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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 16th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. IRUMBA (Uganda)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 61: INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (continued):

(a) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (A/36/20)

(b) REPORT OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE SECOND UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE EXPLORATION AND PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (A/36/46)

AGENDA ITEM 62: PREPARATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE USE BY STATES OF ARTIFICIAL EARTH SATELLITES FOR DIRECT TELEVISION BROADCASTING: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (A/36/20) (continued)

1. The CHAIRMAN announced that the list of speakers on items 61 and 62 would be closed at the end of the current meeting.

2. Mr. DJALAL (Indonesia), said that, despite the considerable amount allotted to them and the goodwill expressed by a majority of the members of the Committee, some issues had continued to evade. On the other hand, rapid technolgocial progress, which had outpaced the ability to establish a set of principles to govern activities in outer space created a situation which not only threatened the sovereignty of the developing countries but made the equitable sharing of the benefits of such activities more difficult. Attainment of the goal of establishing harmony among Member States for mutually beneficial co-operation in the peaceful use of outer space was hampered by the inflexible and selfish positions taken up by a few States that were dominant in that field. His delegation therefore wished to renew its appeal for a spirit of international co-operation which would contribute to the success of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE 82).

3. One of the items on which very little progress had been acheived was that of remote sensing. There were still obstacles in the way of reaching an agreement on the principles governing the legal implications of remote sensing and the dissemination of classification of data. The fundamental questions that still had to be solved related to the prior consent or notification of the sensed State, the prompt transfer of data to that State, and the requirement of consent from the sensed state before the dissemination of data to third parties. Those questions could be resolved only by respecting the sovereignty States and the needs of the developing countries.

4. Another point on which it had not been possible to reach agreement was the elaboration of principles governing the use by States of artificial satellites for international direct television broadcasting. There again, a genuine spirit of co-operation based on equality and respect for the sovereignty of States had been lacking. There had been no change in the position or on the inherent link between a

(Mr. Djalal, Indonesia)

definition or a delimitation of outer space activities and the questions of the geostationary orbit. Indonesia was opposed to any attempt to divide those two questions so as to define outer space at the expense of the geostationary orbit. It agreed with the proposal to discuss the question in its totality and with adequate time at the next session of the Legal Sub-Committee. Because the geostationary orbit was a limited natural resource, there must be precise international regulations, within a sui generis legal régime, which would safeguard the interests of all countries and recognize the special rights of the subjacent States.

5. His delegation was happy to note the progress made by the working groups of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and the Legal Sub-Committee with regard to the principles of international law relating to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space. In that connexion, he said that the working paper submitted by Canada, as amended in the discussions on the item, would help to achieve the objectives not only of the safety of nuclear power sources in outer space but of finding guarantees against nuclear contamination from re-entry vehicles.

6. As a developing country, Indonesia had participated in bilateral and international space programmes. He commended the programmes carried out by the United Nations Expert on Space Applications and proposed that they should be strengthened and that a new Expert should be appointed. Indonesia was committed to broadening its research and development activities in space science and technology to achieving its development goals, and it was convinced that the United Nations should be the co-ordinating body for all the multilateral programmes for the application of space technology to development. The Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space would provide an opportunity for developing countries that had space application programmes for development - as Indonesia had - to participate actively in strengthening the central role of the United Nations. For that reason, the Secretary-General should fill the posts that were still vacant in the Conference secretariat as soon as possible. For its part, Indonesia would be hosting a United Nations regional seminar on remote sensing and communication to be held in Jakarta the following month and it would participate in the outer space exhibition at United Nations Headquarters in May 1982. Turning to the use of outer space for military purposes, his delegation wished to stress the urgency of resuming negotiations immediately so as to prevent a dangerous arms race, this time in outer space.

7. Mr. ROCCA (Italy) said that Italy was firmly convinced of the need to enhance co-operation between States in order to give the maximum effectiveness to the activities aimed at the peaceful uses of outer space. The increasing participation of the United Nations and some of its specialized agencies in space application programmes was in itself a heartening trend.

