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COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND TWENTY-THIRD MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 26 June 1981, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. JANKOWITSCH (Austria)

Report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee (continued)

Report of the Legal Sub-Committee (continued)

81-61300

The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

REPORT OF THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL SUB-COMMITTEE (continued)
REPORT OF THE LEGAL SUB-COMMITTEE (continued)

The CHAIRMAN: The secretary has an announcement to make.

Mr. ROBINSON (Secretary of the Committee): A second provisional list of participants will be distributed this morning and this morning will be the last opportunity for delegations to make corrections or additions to the list of participants before it comes out as a document.

The CHAIRMAN: We shall now continue the discussion of the two items before the Committee.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ MEDINA (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish): Our delegation cannot but express its regret at the slow rate of progress we have noted in the work of the Sub-Committee: the Legal Sub-Committee, on the one hand, and the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, on the other.

The Legal Sub-Committee has held 360 meetings, and the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, 253, but their combined efforts have placed before us a balance sheet that is hardly encouraging, judging by the accomplishments in delimiting and defining outer space and in regard to questions concerning the geostationary orbit and the examination of its physical nature and technical attributes.

So far as the specific item is concerned, Colombia believes that definitions, like regulations, should be adopted by the international community immediately - indeed urgently; otherwise, the technical definition and the legal rules will come after de facto situations have been created. We shall then run the risk of the establishment of a monopoly that could endanger the equity so dear to our Organization.

(Mr. Rodriguez Medina, Colombia)

The position of the equatorial countries on the geostationary orbit was presented to the international community at a time when that orbit was being occupied covertly and almost entirely by the small group of Powers which possess advanced technology. Thus the equatorial countries opened a major international debate which demonstrated the serious omissions in the 1967 Treaty and alerted third-world countries, which began to become aware of the way in which one of the most vital factors for civilization and progress - satellite communications - was being subjected to a process of speedy monopolization which could create a new and highly serious area of inequality in the world.

Quite understandably the needs of all developing countries and the position of the equatorial States, which are also developing countries, coincide and complement each other. The geostationary orbit is a scarce resource and should not be subject to appropriation - de facto appropriation, facilitated by the unequal development of technology. This points to the appropriateness of having an international conference assume the task of filling the gaps and correcting the omissions in the 1967 Treaty. In that year the majority of States were not yet fully aware of the economic, political and cultural importance of the geostationary orbit or of outer space, and because of that decisions were reached which pose problems for a great part of mankind - problems which can be seen only now.

If cosmic phenomena had been such that the geostationary orbit passed through the North Atlantic zone we would not be involved in this debate; possibly the geostationary orbit would already have been specifically defined to distinguish it from the amorphous concept of outer space, and jurisdiction over it would have been claimed. However, since it happens that the orbit passes over equatorial zones, over developing countries, something can and must be added by the third world to the imprecise and very general notions of outer space which, since 1967, have facilitated the rapid occupation of a scarce resource by a small number of pioneers that have mastered the technology. It is up to the developing countries to promote an international legal order which, by meeting the legitimate interests of the equatorial States, can appropriately regulate

(Mr. Rodriguez Medina, Colombia)

the utilization of the geostationary orbit, as well as the application of those legitimate interests for the benefit of all mankind.

That is why my country considers that the forthcoming Vienna Conference should not be limited to the consideration of the scientific and commercial aspects of technological progress in the utilization of outer space; rather, it should also deal with urgent legal problems. Only in this way will it be possible, in accordance with the enormous importance of outer space and the geostationary orbit, to update the legal instruments of 1967 which were very preliminary in nature. At Vienna it might be possible to take a first decisive step towards preparing a genuine law of outer space, consistent, equitable and harmonious.

We are particularly addressing these comments to the members of the Group of 77, the non-aligned countries, the developing world, which can be so affected by the continuation of a system such as the present one. My country and the other equatorial States would derive no benefit if, within 20 or 30 years in the absence of needed and recommended legal reforms, we were to be faced with serious faits accomplis and, therefore, had to try to free ourselves from dependencies and inequalities created in outer space, just as we have to do today with inequalities and dependencies created in the international economic order. It will not be easy to fight for a new international legal order in outer space, just as today it is not easy to achieve a new world economic order in the face of the powerful interests created during centuries of accommodation and reticence.

