



General Assembly

Sixty-ninth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
28 November 2014

Original: English

Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 8th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 15 October 2014, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Bhattarai (Nepal)

Contents

Agenda item 49: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be sent as soon as possible, under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, to the Chief of the Documents Control Unit (srcorrections@un.org), and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org/>).

14-62665 (E)



Please recycle



The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 49: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (A/69/20 and A/C.4/69/L.2)

Panel discussion on the peaceful uses of outer space and sustainable development within the context of the post-2015 development agenda

1. **The Chair** said that the topic chosen for discussion by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) was of major importance in the context of global processes to establish sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda. The benefits of space technology applications and the use of space-derived data provided important tools for meeting global development needs. Fields where space technology acted as an enabler for further growth and development included agriculture, water resource management, climate change, rural and urban planning, health, disaster management and the environment. The current panel discussion was connected to previous discussions on the topics of space and climate change, food security, global health, and emergencies and on the contribution of COPUOS to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20 Conference).

2. **Mr. O'Connor** (Chief, Policy Integration and Analysis Branch of the Division for Sustainable Development, Department of Social and Economic Affairs), accompanying his statement with a digital slide presentation, said that his department was drafting the post-2015 development agenda, in which sustainable development goals would play an integral part. Tremendous, if uneven, progress had been made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals by the deadline of 2015. The progress made by China in poverty reduction was particularly notable and real advances had also been seen in many parts of the world, including South Asia, South East Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Many countries would not achieve the goals, however, and much more work would be needed in order to, for example, eradicate rather than halve poverty. At the Rio+20 Conference a proposal to define the sustainable development goals had been enthusiastically supported by Member States. The Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals had been established to determine them; and other mechanisms had been launched to address the areas of financing and

technology. In addition, the high-level political forum on sustainable development would focus on strengthening the science-policy interface to inform sustainable development policy at all levels, and it had been decided to issue a global development report.

3. In September 2014, the General Assembly had agreed to use the proposal of the Open Working Group (A/68/970) as the main basis for incorporating sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda. The report of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing (A/69/315) would serve as a reference for the discussions on funding mechanisms scheduled to take place at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in July 2015. The four structured dialogues on possible arrangements for a facilitation mechanism to promote the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies had concluded in July 2014. The resulting summary of the dialogues by the President of the General Assembly (A/69/554) had recommended, inter alia, the development of an online knowledge-sharing platform to map existing technology facilitation initiatives, and improved coordination on such clean technologies within the United Nations system and, more broadly, among international organizations and bodies working in the field.

4. With 17 goals and 169 targets, the Open Working Group proposal for sustainable development goals presented a broad agenda, far more comprehensive than that of the Millennium Development Goals, and consequently less focused. The sustainable development goals would retain poverty, health, education and gender equality as core concerns, but would focus on quality and level of achievement in each area, rather than simple attainment. They were a universal set of goals addressing challenges that affected all countries in a context of common but differentiated responsibilities: such as poverty eradication, including relative poverty and inequality; inclusive growth, including decent job creation; changing unsustainable consumption and production patterns; tackling climate change; and building resilience. The sustainable development goal framework attempted to balance the three dimensions of sustainable development — social, economic and environmental — none of which could be neglected if the aim was to achieve irreversible progress. Also, targets and the means of implementation, in terms of

financing, technology and capacity-building, were integrated throughout the goal framework.

5. The Secretary-General was in the process of drafting a report synthesizing the streams of work done during the past year into a coherent agenda. Two co-facilitators for negotiations on the outcome document of the summit that would be held in September 2015 for the adoption of that post-2015 development agenda would soon be appointed by the President of the General Assembly. The expectation was that the outcome document would set out a vision of “the future we want”: a world free from want, and shared prosperity on a healthy planet. Also included would be the sustainable development goals and targets in final form, a revitalized global partnership among governments backed by multi-stakeholder partnerships, initiatives on financing, technology and capacity-building, and a framework for monitoring progress towards the sustainable development goals.