8. At the regional level and in the framework of the European Space Agency, Italy had participated in the construction of the Ariane launcher and of the SPACELAB system, and also in a number of projects involving telecommunication, meteorological and remote-

(Mr. Rocca, Italy)

sensing satellites. On the national level, his country was promoting activities to improve the competitiveness of its aerospace industry. Thanks to the ITSAISAT project, is would be possible to evaluate the pre-operational effects of the introduction of a domestic satellite into the national telephone traffic and data transmission network.

9. Agreements had been signed with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration of the United States, in the context of the Space Shuttle Programme, for the study of the propulsion system IRIS and a tethered satellite system. IRIS would make possible the satellite transfer from the shuttle to higher orbits, while the tethered satellite system would open the way to experimentation on the megnetospheric, ionospheric and atmospheric coupling process in the 125 to 150 kilometre region of the lower thermosphere. Italy had been studying the technological applications of infrared and microwave sensors and undertaking pilot projects in agriculture and hydrogeology. The National Space Plan was fostering activities in co-operation with other countries related to geodynamics application, such as satellite laser ranging and radio-interpherometric techniques, which would make it possible to gain knowledge of techtonic phenomena from the geological and seismic point of view.

10. The Italian Government was ready to continue efforts towards finding generally acceptable solutions for the issues still pending in the elaboration of draft principles governing direct television broadcasting. The free flow of information and ideas, provided it was responsibly implemented, must be the cornerstone of the principles to be proposed to the General Assembly. The consultations on those principles must be based on close observance of the requirements set forth by the International Telecommunication Union. Italy believed that it would be inadvisable to impose upon States over-all rules of responsibility for direct broadcasts by satellite.

11. With regard to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space, a clear-cut legal régime must be established, as a matter of urgency, to supply all States with the necessary information on a timely basis and to provide them with the safeguards required in the event of accidental re-entry of space objects with nuclear power sources on board. It was essential to devise a set of rules more stringent than those contained in the 1967 and 1972 Conventions. The delegation of Italy believed in particular that nuclear power sources should be used in outer space only when they were irreplaceable, that prior notice of their use should be given with all pertinent information and that the responsibility régime must be strengthened.

12. With regard to remote sensing by satellite, efforts should be made to reconcile the views expressed and to agree on a common approach. Any measures adopted must be sufficiently flexible and pragmatic to preclude any hasty restrictions that might hamper or delay the beneficial applications of that technology and undermine the validity of the principle of the free flow of data and information gathered by remote sensing. In 1981, Italy had increased its financial contributions to the seminars on remote sensing applications organized by FAO for experts from developing countries.

(Mr. Rocca, Italy)

13. The Second United Nations Conference on The Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space would provide an opportunity for all States to re-enforce their determination to co-operate at the regional and global levels. It would also enable the international community to examine new methods of co-operation and to identify specific areas for action. In that connexion, the exchange of views between the Secretary-General of the Conference and the Italian space sector authorities been particularly interesting for both sides. He hoped that questions relating to the appointment of the officers of the Conference Secretariat and the Outer Space Affairs Division would be solved in the next few weeks.

14. The meeting was suspended at 3.55 p.m. and resumed at 4.45 p.m.

15. Mr. BETTENCOURT BUENO (Brazil) said that, for a vast and diverse country such as Brazil, space research could provide important additional information on communications, education, meteorology, natural resources, the transfer of technology and systems analysis. Under Brazil's national space programme, space technology had acquired considerable significance over the last few years; for example, Brazil was now planning the early launching of two satellites.

16. With regard to the issues under consideration by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, the delegation of Brazil welcomed the fact that the Committee, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 35/14, had resumed its consideration of questions relating to the remote sensing of the earth by satellite. It also welcomed the fact that progress was being made in the implementation of the United Nations programme on space applications, and that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had endorsed the programme for 1982 as proposed by the Expert on Space Applications in his report (A/AC.104/285).

