



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

Establishment of UN SPIDER

In its resolution 61/110 of 14 December 2006 the United Nations General Assembly agreed to establish the “United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response – UN SPIDER” as a new United Nations programme, with the following mission statement: **“Ensure that all countries have access to and develop the capacity to use all types of space-based information to support the full disaster management cycle”**.

The General Assembly recognised that space technology and its applications can play a vital role in supporting disaster relief operations by providing accurate and timely information and communication support and also recognized the important role that coordinated applications of space technology can play in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters, adopted by the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, held at Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, from 18 to 22 January 2005.

Whereas there have been a number of initiatives in recent years that have contributed to making space technologies available for humanitarian and emergency response, such as the International Charter Space and Major Disasters, UN SPIDER is the first to focus on the need to ensure access to and use of such solutions during all phases of the disaster, including the risk reduction phase which will significantly contribute to an increasing reduction in loss of lives and property, and also for all

UN SPIDER NEWSLETTER

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types of disasters and emergencies. The new 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.

UN SPIDER is being implemented by the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) as an open network of providers of space-based solutions to support disaster management activities. Besides Vienna (where UNOOSA is located), the programme will also have offices in Beijing, China and Bonn, Germany. The following countries have committed resources to UN SPIDER: Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Chile, China, Colombia, Ecuador, Germany, India, Indonesia, I.R. of Iran, Italy, Morocco, Nigeria, Romania, the Russian Federation, Switzerland, South Africa, Syria and Turkey. Furthermore, several of these countries have indicated that they will join the Network of Regional Support Offices that will work together in implementing the activities of the new programme.

During the forty-fourth session (**see photo**) of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, a subsidiary body of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), which met in Vienna from 12-23 February 2007, delegates agreed to a Platform Programme for 2007-2009

and requested that UNOOSA begin activities immediately taking advantage of the commitments provided and building upon the Network of Regional Support Offices.

Since then UNOOSA has been busy setting up the offices in Beijing and Bonn (host country agreements, mobilisation of staff and office space and infrastructure). The Bonn office will be located on the 23rd floor of the UN campus building and it is expected to be operational by 1st August 2007. The Beijing office is expected to be operational soon thereafter. Additional staff and resources are also being mobilised to OOSA in Vienna.

In March, Mr. Georg Magerl, an Associate Expert from Austria, joined the UN SPIDER programme fulltime and will be responsible for coordinating the implementation of the outreach activities and supporting the capacity building tasks.



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