6. Statistical Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs was working with the Statistical Commission and other United Nations bodies to identify the indicators needed to measure progress; as was the United-Nations-affiliated Sustainable Development Solutions Network, which wished to streamline the goals and targets and reduce the indicators to no more than 100 — a number that would, even so, tax the statistical capabilities of many countries.

7. The first *Global Sustainable Development Report 2014*, published in July, considered how more information could be obtained on the progress especially of poorer countries by using big data gleaned from remote sensing and the Internet to complement official statistics. For example, night-time light, land use, forest cover, or the pattern of online searches relating to diseases could be indicators of economic development, changes in ecosystems, urban growth or real-time health crises. Future global sustainable development reports would be an important tool in monitoring and tracking progress on sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda, and it was expected that they would continue to rely on space-based data.

8. **Ms. Di Pippo** (Director, United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs), accompanying her statement with an introductory video on the history and work of her Office and with a digital slide presentation, said

that the Office’s mandate included implementing the decisions of the General Assembly and COPUOS, coordinating inter-agency cooperation within the United Nations on the use of space technology and also cooperation with outside space agencies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in the field, and implementing the programme of the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER) and the United Nations Programme on Space Applications. Activities linked to the Millennium Development Goals that had been carried out by the Office had included capacity-building and workshops.

9. Space technology could be applied to various fields, including a clean environment, water availability and food security, which were crucial to human health; and it could help map droughts and floods, desertification and ocean conditions, monitor climate change indicators and public health indicators, and provide telemedicine to remote areas, among other benefits. Space technology also had applications in areas such as population growth, energy demand, urban growth and new energy sources; and outer space could inspire and act as a catalyst for change in society by creating high-tech jobs and offering role models.

10. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its Subcommittees performed support activities in areas including space weather, space applications for socioeconomic development, international mechanisms for cooperation, national space legislation, space debris and near-Earth-object management, disaster management, climate change, delimitation of outer space, and global navigation satellite systems. Clear reference had been made in the outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference to the importance of space-technology-based data in sustainable development policymaking, programming and project operations. Space technology could assist with all the main topics addressed by the post-2015 development agenda: in combination with capacity-building, space-derived scientific information could be used in areas like climate monitoring, land use planning, water management, disaster risk reduction, health and food security.

11. The Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities (UN-Space) held in May 2014 in New York had focused on the topic of engaging space tools for development on Earth — the contribution of space

technology and applications to the post-2015 development agenda. UN-Space was increasingly a platform for constructive dialogues, primarily between the main entities of the United Nations dealing with space. It had produced various special reports on development issues in the past and an upcoming report was entitled “Space for Global Health”. In addition, the report of the Secretary-General on the coordination of space-related activities within the United Nations system: directions and anticipated results for the period 2014-2015 — addressing the post-2015 development agenda (A/AC.105/1063) discussed environmental sustainability, inclusive social development and inclusive economic development.

12. Regarding the application of space technology to disaster management, UN-SPIDER provided technical advice to Member States, maintained a knowledge portal on the disaster management cycle of mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery, and acted as a bridge between providers and users of space-based data and products. The Office had proposed an official working session at the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in March 2015 on Earth observations to support national and local disaster risk reduction initiatives, as a way of showcasing the use of geospatial and space-based applications and identifying areas for improvement. In addition, a United-Nations/Germany international conference on global solutions for the challenges of sustainable development in societies at risk would be held in Bonn in May 2015, to facilitate the coordination of global efforts by the space community, to provide guidance to decision-makers from the disaster management community, and to identify ways in which Earth observations could contribute to the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

13. Regarding the long-term sustainability of outer space activities, there were strategic choices to be made by both the United Nations and Member States, with regard to promoting space technology applications and improving the safety of space operations. The Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities was also important in that connection. There was an understanding that science, technology, policy and law were inherently interlinked in the case of space activities and the use of space science for the purposes of development.

14. The Office’s strategy for the future would be based on four pillars: a space economy that brought economic growth, new markets and sustainable development; a space society where space-based technologies were used to improve socio-economic prospects and encourage social advances; space accessibility for the benefit of all, including free access, exchange of space-based information, and regulatory and legislative action by Governments; and space diplomacy to establish international knowledge-based partnerships that would improve international relations.

