

VOLUNTEERS IN TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

12 March 1999

Ms. Marjorie Roman Sales  
Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Ref.: Afrispace, Inc.  
File No. CSS-90-017 [IBFS File No. SAT-LOA-19900723-00002];  
Amendment  
File No. SAT-AMD-19990125-00016 (call sign 52367)

Dear Ms. Sales:

I am writing to support the above-referenced license application on behalf of Afrispace, Inc., wholly owned by the WorldSpace Corporation.

VITA is a nonprofit 501(3)3 organization chartered in Virginia with a nearly 40 year history working on behalf of the people of Asia, Africa and Latin America. We supply technical information and project assistance, especially for use in rural and remote regions. For almost half of our history we have also experimented with a variety of communications technologies to enhance these efforts and in 1992 was awarded a Pioneer's Preference license by the FCC for our work in the NVNG MSS service.

Given this background, we have also allied ourselves with those US-based institutions and companies whose operating philosophy complements our own mandate. We are very proud to be able to state that the WorldSpace Corporation and its goal of providing millions of low-cost digital receivers with high quality entertainment and information to listeners throughout the developing world is first on our list of collaborators. We have observed and admired WorldSpace and its leadership for many years. Imbedded in its public discourses and promotional materials is its intention not only to be a commercial success which obviously it must be, but also a real desire to make a positive difference in the lives of usually forgotten citizens on a world scale.

VITA has just signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the WorldSpace Foundation which states in part that "the parties are considering [a pilot project which] would involve the installation by WorldSpace Foundation of a number of digital radio receivers for reception of its Afristar™ broadcasts in test

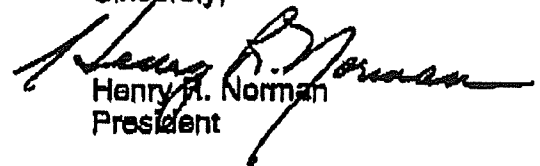
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sites in selected schoolrooms and other facilities in rural South Africa. At the same sites, VITA would install transceivers and computers for transmission of email through the LEO satellites to which VITA has access. This linkage would form a single terminal capable of supporting two-way communications."

The potential of this relationship for the good of underprivileged African schoolchildren cannot be underestimated. It is our hope that it will be replicated in many places throughout the continent and indeed around the world.

We urge the FCC to grant the AfriSpace application and issue it a private international satellite license without delay.

Sincerely,



Henry H. Norman  
President