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Policy and economic aspects of space weather (2)

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CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR OUTER SPACE AFFAIRS TO THE
INTERNATIONAL SPACE WEATHER INITIATIVE (ISWI)

Abstract

In 2010, the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space began consideration of a new agenda item under a three-year workplan on the International Space Weather Initiative (ISWI). The main objectives of ISWI are to contribute to the development of the scientific insight necessary to improve our understanding and forecasting capabilities of near-Earth space weather and to contribute to education and public outreach. The United Nations Programme on Space Applications, implemented by the Office for Outer Space Affairs, is contributing to ISWI through its United Nations Basic Space Science Initiative (UNBSSI), a long-term effort, launched in 1991, for the development of basic space science and for international and regional cooperation in this field on a worldwide basis, particularly in developing countries. UNBSSI encompassed a series of workshops, held from 1991 to 2004, which addressed the status of basic space science in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Western Asia and contributed to the inauguration of small astronomical facilities for research and education programmes at the university level. From 2005 to 2009, the UNBSSI workshops were dedicated to promoting activities related to the International Heliophysical Year 2007 (IHY) which resulted in the establishment of a series of worldwide ground-based instrument networks, a node of which is also operated by the Office for Outer Space Affairs. Building on these accomplishments, UNBSSI is now focussing on the ISWI. This paper will report on these activities.