15. While the Millennium Development Goals had been highly ambitious, the focus was shifting to the post-2015 development agenda, which would require that space-related activities and outer space itself continued to be sustainable in the long term. The United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs planned to take the multidimensional approach described to help attain the sustainable development goals.

16. **Mr. Oussedik** (Algeria), speaking in his capacity as Director-General of the Algerian Space Agency, said that his statement aimed to demonstrate how space science and applications were being used at the national level, from an African perspective. Accompanying his statement with a digital slide presentation, he said that the Algerian National Space Programme was following a strategy for the period up to 2020 that comprised projects on space applications, systems, facilities and equipment and human skills development. Regarding space systems, the first Algerian Earth observation satellite, Alsat-1, had been launched in 2002 as one of five satellites in the disaster monitoring constellation, administered jointly with the United Kingdom, Nigeria, China and Turkey. The second Earth observation satellite, Alsat-2A, had been launched in 2010 aboard an Indian launch vehicle. National capacity had been reinforced through the building of a satellite development centre and the training of Algerian engineers. Alsat-2A had taken more than 94,000 images of different regions of the world, 72 per cent of which had covered the African continent.

17. The next space system launched as a priority would be Alcomsat-1, a telecommunications satellite, whose key objectives would be to ensure autonomy in communications, respond to Algeria’s needs in communications, broadcasting and other electronic services and to its health needs, and in the process gain

design and operational expertise. Since 2005, work had been underway on the African resource management constellation — a project initiated together with Nigeria, South Africa and Kenya. There were plans to launch further satellites, including high-resolution and radar satellites, by 2020.

18. The Algerian Space Agency had five operational units, including a research centre, a satellite development centre and a secondary school, and worked with a large number of partners. Bilateral cooperation was key to the National Space Programme, and the Algerian Space Agency had agreements with its counterparts in many countries, including Argentina, France and the Russian Federation and, soon, the United States. Multilateral cooperation included work with COPUOS, UN-SPIDER, the Sahara and Sahel Observatory, the African Leadership Conference on Space Science and Technology and the Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific.

19. Users of the National Space Programme included many government departments. Geological mapping was used to assist with mining and the use of water resources, including the hydrological exploration of groundwater in Algeria's Saharan region, while space images were used to produce maps of agricultural resources, identify areas of flooding, and monitor the construction of major highways and road tunnels. Many high quality images had also been gathered of water resources, including the Bay of Algiers, and of the capital cities of many African countries.

20. The Algerian Space Agency participated in regional projects, among them those of the UN-SPIDER regional support office in Algiers, which covered the region of North Africa and liaised with a national alert unit and a network comprising all the countries of the region. There was a project, for example, involving cooperation between the Algerian Space Agency and the Sahara and Sahel Observatory, using space technology under the regional REPSAHEL project to improve the resilience of Saharan populations to climate change. The pilot observatories for the project were in Mauritania, Senegal and Chad.

21. **Mr. Maleki** (Islamic Republic of Iran) asked for more information about the services rendered to Member States, especially developing countries, through the UN-SPIDER programme and about the feedback from Member States on those services. He

asked whether UN-SPIDER had an intranet network for the prediction and mitigation of natural disasters that would allow national centres to benefit from knowledge available on the network and to share their experience with other Member States.

22. **Mr. González** (Chile) said that, during his time as Chair of COPUOS, a number of high-level panels had been organized, some of which had focused on potential pandemics and natural disasters. He asked what difference the Director of the Office saw between those panels and the interactive dialogues, as their form and content had been very similar. The panels had not necessarily led to plans for regional cooperation or disaster management projects for countries at risk, and there was no international convention to protect such countries, whose people continued to suffer the consequences of natural disasters. The complex legal issues involved in the use of outer space should, therefore, be taken into account in interactive dialogues and their follow-up. The current discussion should lead to follow-up that was devoted to the needs of developing countries, in accordance with the emphasis placed on the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda and the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals.