The equatorial delegations consider that the wording of agenda item 4 should not be changed, because there can be no definition and/or delimitation of outer space without a prior resolution of the question of the geostationary orbit. That is why a solution would be for this Committee to decide on and establish a working group to study agenda item 4 in the future on a priority basis.

(Mr. Rodriguez Medina, Colombia)

My country considers that, on the basis of the principles of equity and justice which inspire the United Nations, we can hardly be asked to lend support in the future to other issues, important but perhaps not as vital as this one, when we have systematically been denied support for aspirations which are not ours alone, not only those of equatorial countries, but rather, as we have been observing, are and should be shared by the entire developing world.

We reserve our right to speak on other subitems in the course of the debate.

Mr. MANDESCU (Romania)(interpretation from French): In respect of the reports of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and the Legal Sub-Committee, we appreciate the fact that throughout the debate the two Sub-Committees have tried to make their contribution to clarifying legal and technical problems on the basis of which we should work out legal instruments to govern important applications of space technology in the future. But, as many delegations have stated in the general debate, little real progress has been made and there seems no hope of achieving specific results.

Among the problems treated by the two Sub-Committees, remote sensing by satellites is the focus of the attention of most Governments and many international organizations, as well as of our Committee. An ever-increasing number of States or groups of States have announced their intention to build remote sensing satellites to give them the capability of collecting data from any part of the world. In the 1990s, more than 20 countries will have that capability - naturally including the countries members of the European Space Agency. Also, there is a growing number of ground stations for the direct reception of data from certain territories which go far beyond national boundaries. In the 1990s more than 35 countries will have this capability, including countries members of the European Space Agency.

(Mr. Mandescu, Romania)

There is great progress in making remote sensing by satellite operational without the international community having the legal and organizational machinery that is necessary to enable all States to benefit equitably and in real terms from this new technology.

For more than a decade now the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space has been discussing remote sensing by satellite in an effort to establish international legal rules to govern that activity. But we have not succeeded in achieving significant results on basic issues. The debates that have taken place in recent years in the two Sub-Committees have been ceaseless repetitions of some well-known positions, with no possibility of progress emerging. Happily we have agreed that it is the right of all States to have access to all remote-sensing data obtained by States in the national territories of other States and that there is no scientific or legal foundation for limiting that right. As regards the transmission of remote-sensing data to other territories, including seas, oceans and free territories, the establishment of a régime of limited distribution of remote-sensing data would indirectly mean the institutionalization at the international level of the right of States possessing satellites or ground stations to obtain data in the territories of other States. At the same time, the establishment of any régime of limited distribution for remote-sensing data would affect only those States not possessing the means to receive data directly from satellites - that is, generally speaking, small States and the great majority of the developing countries.

We therefore share the opinion that all States have the right to access to any material obtained by remote sensing. Restrictions and discriminatory barriers should be removed. Access to such data in advantageous and equitable conditions would, we think, be an important factor in the process of establishing a new international economic order.

(Mr. Mandescu, Romania)

For five years now, I believe the Committee and its subsidiary bodies have been trying to decide on a single degree of resolution for all data obtained by remote sensing. As a result, none of the other aspects of remote sensing has been considered substantively. If we continue thus we may waste a lot of time and not be able to reach conclusive results. The studies that have been made on these problems have, we think, shown the practical impossibility of finding a single criterion at this developmental stage of remote sensing. The difficulty of resolving this problem has been increased by technical developments, spectacular and permanent developments, in this field.

In conclusion we would propose that the question of resolution be entrusted to the scientific bodies competent to deal with this problem, such as COSPAR and the International Association of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing, without neglecting questions of co-ordination and co-operation in the matter of remote sensing, which would benefit all nations without any sort of discrimination. Unless we proceed in that way the Committee will find itself in a situation of fait accompli in which there are organizations, agencies and machinery that create enormous difficulties when it comes to meeting the needs of all nations. In the absence of any rules or international arrangements, each State that launches remote-sensing satellites will be able to draw up its own rules or methodologies for giving other States access to data thus obtained.

The main problems in this field at the international level which must be urgently resolved are access by States to data obtained by remote-sensing satellites and the granting of the necessary assistance to developing countries so that they can effectively implement and obtain effective results from this technology to the benefit of their national economies.

