



# United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER)

*Ensuring access to and develop the capacity to use space-based information*

## COPUOS AGREES TO UN-SPIDER PLAN OF WORK

The United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) held its historical 50th session, from 6 to 15 June in Vienna, Austria, approving new space debris mitigation guidelines, agreeing on a draft resolution on the practice of States and international organizations in registering space objects to be submitted to the General Assembly, and approving a workplan for the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER).

The Committee approved the workplan for 2007 and for the biennium 2008-2009, highlighting the benefits that such a programme will bring to developing countries, particularly to those countries that have frequent disasters and that would benefit from the access and use of space-based solutions for disaster management. The UN-SPIDER programme will achieve this by focusing on being a **gateway** to space information for disaster management support, serving as a **bridge** to connect the disaster management and space communities and being a **facilitator** of capacity-building and institutional strengthening, in particular for developing countries.



**Opening Session of the 50th Session of COPUOS**

The proposed workplan will be carried out by staff in Vienna as well as by the new UN-SPIDER offices to be opened in Beijing, China, and in Bonn, Germany, as well as by the new liaison office in Geneva, Switzerland. The Bonn office will be located on the 23rd floor of the UN campus building and it is expected to be operational in time for the first UN-SPIDER workshop which will be held in the UN campus building from 29-31 October 2007.

The Beijing office should be open by early 2008 and in the meantime China has agreed to support UN-SPIDER with an "Implementation Team" consisting of 5 part-

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**Meeting with the NDRCC Implementation Team  
Beijing, China - 17 May 2007**

time staff from the National Disaster Reduction Center of China - NDRCC. The NDRCC Implementation Team will focus in 2007 on working on the Country Profiles and the Awareness Raising Strategy. A workshop, focusing on the tasks of the future UN-SPIDER Beijing office, will be held in Guangzhou, China from 3 - 5 December 2007.

**DI-06-09 - Virtual Constellation for Risk Management - User Group - Working Meeting - 13 June 2007, Vienna, Austria**

Over 30 participants from every continent representing meteorological organizations, public security departments, space agencies and organizations working with disaster management, came together to work on user requirements for a virtual satellite constellation to address risk management. Discussions were led by Andrew Eddy of Athena Global. Giovanni Rum from the GEO Secretariat provided an initial overview of GEO and the importance of this specific GEO Task. The work is part of a broader effort led by the Canadian Space Agency and



**Participants of DI-06-09 Working Meeting**

UNOOSA in the context of the 2007-09 GEO Workplan. This GEO Task (DI-06-09) will develop both user requirements and a system architecture that will ensure easy access to satellite data and products for disaster managers from GEO Member States.

A follow-on meeting, held at ESA's ESRIN facility in Frascati on June 18th, between space agency representatives focused solely on developing system architecture to address requirements. This meeting was held in conjunction with the CEOS/SIT meeting. Both groups will continue to work over the summer with recommendations expected from the Task Steering Committee later this fall. Experts interested in contributing to the work of the group should contact Andrew Eddy of Athena Global ([andrew.eddy@athenaglobal.com](mailto:andrew.eddy@athenaglobal.com)).

**GMOSS 36-month Integration Meeting - 16 - 17 April 2007 - The Hague, The Netherlands**

The Network of Excellence GMOSS Global Monitoring for Security and Stability, of the European Union's 6th Framework Program was launched in March 2004. The focus of the GMOSS work programme is on assessing the potential of remote sensing for threat analysis (early warning indicators, scenario analysis), monitoring critical infrastructure, borders and migration, and damage assessment bringing together over 20 European research-type institutions and companies working together as a Network of Excellence. As a result of their joint research work, the GMOSS network is in the process of elaborating benchmarking concepts to methodologies, data potential and suitable tools for security applications and services. GMOSS invited UNOOSA to attend its 36 month Review Meeting to provide feed-back of their work. Several GMOSS issues/concerns are relevant to UN-SPIDER such as metadata standards, definition of benchmarking of methodologies, coordination of work among partners. At the meeting the results of GNEX 06 were evaluated. GNEX 06

was a test case scenario, which provided an opportunity for a team of institutions to develop geospatial products to be developed over 36 hours after the triggering of a fictitious event (in this case a leak in a nuclear power plant). GNEX 07 is scheduled for the second half of 2007. One of the conclusions was the need for the definition of European Emergency Mapping Standards. Similarly, such standards should be developed for the UN, building upon the 4 years of work with the International Charter Space and Major Disasters. Check out: <http://gmooss.jrc.it/web/guest/home>

### **The 3rd International Symposium on Geoinformation for Disaster Management (GI4DM) in Toronto, Canada - 23-25 May 2007**