23. **Mr. Kullane** (Somalia) asked how countries like Somalia could best benefit from space-derived information. His country experienced droughts and flooding and he wished to know how to engage with UN-SPIDER in that regard.

24. **Ms. Di Pippo** (Director, United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs) said that she was available to provide specific information or discuss action that could be taken, including country-specific activity. She welcomed the comment about feedback, since one of her goals for the Office in 2015 was to determine how to measure the impact of technical advisory missions and capacity-building, in order to better target activities. UN-SPIDER activities would certainly be improved if it reached out to more countries. There were two main contributors to the UN-SPIDER programme — Germany and China — and centres had been established in Bonn and Beijing. There was good collaboration with those centres but, in order to make a strategic plan for the coming years and support more countries, the number of contributors and donors would need to be expanded. The websites of the Office and UN-SPIDER were fairly comprehensive, but

delegations were free to contact her at any time for more information.

Statement by the Chair of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

25. **Mr. Oussedik** (Algeria), speaking in his capacity as Chair of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and introducing its report on its fifty-seventh session (A/69/20), said that the considerable achievements by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the Legal Subcommittee during the session had demonstrated the importance of advancing the long-term sustainability of outer space activities and enhancing the capacity of States to promote economic, social and cultural development through the use of space tools. Over the decades, COPUOS and its Subcommittees had furthered international cooperation on the peaceful uses of outer space and were still serving as a unique global platform for the purpose. Recalling the celebration of several achievements in space endeavours in recent years, he highlighted the fiftieth anniversary, in 2014, of European cooperation in space and the forty-fifth anniversary of the Apollo 11 mission to the Moon. Such commemorations emphasized the importance of space exploration, science, technology applications and diplomacy.

26. Within COPUOS and its Subcommittees, work continued on developing a common approach to the objectives of the Rio+20 Conference and the post-2015 development agenda, and the sense had been that there was a need to increase global awareness of the importance of space tools and space-derived information in meeting those objectives. As the sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda were taking shape, building on the contribution of COPUOS to the Rio+20 Conference, the usefulness of sustainable and standards-driven spatial data infrastructures should be recognized. The post-2015 development agenda would require advanced tools with transformative power that should be applicable to all areas of development, including health, food security, climate change and disaster risk reduction. Space technology could transform traditional approaches in virtually any sector of the economy, while space-derived data could be used to monitor the implementation and impact of mitigation measures and to establish scientifically justified strategies for future actions.

27. In order to ensure continuous monitoring and assessment of sustainable development objectives at all levels, it was essential to enhance national capabilities, strengthen the institutional framework for using space science and technology for development, and enhance international cooperation to facilitate the collection, processing and exchange of space-derived data and information. During its fifty-seventh session, COPUOS had encouraged its members to urge their Governments to promote the inclusion of space science and technology applications and space-derived geospatial data in activities related to the outcome of the Rio+20 Conference and the post-2015 development agenda. His Committee had stressed the fundamental significance of space-derived information to sustainability management at all levels, as well as its potential contribution to policy development and implementation.

28. In that context, regional, interregional and global cooperation was crucial. Regional mechanisms played an important role by providing platforms for enhanced coordination and cooperation between spacefaring nations and emerging space nations, and for establishing partnerships between users and providers of space-based services. Notable in that regard were the activities of the European Space Agency, the African Leadership Conference on Space Science and Technology for Sustainable Development, the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum, the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization and the Space Conference of the Americas. The work being done by the African Leadership Conference, for instance, had been outlined in the COPUOS report. Other space-related international organizations and entities were also important to the common endeavour of promoting space activities. The regional centres for space science and technology education, affiliated to the United Nations, did much to enhance cooperation and had established solid infrastructure for advanced training in space science and technology and highly successful education programmes that addressed topics like space law and satellite systems. Similarly, the network of UN-SPIDER regional support offices furthered regional coordination of disaster risk reduction.