Bearing in mind the way in which the debate has evolved in this Committee in respect of remote sensing, it is, I think, not very probable that we can establish those rules in the immediate or even the longer term. The attempt to resolve remote-sensing problems means that the elaboration of international rules will be postponed for a long time to come.

(Mr. Mandescu, Romania)

In view of the fact that the United Nations, and in particular the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, finds itself unable to establish general rules on this delicate problem of remote sensing, it would be very useful and timely for it to establish norms for the use of remote-sensing satellites as and when they become necessary. Those norms should take account only of the performance of satellites in orbit and should be constantly improved as new satellites appear. Thus, in respect of data provided by existing satellites and those of LANDSAT-D and SPOT and others of the next generation, it seems there are no major differences within the Committee regarding the establishment of rules to ensure unrestricted access by all States to these remote-sensing data. Norms must also contain provisions enabling States to share the data.

We share the concerns expressed yesterday by the delegation of Pakistan regarding the very high price of remote-sensing data. The use of remote sensing in all countries, and particularly the developing countries, raises particularly difficult and complex problems, for example those of access to data from satellites; the acquisition of complementary data from aircraft or from the ground; the acquisition of installations, apparatus and specific tools; the training of specialists to work on those specific installations; the training of a large number of specialists to ensure ample staff for interpreting remote-sensing data, which is possible only in the universities and schools of each country. The United Nations should support such action.

(Mr. Mandescu, Romania)

It would be difficult for these problems to be resolved and analysed in the regular meetings of the Committee and in the Sub-Committees. A group of experts nominated by the Secretary-General and comprising a limited number of specialists could make specific detailed proposals which would be analysed subsequently by the Committee and the two Sub-Committees.

As regards direct television broadcasting by satellites, my delegation reaffirms its well-known position, according to which we could not admit broadcasts of this kind without the strict respect for the basic principles of international law, particularly the principles of sovereign rights and non-interference in internal affairs. These last two principles are the ones most affected and jeopardized by direct television broadcasting by satellites and at the same time they offer the only political and legal way whereby the great majority of countries of the world, particularly the developing countries, can be protected. Furthermore, no new activities in international life and no new relationships can be conceived outside these basic principles of international law, which are unanimously accepted.

Turning now to the United Nations space applications programme, we note here that in the period when the programme was established, the meagre financial resources allocated to it by the United Nations were on the whole sufficient. However, with the emergence of much more complex new space techniques such as remote sensing, which make necessary the training of a great number of specialists in various fields and the acquisition by States of costly equipment and installations, the meagre financial resources allocated to this programme have become quite insufficient. This situation has been emphasized many times by numerous delegations within the Committee's debates and by the annual reports, which mention the urgent necessity of enlarging the content and scope of the United Nations space applications programme so that it can better respond to the needs of the developing countries.

(Mr. Mandescu, Romania)

Support for the United Nations programme of space applications through voluntary contributions by States, particularly the space Powers that is those which obtain the main results and benefits of space research, would represent on the part of these Powers a modest contribution towards the establishment of the New International Economic Order. The allocation to this programme of only one per cent of funds devoted by the space Powers to space research, in addition to the contributions of the relevant specialized agencies in the United Nations system, as well as the funds coming directly from the United Nations budget, would create a good basis enabling the programme effectively to assist developing countries in the application of space techniques.

Ms. WU Dalan (China) (interpretation from Chinese): Before making my statement on the reports of the two Sub-Committees, allow me first of all to take this opportunity to express our thanks to Mr. Wyzner, Chairman of the Legal Sub-Committee of the Outer Space Committee, and to Mr. Carver, Chairman of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, for the untiring efforts and invaluable contributions of the work of the two Sub-Committees. As we all know, for many years the Legal Sub-Committee has been successful in formulating legal rules and regulations for outer space. This is a result achieved through long-term efforts and recurring consultations among member-States.

On the other hand, as was summarized by the report of the Legal Sub-Committee, there are still some major differences over some important issues under consideration by the Committee, which thus affect the progress of the work.

(Ms. Wu Dalan, China)

In the meantime, of course, we have also noted that during the course of the twentieth session some progress was made on certain issues, mainly to be seen in a tendency towards rapprochement between the views of the various sides. This will be helpful for the future work of the Legal Sub-Committee.