This 3rd GI4DM was organized by the Canadian Institute of Geomatics (CIG), together with ISPRS (through its WG IV/8 - Spatial Data Integration for Emergency Services). UNOOSA supported the 2



#### **Technical Session - 3rd GI4DM - Toronto, Canada**

previous events and also contributed to this one by promoting the event, participating as co-chair of the organizing committee, and also funding the participation of Mr. Duván López from Colombia who gave a presentation during the symposium, which was attended by 241 participants coming from 33 countries. There were over a hundred oral and poster presentations and the special “Futures Dialogue” session provided an opportunity to participate in exploring future practices and technologies and the ways these will impact on the strategic choices we have to make today. As Duván commented: “Lessons

learned in the past several years have indicated clearly that the prediction and efficient monitoring of disasters are two critical factors in the decision-making process and that space-based technologies have a great potential to meet such needs in a fast, near-real-time manner”. The 4th GI4DM will be held in Beijing from 30 June - 2 July 2008 with the theme: “3D Geoinformation for Urban Disaster Management”, and will be organized by the Beijing University of Civil Engineering and Architecture. UN-SPIDER will be supporting this 4th GI4DM as well.

### **Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System (GDACS) - Annual Stakeholders Meeting in Schloss Seggau, Austria - 24-25 April 2007**

The GDACS-meeting on the 24th and 25th of April 2007 focused on operational aspects of the platform and on the planned further improvements. As UN-SPIDER has a major contribution to provide to the emergency response community, including ensuring a better understanding of their needs and requirements, Georg Magerl, who is responsible for coordinating all outreach activities of UN-SPIDER, took part in the meeting. Following presentations by each one of the main stakeholders, a demonstration exercise was held where a major onset disaster (earthquake) was simulated in a fictitious country. Participants were divided into different groups (donor countries, affected country, OCHA, mediators, etc.) and given the opportunity to practice the use of GDACS and its tools. GDACS demonstrated its usefulness and the exercise provided an opportunity to identify possible improvements.

The UN-SPIDER programme was presented at the beginning of the meeting and participants were provided with information material. The feedback and interest in UN-SPIDER was very positive and, amongst others, the need for access to satellite images from both before and after a disaster within a reasonable timeframe was emphasized in many con-



**GDACS Participants**

versations with participants. For further information on GDACS visit: <http://www.gdacs.org>

**Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction 2007: Working Together for a Safer World (ACDR 2007) 25-27 June 2007, Astana, the Republic of Kazakhstan**

ACDR 2007 brought together a total of 136 participants from 22 countries, and from 32 organizations, including several UN organizations, to further review the progress made in Asia toward the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) adopted at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in January 2005, as well as to present good practices and achievements, to identify the challenges that remain, and to propose ways to accelerate the implementation process in the future. It addressed such topics as governance, education, the application of scientific knowledge, public-private partnerships, and community-based disaster risk reduction.

Presentations included introductory presentations on governance, country presentations on the status of HFA implementation, and panel discussions on the main topics of the ACDR 2007. ADRC member country representatives and experts from key or-



**Plenary Session - ACDR2007, Astana, Kazakhstan**

ganizations in the field of disaster risk reduction provided an update of their work. UNOOSA made a presentation on the new UN-SPIDER Programme together with other presentations on initiatives that are helping developing countries take advantage of cutting edge solutions, such as Sentinel Asia.

The Conference Summary and other related documents will soon be available on the ACDR 2007 website (<http://web.adrc.or.jp/acdr2007astana/index.html>).

**2007 Outreach Activities**

We are pleased to confirm the following workshops for 2007: The "**United Nations International UN-SPIDER Workshop: Space-based Information and Solutions for Disaster Management and Emergency Response**", which is being jointly organized by UNOOSA and the German Aerospace Center (DLR) and with the support of the Government of Germany. The workshop will be held in Bonn, Germany, from 29 October – 31 October 2007; The "**United Nations/China Regional UN-SPIDER Workshop**" which is being organised by UNOOSA and the China National Space Administration (CNSA) and with the support of the Government of China. This workshop will be held in Guangzhou, China, 3 – 5 December 2007, and; The "**United Nations/Sudan International UN SPIDER Workshop: Space-based Solutions for Disaster Management and Emergency Response**" organised by UNOOSA and the Remote Sensing Authority of Sudan and with the support of the Governments of Austria and Sudan, which will be held in Khartoum, Sudan, 9 - 13 December 2007. We will be sending out further information on these workshops in the upcoming days, including application forms. Two additional workshops will be held in Salzburg and Geneva and information on these activities will be distributed soon.

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