29. The mandate of COPUOS with regard to governance was to strengthen the international legal regime governing the use of outer space with the intention of expanding international cooperation in peaceful uses. Most recently, work done by the Legal

Subcommittee had underpinned the recommendations on national legislation relevant to the peaceful exploration and use of outer space adopted in General Assembly resolution 68/74; and its recommendations for an international response to the near-Earth object impact threat had been welcomed in resolution 68/75. In line with resolution 68/50, COPUOS, convinced of the importance of space security and associated matters, would in 2015 consider the recommendations of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities (A/68/189) relating to the safety and the long-term sustainability of outer space activities.

30. COPUOS worked continuously to increase awareness and capacity in the use of space technology applications in areas critical to all humanity at the global, interregional, regional and national levels. Space-derived data and applications played an essential role in providing the information needed, for example, for disaster or global health monitoring, preparedness and response. Space tools were multifaceted: they supported the implementation of activities called for in the global development agenda, and would advance the establishment of sustainable development goals.

General debate

31. **Mr. Sinhaseni** (Thailand), speaking on behalf of the members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that they welcomed the Committee's timely panel discussion, encouraged all States to continue exploring the potential of space science and technology in terms of the post-2015 development agenda, and urged the United Nations and its partners to raise awareness of the useful applications of space technology. Given that regional and international cooperation was key to the promotion and use of space technology, ASEAN urged developed countries and international organizations to assist developing countries to build their capacities in space science and technology, in particular through education, training and the transfer of knowledge and technology.

32. Recalling the devastating tsunami that had hit the Indian Ocean coast a decade earlier, ASEAN recognized that space-based data could complement and improve early warning systems and facilitate search-and-rescue operations in the event of natural disasters, and that, despite some improvements, more should be done to prevent and mitigate the terrible

effects of such natural disasters through further technological research and development and greater collaboration among those involved. The dangers posed by space debris were another matter of concern, and the COPUOS Scientific and Technical Subcommittee was urged to continue its discussion of mitigation measures, while States that had not yet done so were encouraged to consider implementing the COPUOS Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines.

33. The ASEAN Subcommittee on Space Technology and Applications had strengthened regional cooperation in the field, notably through the second Workshop on Ground Station Experts Exchange in November 2013, the establishment of a jointly operated virtual constellation project in connection with the ASEAN Earth-observation satellite, and the twenty-first ASEAN Regional Forum held in August 2014, which had underscored the vital role of space systems in climate monitoring and disaster management, and the importance of cooperative international regulation of outer space for peaceful uses.

34. Speaking as the representative of Thailand, he noted that his Government remained committed to promoting the peaceful uses of outer space in order to better the lives of its people. Projects under royal patronage had used space data for land and water management to improve the productivity of Thai farmers. In recent years, Thailand had focused on Earth observation, communications satellites and the space economy, and its National Committee on Space Policy had issued a roadmap for the use of space science to develop a knowledge-based society and advance sustainable development. Thailand had hosted a number of international conferences in the field, including, in November 2013, the symposium of the Committee on Space Research on space astronomy and the second round of the European Union consultations on its draft International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities, a laudable initiative that should aim at the broadest possible consensus. In 2014, it had hosted the Tenth Asia Geographic Information System Conference on geospatial technology. Thailand itself was developing its space economy and in 2014 had launched two communications satellites, Thaicom-6 and Thaicom-7, which would serve the growing Thai telecommunications industry and increase the country's competitiveness. The public-private Space Krenovation Park served as a skills and business development centre and currently enjoyed 12 partnerships conducting more than 40 programmes.

35. ASEAN maintained that the uses of outer space must respect the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and equal access for all States, and emphasized the need to prevent the possibility of an arms race in outer space, especially one involving nuclear weapons. There must be continued discussion within the United Nations of the legal principles governing outer space activities, including the adoption of a code of conduct, in order to strengthen the international space regime and ensure universal access to outer space and its benefits.