It has been many years since the drafting of principle on direct television broadcasting by satellites was placed on the agenda of the Sub-Committee as a priority item. However, no agreement has been reached so far. We consider that international direct television broadcasting should be carried out on the basis of respect for State sovereignty and non-interference in States' internal affairs, the established principles of international law. Only thus can understanding and friendship among the peoples of various countries be properly promoted and the cause of maintaining international peace and security be served.

We support in principle the proposal submitted to the current session by Argentina, Brazil, Canada and other countries, 12 in all, and we agree that it should serve as a basis for the search for an agreement at this session of the Outer Space Committee and the twenty-first session of the Legal Sub-Committee. With regard to the important principle of consultations and agreement among States, we consider that consultations and agreement between the broadcasting and the receiving States should contain not only the technical arrangement in accordance with the relevant documents of the International Telecommunication Union, but also a non-technical arrangement concerning important interests of the receiving State. This point should be adequately embodied in this principle. As for the question of co-operation on programme content, this is also an important issue, but it is not mentioned in the proposal of the 12 countries. We hope some appropriate proposals will be made on this after consultations.

(Ms. Wu Dalan, China)

Regarding the text of the draft principles of remote sensing of the natural resources of the earth from outer space, we hold that it is an important principle of international law for a State to have absolute and permanent sovereignty over its natural resources and this is also our basic viewpoint in considering this question. Consequently, we support the view of many developing countries that only with the consent of the sensed State can the sensing State disseminate the remote sensing data and information about the natural resources of the sensed State to other countries. It is fully justifiable for the sensed State to claim a prior right in the acquisition of these data and information.

Besides this, the sensing State should bear international responsibility for remote sensing activities in outer space carried out by all the agencies under its jurisdiction. These are the issues still unresolved in the elaboration of the drafting principles on remote sensing. We hope that through further consultation some progress on these issues can be achieved at the next session of the Legal Sub-Committee.

(Ms. Wu Dalan, China)

Lastly, I would like to make a few comments on the use of nuclear power sources in outer space. We share the view of the majority of countries that, although there are some regulations applicable to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space in the existing relevant international treaties and other instruments, they are obviously not adequate: they cannot meet the needs of the safe use of nuclear power sources in outer space and cannot deal with the legal problems that might arise from the use of such sources. Therefore, they should be supplemented.

We think it necessary to draft supplementary provisions on the basis of a Canadian working paper while accepting some valuable amendments and suggestions made by other countries. So we propose that the title of this item be rectified at the current session so that the Legal Sub-Committee can be given the mandate to start drafting the supplementary provisions at its next session.

We are not going to make comments here on the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, item by item, but we wish to make some observations on a few individual issues.

We appreciate the smooth implementation of the United Nations space applications programme. We are of the view that the programme of 1980, already carried out, and the programme of 1981, currently under way, and the programme for 1982, in preparation, are really beneficial to the participating countries, particularly the developing countries. We hope that programmes of this kind can be gradually expanded so that countries, especially the developing countries, can obtain more benefits.

Allow me here to give some account of developments in our country.

In October this year, the second Asian Remote Sensing Conference will be held in China. Although it is not an integral part of the United Nations space applications programme, it will be helpful in promoting the development of remote sensing technology in Asia. At the moment, Chinese scientists and experts are summarizing their work and experience for the forthcoming discussion on remote sensing technology and other relevant questions, and exchanging experience with foreign friends participating in the Conference.

(Ms. Wu Dalan, China)

We would like to express our hope that, conditions permitting, China will make its contributions to the United Nations space applications programme.

With regard to the issue of the space transportation systems mentioned in the report, we want to add some developments that have taken place in China. China is now developing a new three-stage launch vehicle, CZ-3, for launching a geostationary satellite in a low-orbit large-scale spacecraft. CZ-3 employs, in the third stage, a cryogenic propulsion system using liquid oxygen and liquid hydrogen propellants. In 1983 or 1984 we shall use this launch vehicle to launch a geostationary communication test satellite developed by China itself. The satellite will weigh about 900 kilograms in the transfer orbit.

The launch vehicle CZ-3 we are developing and the launch vehicle CZ-2, capable of launching a 300-kilogram satellite, and the FP-1, capable of placing a satellite weighing 1,200 kilograms into orbit, which we have used before, are designed and manufactured by Chinese experts, engineers and workers themselves. However, we are looking forward to co-operating in space activities with foreign countries, on the basis of equality and mutual benefit, so as to contribute to the development of world space science and technology.