17. With regard to the issues considered by the Committee through its Legal Sub-Committee, the agenda of the Sub-Committee contained several important items on which no solution had yet been reached. For almost a decade, the Legal Sub-Committee had attempted to comply with General Assembly resolution 2916 (XXVII), which stressed the need to elaborate draft principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting, with a view to the conclusion of an international agreement or agreements. However, in spite of the recommendations made by the General Assembly in a number of resolutions (3182 (XXVII), 3234 (XXIX), 3388 (XXX), 31/8, 32/196, 33/16, 34/66 and 35/14), the Sub-Committee had been unable to comply with those General Assembly directives.

18. One point of contention which had prevented consensus on a text was that some delegations considered that the prerequisite of prior agreement by the receiving State might imperil the "free flow of information". The delegation of Brazil, while supporting freedom of information, wished to stress that adherence to that principle should in no way prevent States from protecting their national security and their fundamental social, political and cultural values, as well as their economic interests, from unwelcome broadcasts of any kind. The flow of

(Mr. Bettencourt Bueno, Brazil)

information must be free and unchecked only insofar as it conformed both to international law and the principles of friendly co-operation among States, and enhanced international peace and security.

19. The absence of a consensus in the draft principles in the Legal Sub-Committee was not a valid argument for extending the process of negotiation ad infinitum. The direct broadcasting experiments now being conducted introduced an element of urgency into the deliberations. The Brazilian delegation hoped that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space would at its next session provide delegations with a fresh opportunity to finalize that important task. Should the impasse persist, the issue would be referred to the General Assembly for appropriate action at its thirty-seventh session.

20. A similar situation had arisen in the Legal Sub-Committee with respect to the formulation of draft principles concerning the legal implications of remote sensing of the earth from space. Some delegations were reluctant to accept the sovereign perogatives of States which sought adequate protection of their rights from potential abuse by the oligopoly of space technology; Brazil had already voiced its concern on that subject.

21. The benefits obtainable from remote sensing had scarcely been tapped, in spite of the vital importance of that technology for the sensed States. Under no circumstances should those States be denied access to such data, which should not be made available to third parties without the prior consent of the sensed State. The central obstacle to the establishment of principles to regulate remote sensing activities was the systematic and explicit refusal on the part of certain delegations to accept recognition of the sovereign rights of the States affected. Nonetheless, the delegation of Brazil continued to strive for the establishment of a set of principles based on the following considerations: all data obtained by remote sensing concerning the territory and natural resources of any State must be submitted for consideration by the sensed State, which had the right to decide whether the data could be disseminated; the definitions of "primary data" and "analysed information" could not serve as a basis for the delimitation of separate régimes for the purpose of data dissemination; additional in-depth studies were needed to evaluate the advisability of setting an arbitrary level for resolutions to serve as criteria for the dissemination of data; and all remote sensing activities must be carried out in a spirit of international co-operation, with special emphasis on the needs of the developing countries.

22. While it was self-evident that the basic instruments of international space law contained provisions applicable to the use of nuclear power sources, it was also true that the general nature of those instruments necessitated the elaboration of specific rules to make good any lacunae.

23. With regard to the definition and/or delimitation of outer space, Brazil held the view that the special régime established by the international instruments for activities in outer space called for a delimitation of the boundaries of outer space in relation to air space. That was all the more necessary in order to avoid conflicting views on the application of two distinct régimes.

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24. With respect to the utilization of the geostationary orbit, Brazil believed that it was a natural resource and that appropriate criteria must therefore be found to preserve access to orbital positions on an equitable basis. The interests of equatorial countries must also be taken into account.