36. **Mr. Estreme** (Argentina), speaking on behalf of the States members of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) and of its associated States, said that the latest report of COPUOS confirmed its role as a guarantor of the peaceful uses of outer space through its scientific, legal and technical work and its promotion of international dialogue and exchange of information. MERCOSUR recognized that it was the sovereign right of every State to participate in the use of outer space for exclusively peaceful purposes, as well as to enjoy the benefits that such use could bring to the common development of mankind. MERCOSUR was committed to respecting the principles governing the use of outer space, particularly access to outer space on a basis of equality; the recognition that outer space and celestial bodies were not subject to national appropriation of any kind; the non-militarization of outer space as the common heritage of humankind; and regional cooperation in the development of space activities, which in the MERCOSUR region meant regular meetings of the Space Conference of the Americas.

37. Since so much progress had been made in the use of space technology in many different areas, it was important to ensure that all countries, especially developing countries, had access to those advances through international and inter-regional cooperation in the form of programmes and capacity-building in scientific and technical fields. Prohibiting the placement of weapons in outer space and thus preventing an arms race would avert a serious threat to international peace and security; and that would be accomplished through strict compliance with existing agreements on arms control and disarmament relating to outer space.

38. The increasing use of outer space by a growing number of actors could have an unforeseen impact on the ultraterrestrial environment, particularly in the

event of saturation of the geostationary orbit, or problems with space debris, nuclear-powered satellites, or placement of nuclear weapons in outer space. MERCOSUR recognized the importance of the long-term sustainability of space activities, but that should not be an excuse for traditional spacefaring countries to place restrictions on other countries. All States had a legitimate right to use space technology as a tool to advance the living standards of their people.

39. Active international and strengthened interregional cooperation was crucial to MERCOSUR countries for it allowed for the exchange of best practices and capacity-building at the national and regional levels, and raised awareness of the benefits of space science and technology for sustainable development. Of particular relevance were the relationship between space and water, climate change and society, and the increasing role of space tools in the prevention, management and mitigation of natural disasters, which was an area of great interest in the MERCOSUR region.

40. **Mr. Vrailas** (Observer for the European Union), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member States, and supporting the prospective membership of Luxembourg in COPUOS, said that space was a driver of economic growth and innovation for the benefit of all. Space activities and technologies had helped deal with major challenges such as climate change, scarce resources, health and ageing, and had boosted industrial competitiveness well beyond the space sector, and thus socioeconomic development worldwide. Strong and unique space capacities had been developed in the European Union, which was a world-class leader in major space endeavours.

41. The priorities for the European Space Policy were global navigation and Earth observation, with European Union involvement in two flagship programmes: Galileo and Copernicus. Galileo, the European Union satellite navigation system, would provide a state-of-the-art, highly accurate global positioning service under civilian control. In 2013, a new regulation and financial framework had been adopted for the European global navigation satellite system (GNSS) programmes for the period 2014-2020. In March 2014, the ASTRA 5B satellite, hosting a L-band payload for the European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service, had been successfully launched. Once fully operative, the Galileo system would improve services ranging from in-car navigation

and transport management to search-and-rescue, secure banking transactions and reliable energy supply, providing new business opportunities in many sectors of the economy in Europe and worldwide.

42. Copernicus, the long-term European Union Earth-observation programme initiated in 1998 and newly regulated in 2014, was based on partnerships between the European Union, the European Space Agency and other European stakeholders and was already partly operational. The emergency and land services were functioning, while the marine and atmosphere services would enter into operation in 2015. The resulting data and products were available to the public online, since the Copernicus data policy guaranteed free and open data access, thereby contributing to the overall aim of bringing the benefits of space to mankind. The initial powerful radar images from Sentinel-1A, Europe's first observation satellite launched in April 2014, had demonstrated the vital role the satellite would play in the largest civil Earth-observation programme ever conceived, supporting applications in multiple domains, such as monitoring climate change, sea ice, tropical forests and floods, and detecting oil spills and vessels. Other Copernicus satellites would be launched from 2015 onwards.