Mr. RAJAN (India): We are once again pleased to go on record about the valuable and able guidance of Mr. Carver of Australia and Mr. Wyzner of Poland, Chairmen of the two Sub-Committees. While a great deal of work has been done and various complex issues have been addressed, at this stage we shall restrict our comments to a few points and will go back to some of the other issues at a later time.

We are very pleased to note the considerable progress made by the two Sub-Committees in dealing with the various complex issues on outer space, though one might feel at times that there could have been greater progress. Notable among the achievements of the Sub-Committees are the successful conclusion of the Working Group's work on nuclear power sources within the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and the materials generated by the Legal Sub-Committee to deal with the issue of direct broadcasting by satellite (DBS).

(Mr. Rajan, India)

We feel confident that on the basis of the long and meticulous work done by the members over the past few years in a spirit of co-operation, compromise and consensus, the DBS question can now be considered by the Main Committee so as to arrive at an agreed version. The informal Working Group set up by the main Committee is doing a commendable job under the able chairmanship of Mr. Elaraby of Egypt. We are sure our Committee will find ways of harmonizing the requirements of the sovereignty of States, together with the resultant requirements of consent and agreement, with the need to extend the benefits to large sections of people.

Regarding the question of remote sensing, the progress has been somewhat slower; member States have stated their various positions. Our delegation feels that this is yet another area of space research which has immense potential for application to various disciplines to the benefit of all humanity, especially the developing countries. The problem of our Committee's not being able to move speedily towards an agreement is due partly, in our opinion, to the fact that we have not considered the entire spectrum of complex applications of remote sensing ranging from meteorology to surveillance.

With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I will quote a few parts of our national paper dealing with this issue, since it might help to pose the problems faced by our Committee rather pointedly.

(Mr. Rajan, India)

"India has always maintained that surveillance and remote sensing are but two faces of the same coin. To look at one in isolation from the other can only be self-defeating. This very contentious issue arises out of conflicting national needs and interests which lead to deep mistrust and mutual suspicion of each other's motives among contending nations. Remote sensing does require high-resolution sensors which, unfortunately, just as well serve for surveillance. Again, sensors are no respectors of national boundaries; they record whatever appears in their fields of view". (A/CONF.101/NP/6, para. 87)

"A ban on all data dissemination would mean denying a lot of useful information to those who need it but cannot afford a full-fledged programme to obtain it on their own. India would, therefore, advocate definite international agreements on dissemination of remotely sensed data finer than a certain resolution, depending on the sensor capabilities and applications". (ibid., para. 90)

Of course, while quoting these passages, I am deeply aware of the complexity of the issue and the various uncertainties - technical and otherwise - involved here. It would be our hope that this issue will be addressed rather speedily both in the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and in the Legal Sub-Committee.

As regards the future work proposed by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee in paragraph 63 of document A/AC.105/287, we would think that consideration of the United Nations programme on space applications and the co-ordination of space activities within the United Nations system; questions relating to remote sensing of the earth by satellites; preparation for the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space; and the examination of the physical nature and technical attributes of the geostationary orbit could perhaps receive more attention. In this context, we should like to go on record at commending the excellent compilation done by the Secretariat regarding the list of applications and the co-operation between the Member States. There has been considerable work done on this and also some suggestions made by the Sub-Committee as to how to organize some of the materials in future. It is a fairly long list. However, if some of them are implemented it would be an extremely valuable contributior to international co-operation and also to various applications.

(Mr. Rajan, India)

Although one reads different world literature, if all the materials on applications are available at a single place expressing various viewpoints and documenting various innovations by Member States, it gives a new perspective and dimension to space applications. And as regards the future work of the Legal Sub-Committee, we hope that the question of direct broadcasting satellites can be resolved by us; and with that hope we suggest that considerable attention could perhaps then be immediately given to the question of remote sensing and subsequently to other issues.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the representative of the the Committee on Space Research (COSPAR).

Mr. ORTNER (Committee on Space Research (COSPAR)): Professor Denisse, the President of COSPAR sends on behalf of the Committee on Space Research his best wishes for a successful session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Professor Denisse intended to participate at this session personally. Unfortunately, he broke his arm just before this meeting, and therefore in my capacity as Chairman of the COSPAR Finance Committee I was asked to read to this Committee his statement.

