, practices and initiatives) in support of global health;
- (b) The Chair of the Working Group to submit a first draft of the report of the Working Group to the Subcommittee and a corresponding draft resolution to be submitted to the General Assembly.

2022

- (a) Review and finalize the report of the Working Group to the Subcommittee, and review and finalize a draft resolution, to be considered for endorsement by the Committee with a view to its adoption by the General Assembly;
- (b) Determine whether the workplan should be extended to cover potential future work. If the workplan is not extended, discontinue the Working Group.

IV. Other proposed activities related to the work of the Working Group

10. The Office for Outer Space Affairs could be asked to organize two workshops, in 2020 and 2021, respectively, subject to the availability of resources, related to the work of the Working Group, in collaboration with the World Health Organization and the World Organization for Animal Health and in consultation with States members of the Committee, the regional commissions and other international intergovernmental entities, as well as international non-governmental organizations, as appropriate, on space and global health, with a view to increasing awareness and sharing national, regional and interregional experiences and practices in increasing the use of space science and technology for global health and attaining the health-related Sustainable Development Goals, among other objectives to be defined by the Working Group.

11. In follow-up to the recommendations of the Expert Group on Space and Global Health, the Office for Outer Space Affairs could be tasked with establishing and maintaining a dedicated web page on the website of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, subject to the availability of resources, to make available information on key activities, reference documents and plans relevant to space and global health by United Nations entities, international intergovernmental organizations, States members of the Committee and, to the extent possible, international non-governmental organizations conducting activities in the area of global health and other non-governmental actors. That information could also include the use of space for “One Health”, which refers to an inter-connected framework encompassing human health, animal health, plant health, environmental health and ocean health. The web page could also provide links to relevant open educational resources.