43. Satellites and space debris should be monitored and identified in order to mitigate the risk of collisions and uncontrolled re-entries into the atmosphere. In May 2014, the European Union had established a framework to support the space surveillance and tracking operations of European Union member States and bodies, spacecraft owners and operators, and civil protection authorities, which would significantly improve capabilities in the field.

44. The European Union was committed to developing an international code of conduct for outer space activities in an open, transparent and inclusive manner, inviting all Member States to participate in the ongoing multilateral process. Three rounds of open-ended consultations had already been held, at which more than 60 Member States had been represented. Three versions of the international code of conduct had been drafted on the basis of those consultations; and all States should work towards a speedy conclusion, since a code of conduct would enhance the safety, security and sustainability of outer space activities.

45. Over the previous decades, COPUOS had laid down a firm legal basis for all forms of space

activities, thus promoting the application of international law and furthering international cooperation.. The European Union welcomed the adoption of General Assembly resolution 68/74 on national legislation relevant to the peaceful exploration and use of outer space. It supported the restructuring of the agenda and organization of the Legal Subcommittee, and hoped that the proposal for renewal submitted by Germany could be adopted by consensus during the Subcommittee's 2015 session. It was also looking forward to the final results of the valuable work of its Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities, which should be extended for one more year.

46. **Mr. Nitzan** (Israel) said that Ilan Ramon, the first Israeli astronaut who had been killed in the Space Shuttle Columbia accident, had noted that everything done in space science was directed toward the creation of a better world on Earth. Space research and exploration had indeed provided opportunities for global cooperation for the benefit of all nations. Activity in the field had intensified dramatically and eleven States, including Israel, had space-launch capabilities, while over sixty States owned and operated approximately 1,200 active satellites. Space-based assets offered a broad spectrum of civilian, commercial and humanitarian services.

47. The Israel Space Agency pursued a peaceful mission in outer space through innovative scientific projects based on international collaboration, having signed cooperation agreements with space agencies from various States on projects that would benefit the international community at large. Jerusalem would host the 2015 International Astronautical Congress, had established a government committee to work with the European Union on the draft International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities, and was an active participant in the space initiative of the Horizon 2020 Programme. Furthermore, Israel's OPSAT 2000-series high-resolution observation satellite was intended for civilian use in agriculture, infrastructure analysis, transportation and natural disaster management. In joining UN-SPIDER, Israel had indicated its commitment to international cooperation.

48. The public and private sectors in Israel sought innovation and technological excellence in space research. One of the main objectives of the national civilian space programme, almost 50 per cent of whose budget was invested in international partnerships, was

to position Israel among the five leading spacefaring nations. Israel was already working closely with its partners in the United States and in Europe on Earth monitoring, environmental monitoring and soil mapping. Other areas of work included supernova detection and tracking, lightweight satellites, satellite formation flying, microelectronic propulsion systems, and nanosatellites and microsatellites. Israel continued to seek additional partners, and reenergize existing links, to build a platform for future cooperation with space agencies around the world.

49. **Ms. Bolaños Pérez** (Guatemala) said that the work of COPUOS and its Subcommittees to promote space exploration and research for the benefit of all on Earth was particularly important to developing countries. There should be more regional and inter-regional cooperation on space activities and national capacity-building, and COPUOS should cooperate closely with other intergovernmental bodies working on the post-2015 development agenda and the sustainable development goals. A unique opportunity had presented itself for making space technology and space-based information a means of reaching those goals and targets.

50. In order to optimize the peaceful use of outer space for the benefit of future generations, joint exploration agreements should be concluded; and the legal regime governing outer space should be strengthened, either through codes of conduct or the development of space law, the main purpose of which should be to ensure the peaceful uses of outer space and to prevent its militarization. Action should be taken to reduce the generation and proliferation of space debris, since that was one of the main ways of ensuring sustainable space activities. The geostationary orbit was a limited natural resource that was at risk of becoming saturated and must therefore be used rationally and made available to all States, regardless of their current technical capacity. It should be used in compliance with international law, the decisions of the International Telecommunication Union and the relevant United Nations treaties.