25. The mounting evidence that new weapons systems were being developed with a view to stationing them in outer space, contrary to the spirit of the Outer Space Treaty of 1967, was a matter of great concern to Brazil. His delegation believed that immediate measures should be taken to preserve outer space as an area free from military activities, and that States with the ability to test and deploy such weapons should agree on a moratorium on military activities in outer space. At the same time, negotiations should be initiated within the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to include in the 1967 Outer Space Treaty provisions to make good that lacuna. With that aim, Brazil supported the elaboration of an additional protocol to the Treaty.

26. He co mended Professor Yash Pal, Secretary-General of UNISPACE II, for his efforts in the Preparatory Committee for the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to mobilize the necessary resources to attain the objectives set forth in General Assembly resolution 35/15.

27. Mr. THUNBORG (Sweden) said that space activities had become an important factor in everyday life. The present year had witnessed technological achievements such as the launching and landing of the United States Space Shuttle Orbiter Columbia, the Soviet Union's programme of manned space flights, the third launching of the European Space Agency (ESA) Ariane rocket and the launching of two Indian satellites. Space activities were also receiving increased attention in Sweden which had developed a small scientific research satellite. That satellite would be launched together with the SPOT remote sensing satellite in 1984. The Swedish Government had also decided to carry out a definition phase for a telecommunications satellite project in co-operation with Finland and Norway.

28. The danger that the arms race might be extended into outer space was causing concern in many countries. His delegation therefore considered that action should be taken to prevent outer space from becoming another battlefield, and to maintain it as an area of peaceful development and co-operation among nations; and Sweden urged the two major space Powers to resume their discussions on the prohibition of anti-satellite systems. The international community had a right and a responsibility to participate in the formulation of measures to prevent an arms race in outer space, because many countries were becoming increasingly dependent on space technology. His delegation had already referred to the USSR proposal on a treaty prohibiting the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space.

29. On the question of principles for direct television by satellite, although no final agreement had been reached, substantial progress had been made. At the end of the last session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space,

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the Swedish delegation had introduced a working paper (annex III to the Committee's report (A/36/20)) containing draft principles which took into account the discussions on direct television broadcasting. He was in favour of continuing negotiations on the question during the present session of the General Assembly, or in the Legal Sub-Committee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space Committee in 1982.

30. He trusted that the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space would stimulate international co-operation in the field of outer space, and would improve possibilities for all countries to make use of achievements in space technology. The Swedish national paper for the Conference emphasized that, to achieve the greatest possible effect, the use of space science and technology should be considered in the light of a country's general priorities and development objectives. Also, measures should be taken at the international level to enable a larger number of countries to share the benefits of space activities. The paper also discussed certain specific issues for which international solutions should be sought, and the organizational structure for different space applications.

31. He commended Professor Yash Pal, Secretary-General of the Conference, for the preparatory work accomplished, since the success of the Conference depended on adequate preparation. He looked forward to receiving the first draft of the final report, which was to be discussed at the next session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee; and he expressed his concern that the remaining posts in the Conference secretariat had not yet been filled.

32. For the Conference to become a success, it was important for the countries attending it to be well prepared. The Swedish Government had contributed $25,000 to the cost of the seminars to be organized for that purpose by the United Nations programme on space applications in different regions of the world.

33. His delegation attached great importance to a thorough study of all aspects, both technical and legal, of remote sensing satellites; and it considered that more attention should be given to the question of availability of data from the satellites. For that purpose, there was a need for international co-operation, so that data could be freely accessible to countries which did not possess their own satellite; and adequate assistance should be provided for the developing countries which lacked the capacity to interpret and make use of such data.

34. The use of nuclear power stations in outer space was an issue which concerned all countries, since it could result in radiation exposure of populations outside the coutry responsible for the activity. It was therefore essential for the activity to be carried out in accordance with internationally accepted rules. The Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee's Working Group on the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space had prepared a sound technical basis for safety regulations in that area. The aim of the Working Group should be to establish safety standards on the basis of the work carried out by the technical

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Working Group, as proposed in the paper submitted by Canada, which his delegation supported.