"I am most gratified to have the opportunity once again to address this assembly on behalf of the Committee on Space Research (COSPAR), of the International Council of Scientific Unions. Please accept the best wishes of our scientific community for every success in your important deliberations.

"COSPAR is happy to continue to respond to requests from the United Nations in the field of scientific expertise. We are greatly pleased that the COSPAR contributions on the current and future state of space sciences and contributions to other background papers for UNISPACE-82 have been received with appreciation by the United Nations Secretariat. Our Committee is at present active in following up the series of annual reports submitted to the United Nations in past years, preparing a report on 'Progress of Space Research - 1980-1981', which will be in the hands of the United Nations Secretariat this autumn.

"We are looking forward to the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which is to take place

(Mr. Ortner, COSPAR)

in Vienna next year, and we note with satisfaction that the eminent scientist, Mr. Yash Pal, highly esteemed by the international scientific community and for many years now a friend of COSPAR, has been appointed Secretary-General of the Conference.

"The Conference will provide a unique opportunity for an exhaustive review of developments in the area of space science and technology and the assessment of future possibilities and trends.

"The year 1982 will be the occasion of many celebrations - the twenty-fifth anniversary of the historic launching of the first artificial earth satellite SPUTNIK-I, and also the anniversaries of three milestones in international scientific co-operation: the first International Polar Year, 100 years ago, namely, 1882 to 1883; the Second International Polar Year 50 years ago, 1932 to 1933; and the International Geophysical Year 25 years ago, 1957 to 1958, which was the real commencement of co-ordinated international efforts in the use of instrumented rockets and satellites.

"In 1982, COSPAR is holding its twenty-fourth plenary meeting and associated activities, in Ottawa, Canada, from 17 May through 3 June. The programme of this meeting will be the richest in the history of COSPAR. It will include 11 symposiums and 6 workshops, to be organized in collaboration with various international bodies, as well as 20 topical meetings organized by the COSPAR interdisciplinary scientific commissions. The subjects of these cover almost the full range of scientific space research. Among the symposiums and workshops, many will surely be of direct interest to the United Nations such as, to list only a few of them, the symposium on the Study of Land Transformation Processes from Space and Ground Observations; the Symposium on Remote Sensing and Mineral Exploration; the Workshop on Selection and Impact of Spectral Bands for Earth Resources Analysis from Space; and the Symposium on the Role and Impact of Space Research in Developing Countries.

(Mr. Ortner, COSPAR)

"In respect to the latter, COSPAR has invited United Nations co-sponsorship, and we are looking forward to receiving a favourable reply.

"Detailed information on the programme plans for the 1982 COSPAR meeting in Ottawa is available on request from the COSPAR secretariat in Paris. We would be happy to distribute such information to any addresses the Outer Space Affairs Division considers desirable.

"Permit me, Mr. Chairman, at the end of this statement, to express deep appreciation for the activities of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, under your wise chairmanship, is carrying out, activities aimed at obtaining maximum benefits from international co-operation in the exploration of outer space, through the fostering of development of scientific and technological research in space, and the solution of any controversial problems which might arise."

Mr. MEHMUD (Pakistan): My delegation offered some brief comments yesterday on the subject of satellite remote sensing, because we feel that this is one of the very important applications of space technology.

My delegation also made the observation that some of the subject-matters before the two Sub-Committees have been on their agendas for a very long time. The delay in the disposal of these agenda items can be attributed in part to the highly complex legal and technical problems that are associated with them. Furthermore, these two Sub-Committees work on the principle of consensus, which is also the way in which the main Committee functions.

One of the agenda items that is very important and is still pending in the Sub-Committees relates to remote sensing of the earth by satellites. This subject-matter is, as I have said, before the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and the Legal Sub-Committee. The two other items before the Legal Sub-Committee relate to the elaboration of draft principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting, and the definition and/or delimitation of outer space. Those two items need to be disposed of as a matter of high

(Mr. Mehmud, Pakistan)

priority. For it can be safely said that events have already overtaken us in this domain; and the same thing is likely to happen in regard to satellite remote sensing.

My delegation feels that the Committee, as a matter of necessity, in order to respond to the fast development pace in space science and technology, has to act quickly so as not to be left way behind, thereby compromising its aims and objectives. My delegation sincerely hopes that the coming years will witness the accelerated disposal of the agenda items before the Sub-Committee, and that even during the current session of this Committee, with the able guidance of the Chairman, tangible forward movement will be registered. Indeed, we very much hope that a common draft on direct broadcasting satellites may be agreed upon during this session.

