

propose at the third United Nations special session devoted to disarmament, in June 1988, the speedy establishment of a satellite image processing agency (SIPA). 1/

The principal function of the agency would be to gather and then partially or completely process data emanating from existing civilian satellites, and to disseminate the results of these operations among its members. Independently of the sources available to them at the national level, the members would in this way benefit from a regularly updated data base usable in three areas of major importance:

Disarmament: Either to obtain in this way data to facilitate the verification of disarmament agreements, or to establish certain facts in advance of the conclusion of such agreements (exchange of data, force estimates);

Crisis control and, where appropriate, compliance with disengagement agreements in local conflicts;

Prevention and handling of disasters and major natural risks, and possibly assistance in the devising of certain development programmes encompassing several countries and/or administered by the United Nations.

SIPA would receive digital or analogue data and/or photographic data (chromatic, colour or spectral photographs) and cartographic data.

Initially, SIPA should be able to use space data with a resolution of between 5 and 10 metres, and, where available, very-high-resolution (aircraft-supplied) data. This would cover only optical data (visible or near-infrared spectrum):

Originating from existing weather satellites;

Originating from existing or planned satellites for the study of terrestrial resources - United States (Landsat and future projects), USSR (Meteor), France (SPOT), India (IRS 1), etc.;

Recorded previously by satellites (historical data and Skylab-type data), or by the Federal Republic of Germany's metric camera installed in the American space shuttle.

The documents received by SIPA should subsequently be developed as satellite technology progresses, and as the resolution of image-taking improves.

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1/ Cf. statement by Mr. Roland DUMAS before the General Assembly on 2 June 1988, as well as document A/S-15/34.