35. The general principles of the International Commission on Radiological Protection should be included in the safety provisions for nuclear power stations. It was also important for States to provide adequate information prior to launching, in view of the high risk of malfunction at the moment of launching and in the early stages of a mission. His delegation strongly supported the idea of pre-launch information and notification prior to re-entry, so that national authorities could take the necessary measures in case of accident.

36. Mr. NGUYEN (Viet Nam) said that the exploration of outer space had opened up wide vistas for earth and space research to meet the peaceful and practical requirements of mankind. At the same time, space exploration gave rise to new, urgent and complex problems which needed carefully-considered technical and legal solutions in order to ensure its full development. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had, since its creation, worked actively for the solution of the technical and legal problems resulting from advances in space science.

37. The international community was aware of the danger of the militarization of outer space, and in the past ten years it had made concerted efforts to ensure that outer space was used only for peaceful purposes. The time had come for the elaboration of rules prohibiting the deployment of any type of weapon in outer space. Press reports of Pentagon plans to establish military bases in outer space, equipped with anti-satellite mines and devices, were a matter of great concern. If those plans were carried out, the arms race in outer space would constitute a serious obstacle in relations between States and a grave threat to international peace and security.

38. In the face of that dangerous turn of events, the Soviet initiative for the conclusion of a treaty prohibiting the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space (A/36/192) satisfied an urgent need to prevent any attempt to militarize space or to transform it into the scene of an arms race and source of tension between States before it was too late.

39. With respect to remote sensing of the earth by satellite, the Vietnamese delegation was firmly convinced that it should be subject to strict respect for national security and to the principle of the sovereignty of each country over its natural resources. Consequently, it was essential to obtain the agreement of the sensed State before disseminating data relating to its territory. The sensed State must have free access to the data relating to its territory and such data could not be communicated to third States without its consent. Arbitrary control over the data obtained by remote sensing without the consent and agreement of the sensed State was a grave violation of that State's sovereignty.

(Mr. Nguyen, Viet Nam)

40. Another no less controversial question was that of direct television broadcasts. To solve that problem, it was necessary for all countries to agree to conclude an agreement which would preclude any external interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States. If that was done, direct television broadcasting would be prevented from becoming a source of conflicts and international disputes.

41. Everyone should respect the principle of the sovereignty and independence of States and the cultural heritage of peoples. No State had the right to broadcast to another State, against the latter's will, television programmes which were against the political, economic and cultural interests of that country. Such dangerous practices were often defended on the pretext of the free circulation of information and ideas, but fortunately, many States had shown that that kind of communication would be a disguised form of traditional neocolonialism.

42. Viet Nam had been studying the peaceful uses of outer space ever since 1962. With the aid of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, it had achieved some initial progress in that field. The Soviet-Vietnamese international space flight, with a Soviet and a Vietnamese cosmonaut on board the spaceship SOYUZ 36, had been completely successful. That had enabled Viet Nam to take part in preparing and carrying out a programme on fundamental scientific questions in space conditions, including studies of the earth's atmosphere, medical studies, prospecting for natural resources, and technological processes in outer space. Among the scientific experiments, he mentioned the one carried out with Azolla Pinnata, a kind of water plant used by Vietnamese farmers as an organic fertilizer for their rice fields. The plant had nutritional properties and, at the same time, the ability to fix free nitrogen from the air; since it was able to live and multiply rapidly under space conditions, it might be of value in future space flights. There had been notable advances in the scientific investigations of the matching of photographs taken in outer space with the MKP-6M multispectrum camera, in particular with the photographs taken for the exploration of natural resources, for geodesic studies and in other fields. The programme would represent a big step forward towards the development of Viet Nam's national economy and a modest contribution to the studies being carried out world-wide on the peaceful uses of outer space.

43. Viet Nam reaffirmed its support for the aims and activities of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and was confident that the different States and peoples of the world would co-operate at the Conference to realize noble aims and combat any attempt to use outer space or space science and technology for warlike purposes.