We endorse the recommendation of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee that the agenda of its nineteenth session should include the following items: questions relating to space transportation systems and their implications for future activities in space, and examination of the physical nature and technical attributes of the geostationary orbit.

As for nuclear power sources in space, my delegation further suggests that the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee might be asked to consider at its next session, and report to the Committee on, progress being made by the Member States employing nuclear power sources on board their spacecraft, in implementation of various recommendations - particularly those relating to safety requirements and notification format - made by the Working Group, as contained in its report.

My delegation has always placed great emphasis on the significance of the role that the United Nations can play in co-ordinating the activities of nations in space science and technology. The viability of the United Nations role as a promoter of international efforts in peaceful applications of space science and technology can hardly be overemphasized. As an immediate

(Mr. Mehmud, Pakistan)

measure, such co-operation might start in the field of applications satellites: for the exchange of data or to obtain such data directly from the satellites; for provision of facilities, expertise, and so forth, by the space nations to the developing countries, for analysis interpretation and use of such data.

It will also contribute towards meeting those objectives if the United Nations agency disseminates such information as: mission of the satellites launched by Member States - and we have in mind applications satellites; frequencies used; orbital parameters; type of ground equipment required to receive signals therefrom and analyze/display such data. Already the Soviet Union, the United States of America, India, Japan and the European Space Agency are operating one or the other kind of applications satellites. France and other countries will soon be launching applications satellites. These countries should be able to participate effectively in the proposed programme, as space nations.

(Mr. Mehmud, Pakistan)

Another area of potential collaboration is the launching of satellites for the nations that do not have their own launch capability. Again, the United States of America, the Soviet Union and the European Space Agency have already launched international satellites. India also has successfully developed a space launch vehicle and is now working on more powerful launchers, including polar launch vehicles. Japan and China have already demonstrated that capability.

The United Nations can and should play a role in bringing together countries that want to launch their experimental satellites on concessional terms, if not free of charge, and the space countries.

Another suggestion my delegation would like to make is that the Outer Space Affairs Division may like to issue a regular newsletter, say, every six months. Such a newsletter could give the names and addresses of space organizations, their functionaries, the progress/programmes of work, offers of opportunities and so on, to all the Member States. In the opinion of my delegation, such a newsletter would go a long way in promoting bilateral and multilateral co-operation in the field of space science and technology among Member States.

Finally, my delegation wishes to state that, as is already well known, space technology has shrunk the world; equally it holds a vast potential to shrink the differences and strife among nations through the implementation of a vigorous international collaborative and co-operative programme under the aegis of the United Nations.

Mr. AUSSEIL (France)(interpretation from French): I should like to avail myself of the opportunity offered by the discussion of the reports of the two Sub-Committees to recall a number of proposals that have been put forward on several occasions by my delegation. Those proposals have as their objective adapting the methods of our Committee to facilitate progress in our work. I should like to recall them briefly.

(Mr. Ausseil, France)

First of all, there is a matter of co-ordinating the work of our two Sub-Committees so that they could give each other assistance, each in its own specialization, and therefore strengthen their action. In that connexion, we could envisage them meeting simultaneously or one immediately after the other.

Also, there is the question of doing away with the so-called general debate in the two Sub-Committees, since it takes up a great deal of time and, we feel, is a duplication of ours here. The large number of contributions which have enriched the debate we have had demonstrate that it is at our annual session that the general debate finds its proper place.

My delegation regrets that, after last year's successful procedure, we have gone back in our agenda to a successive discussion - which is in fact simultaneous - of our Sub-Committees' reports, instead of having an annotated agenda divided on a subject-by-subject basis that would have the benefit of clarity and would in fact reflect our work as it really is. That is why my delegation feels encouraged to make an attempt to see to it that good sense prevails in this matter.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the Secretary-General of the Second United Nations Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

Mr. YASH PAL, Secretary-General, Second United Nations Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space: I just wanted to supply a bit of information with regard to the statement of the representative of the Committee on Space Research. In his statement he mentioned the seminar in Ottawa for which United Nations Co-sponsorship has been requested. That has been discussed with Mr. Niemirowicz and, indeed, the United Nations space applications programme is going to co-operate with it and a programme is being worked out.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.