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Agenda item 5

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

**Report of the action team to implement recommendation no. 4
"Enhance Weather and Climate Forecasting"**

**Action Team to Implement Recommendation No. 4 of UNISPACE III
"Enhance Weather and Climate Forecasting"**

REPORT AND ACTION PLAN

1. REPORT

At a meeting of the action team during the 39th session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of COPUOS, from 25 February to 8 March 2002, it was proposed and approved to organize a Workshop on "Meteorological and Climate Satellite Applications to Enhance Weather and Climate Forecasting" at the margin of the 45th session of COPUOS. After consultations among the members of the action team, a programme was agreed. The Workshop took place on 8 June 2002 at the Embassy of Portugal in Vienna. There were 20 participants which included representatives from Bulgaria, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Portugal, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Syria and the United States.

The Workshop included presentations on meteorological and climate satellite applications at the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and at the Integrated Global Observing Strategy (IGOS) by D.E. Hinsman from WMO. There was also a presentation on the activities at the European Organization for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites (EUMETSAT) by Dr. Marianne Koenig. Finally, Dr. Teresa Abrantes from the Portuguese Meteorological Institute made a presentation on activities regarding meteorological and climate satellite applications in Portugal. Also a written presentation to the Workshop by Dr. R.B. Rustamov and Dr. S.R. Ibrahimova from the Azerbaijani National Aerospace Agency was distributed to the participants.

The Workshop gave the opportunity for a thorough discussion of ways and means to promote actions that contribute to promote international cooperation in the field of meteorological and climate satellite applications. It was particularly informative as regards the activities and products of WMO, EUMETSAT and IGOS. Particular attention was given to the question of data dissemination and the efforts that are presently being made by Member States and international organizations and programmes to improve the access to meteorological and climate data obtained through satellite applications. The presentations at the Workshop will be provided to all the members of the Action Team.

2. PLAN OF ACTION

The Workshop of 8 June raised some questions of relevance regarding the international cooperation on meteorological and climate satellite applications. The information obtained will be very important to identify appropriate strategies and action plans to optimize satellite applications for weather and climate observations and modeling.

It would be useful to have a comprehensive report on success stories and also in specific difficulties encountered by Member States around the world as regards the enhancement of weather and climate forecasting through satellite applications. It is recognized that the requirements from the developing countries from different parts of the world could differ and, therefore, there is a need to consider these requirements on a regional basis.

Particular attention should be given to ensure synergy between the initiatives of this action team and other initiatives involving data from earth observation satellites towards natural resources, environment management and natural disasters. Efforts should also be made to ensure synergy with initiatives taken in the context of the United Nations Conventions on Climate Change and Desertification.

Taking into consideration the above aspects, the action team presents the following plan of action:

Objective:

The main objective is to propose and implement actions that contribute to promote international cooperation in the field of meteorological and climate satellite applications in close collaboration with national and international organizations and programmes. Particular emphasis should be given to applications that address the study of the climate system and climate change and that integrate the Earth system components of land, ocean and atmosphere.

Principal products to be delivered:

- Collect reports from Member States and international organizations on current activities regarding meteorological and climate satellite applications, including success stories and difficulties in particular as regard data dissemination. Particular attention should be given to the problem of capacity building and training in developing countries to allow full use of weather and climate satellite data. Consideration should also be given to the possibility of implementing a comprehensive data policy consistent with the large increase in the variety and quantity of the data. These reports should also include proposals for strategies to develop the international cooperation between Member States, and be presented by the beginning of September 2002.
- Write an assessment report based on the results of the 8 June Workshop and subsequent reports to be presented and discussed at a meeting of the action team in October during the World Space Congress. This report should examine the present range of weather and climate satellite applications, identify the most promising areas for the development of international cooperation, especially regarding developing countries and propose recommendations and actions to implement them for decision makers. A first draft will be proposed by the coordination for consideration and discussion in the action team.
- Write and submit a report to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of COPUOS in 2003. Further actions will be considered following the assessment and evaluation of this report.