44. Mr. KOLOSSOV (Union of Soveit Socialist Republics) said that the use of outer space for peaceful purposes was proceding apace and that international

(Mr. Kolossov, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)

co-operation in that sphere was an essential aspect of relations between countries. The holding of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in Vienna in August 1982 would be an event of universal interest which would constitute an important new stimulus to international co-operation with regard both to scientific space research and to the practical applications of space science and technology.

45. The Soviet Union wished to emphasize that whatever kind of space activity was involved, it had to serve the interests of all mankind. That had been the Soviet position from the beginning, starting with the launching of the first SPUTNIK, on which occasion a solemn declaration was drawn up on that subject. Now, with the twenty-fifth anniversary of that first space success on 4 October 1982, the Soviet Union was maintaining the same position and would continue to do so in the future. In the period from 1978 to 1981, space flights had been carried out by Soviet satellites carrying Soviet cosmonauts and cosmonauts from nine other countries: Czechoslovakia, Poland, the German Democratic Republic, Bulgaria, Hungary, Viet Nam, Cuba, Mongolia and Romania. In addition, joint flights with cosmonauts from France and India were envisaged. Likewise, Soviet rockets had placed French, Swedish and Indian space vehicles in orbit. In addition, the Soviet Union had taken an active part in international organizations specializing in space technology and in those designed for the joint exploitation of space technology, among them INTERSPUTNIK and INMARSAT.

46. That trend in international co-operation could become even broader, especially if certain threats which were darkening the horizon could be eliminated: announcements that people wanted to make outer space into an arena for the arms race and a source of international conflict. In order to face up to that threat, the Soviet Union had submitted a document proposing the conclusion of a treaty prohibiting the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space. The Soviet delegation hoped all those who defended the ideals of guaranteeing the peaceful use of outer space ensuring that it should serve the peoples' development and the general progress of civilization would fully support the Soviet proposal.

47. A very important factor in international co-operation in the use of outer space was the formulation of rules of international space law which were based on principles serving the world's best interests and which would take into account the implications of every kind of space activity. International space law had to be organically linked with the base of a new international order, whose establishment merited the support of the socialist countries and the developing countries. The extent to which States could unite their efforts and their degree of unity in conquering space was currently quite high. However, there were still means which had not been explored and many more possibilities for broadening the scope of co-operation, on condition that the political obstacles could be removed. Thus, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space often met with difficulties arising from the policies of some of its member States which obviously rejected the idea of establishing a unified legal order and wished to apply the policy of fait accompli.

(Mr. Kolossov, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)

48. With regard to direct television broadcasting, it was necessary to respect the principle of the sovereignty of States and their legitimate right to regulate the dissemination of information in their own territory. Any other approach would be a serious attack on the spirit and the letter of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, article IX of which established that "States Parties ..., shall conduct all their activities in outer space...with due regard to the corresponding interests of all other States Parties to the Treaty." It would seem that some delegations did not wish measures to be adopted to prevent the indiscriminate use of broadcasting, so that they could continue to benefit from their big lead in that field and continue to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries. The Soviet delegation hoped that an unequivocal reply to those pretensions would be given in the General Assembly and that the measures required to prevent outer space being converted into a new source of political conflicts would be adopted.

49. There were certain ominous signs that private capitalist interests were penetrating outer space activities. If the capitalist monopolies and the transnational corporations were able to control outer space and the activities which were carried on there, the cause of international co-operation would be lost. It was alarming to hear certain delegations preach the need to incorporate space activities and technology in the so-called free market. It was doubtful that the majority of the members of the Committee would accept the principle that those who possessed space technology and the necessary capacity were entitled to profit from the possession and utilization of data on the resources of other States. The very different level of opportunites and capacities between the various States in that field should be kept in mind; there was an enourmous gap between them, and the only way of overcoming it was through principles and norms which guaranteed that the benefits received from the possession and use of the data obtained through space activities should not benefit a third party, but the States themselves where those resources were located.