51. The rapid increase in space activities and the emergence of new actors required greater coordination to promote understanding and implementation of the treaty law governing outer space and prevent or minimize potential disputes. Capacity-building, training and education in space law were the essential basis for national, regional and international scientific

and technological initiatives in that area, especially for developing countries. Outer space issues should be addressed in the context of inclusive development that encouraged the sustainable exploitation of resources and ensured that space activities benefited all. That was the only means of guaranteeing that outer space would be used for peaceful purposes.

52. **Mr. González** (Chile) said that intensive work had been conducted in the field of outer space for a considerable time, and the development of space law, a Gordian knot, was a crucial element. Past legal achievements included the Principles Relating to Remote Sensing of the Earth from Outer Space and the Declaration on International Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space for the Benefit and in the Interest of All States, Taking into Particular Account the Needs of Developing Countries. The Principles had been rooted in a cold war framework and their political and legal bias did not correspond to the current situation or to technological developments. The Declaration, adopted in 1996, had greater legal weight because it addressed the cross-cutting issue of cooperation. Cooperation in the field of outer space had evolved over time, in keeping with the changes in the geopolitical map, from traditional cooperation among States and international organizations that was determined by the paradigm of international security, to global cooperation. Under the Millennium Declaration, that had evolved into solidarity, with the integration of cooperation into international environmental law, and the concept of common but differentiated responsibilities that took into account differing technological capacities. The Declaration spoke of the duty, rather than the possibility, of cooperating in the peaceful uses of outer space.

53. Access to strategic knowledge derived from space science and technology, rather than just information, was the basis for informed decision-making on inclusive policies. Developing countries were often overwhelmed by information they did not have an adequate capacity to process, but there was a lack of political will to update the Principles in order to resolve that issue. Developing countries desired to cooperate to the greatest possible extent with the members of COPUOS and had to make an effort to ensure that they were able to use the knowledge gained through their cooperation with one another to participate in building international peace and security as a global asset.

54. The Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III) had, significantly, adopted a resolution on space and human development, had noted the value of security, development and human well-being, and had considered the management of natural resources, but there had been no opportunity for in-depth discussion of those issues. UN-SPIDER was an excellent system for disaster management but one that required further investment of resources. More efforts were needed in that area because some countries did not possess space agencies but had an enormous need to prevent disasters through timely information. Chile, as the country with the highest number of earthquakes in the world, knew all too well the significant humanitarian impact and hampered development caused by natural disasters.

55. **Mr. Alday González** (Mexico) said that COPUOS and its Subcommittees provided exceptional platforms for focusing world attention on the usefulness of space applications in advancing sustainable development and meeting the human challenges involved. It was important to remain willing to develop new capacities and ensure close coordination between COPUOS and relevant intergovernmental bodies.

56. His delegation welcomed the conference room paper containing a compendium of space debris mitigation standards adopted by States and international organizations, submitted to the Legal Subcommittee by Canada, Germany and the Czech Republic, and noted that it had been the first document to provide direct information from States concerning their regulations.

57. The members of COPUOS and its subsidiary bodies were urged to give in-depth consideration to the proposals for a universal, comprehensive convention that would make the principles relating to outer space binding and would complement the existing space law instruments. Mexico welcomed the open-ended consultations on an international code of conduct for outer space activities initiated by the European Union. Although the intention behind the proposed code of conduct was good, Mexico considered that the aim should be to ensure the peaceful uses of outer space in accordance with international law, and remained doubtful about the inclusion of references to matters such as national security, militarization, the right to self-defence and the destruction of space objects. It also questioned the appropriateness of the suggestion that the matter be considered in other forums, such as

COPUOS or the Conference on Disarmament. Also, the proposed code of conduct would not have binding force and could therefore hinder negotiations on a legally binding instrument. In any case, Member States that had not ratified or implemented the five United Nations treaties on outer space should consider doing so. The United Nations/Mexico Symposium on Basic Space Technology, coordinated by the Mexican Space Agency, would take place the following week in Ensenada, Mexico, the third such regional symposium to be held, and would focus on the Latin American and Caribbean region.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.