50. At times it had been stated that the dissemination of data was not part of space activities as such and that space activities ceased the moment the earth stations received the primary data. That made an artifical distinction in global process which constituted a whole. Remote sensing was not an end in itself, but a means of receiving and using information on natural resources. In order to overcome those differences of opinion, it was necessary to formulate agreed principles governing space activities and outer space. Various international instruments frequently contained concepts dealing with outer space and space activities. There was a proposal formulated in 1979

(Mr. Kolossov, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)

which reflected the official postion of the Soviet Union at the eighteenth session of the Legal Sub-Committee. The need to define the concept of outer space on the basis of the criterion of altitude was a basic element in that proposal. After arriving at that definition, it would be possible to elaborate the remaining concepts concerning outer space activities. The use of nuclear energy sources in outer space, the elaboration of norms governing transportation through space, the rational utilization of space to place geostationary satellites in orbit and related questions were other topics whose legal aspects would have to be defined.

51. In general the Committee and its Sub-Committees still had a great deal of work before them. Under those conditions, it was surprising to hear certain delegations propose that the length of their sessions should be reduced from four to three weeks. That was unacceptable, particularly in view of the fact that it was necessary to finish the drafting of the report to be submitted at the Second United Nations Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and include the recommendations of the Committee in that report. His delegation hoped that the General Assembly would not only make a favourable evaluation of the activities of the Committee and its Sub-Committees, but would also take the necessary steps to enable them to continue to promote international co-operation in outer space and space activities.

52. Mr RAMZY (Egypt), referring to certain questions of particular importance for his country, said, in the first place, that remote sensing of the earth by satellites was an increasingly important activity for all countries, particularly developing countries. In spite of the difficulties encountered in the classification and dissemination of data obtained through remote sensing, it was hoped that those difficulties could be overcome without infringing the sovereignty of the sensed State. With regard to the establishment of new regional remote sensing centres and the strengthening of existing centres, the United Nations had an important role to play in the co-ordination of the activities of those centres and in co-operating closely with them, especially in the field of technical asssistance.

53. Secondly, in spite of the efforts made at the meetings of the Legal Sub-Committee and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, no agreement had been reached on the elaboration of draft principles governing the use by States of artifical earth satellites for direct television broadcasting and it was necessary to make one last attempt to overcome the differences in that area before the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

54. Thirdly, with respect to the role of the United Nations in international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space, he stressed that outer space was the common heritage of mankind. Article I of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space

(Mr. Ramzy, Egypt)

stated that "the exploration and use of outer space,...shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development, and shall be the province of all mankind." The international community was still in the early stages of the exploration of outer space and, for that reason, it was necessary to agree on a framework of co-operation between all States concerning the use of outer space, a framework which would eventually evolve into a régime governing the use of outer space for the benefit of all mankind. The United Nations had an essential role to play in that regard. Nevertheless, certain elements of that framework should be stressed: the use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes, access to information gathered from the use of outer space, and enhancing the national capacity of developing countries in the field of space technology. It was hoped that the Outer Space Affairs Division and, particularly, the space application programme would increase and diversify the scope of their activities. The list of activities prepared by the Expert on Space Applications (A/AC.105/285, paras. 47-51) was a good starting point. In that connexion, he emphasized the importance of appointing a new Expert on Space Applications as soon as possible, particularly in view of the fact that his work was highly relevant to the preparations for the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

55. It was of the utmost importance to increase the international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space and nothing could contribute more towards the achievement of that goal than the holding of the Conference, whose objective should be not only to ensure that developing countries received the benefits of space technology through the machinery for co-operation, but also to emphasize, through an intensive public information campaign, the value of space technology as an effective instrument in helping developing countries achieve their own economic development.

56. With regard to the preparations for the Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space his delegation expressed satisfaction at the progress achieved with respect to the procedural aspects of the Conference, but at the same time, disappointment over the fact that all the posts in the secretariat of the Conference had not yet been filled. He expressed the hope that the necessary appointments would be made as soon as possible.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.