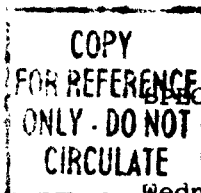




DEC 18 1984



SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
42nd meeting
held on
Wednesday, 28 November 1984
at 10.30 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 42nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. DIALLO (Guinea)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 72: INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE
(continued)

(a) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (continued)
(A/39/20)

(b) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SECOND UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE
ON THE EXPLORATION AND PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE: REPORT OF THE
SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/39/515)

1. Mr. CAPPAGLI (Argentina) said that he could not help but agree that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) was experiencing a profound crisis, which was reflected in the work of its two Sub-Committees. Indeed, no meaningful progress had been achieved on the extremely important items on its agenda. However, COPUOS had, in the past, given sufficient proof of its effectiveness, for example in elaborating five international agreements on the question of outer space. Apparently, the necessary political will of certain States was currently lacking. His delegation therefore agreed on the need to return to the rule of consensus in order to achieve progress. However, consensus required a spirit of compromise and co-operation which could not exist when the very future of COPUOS had been questioned.
2. The Group of 77 had given adequate proof of flexibility and had displayed a willingness to engage in dialogue. Indeed, for the developing countries international co-operation was essential in any space programme. Moreover, in accordance with the 1967 Outer Space Treaty international co-operation constituted a legal obligation and a prerequisite for conducting lawful activities in space.
3. The activities of States in outer space must be regulated by legal instruments, based on the Outer Space Treaty. Priority should be given to the elaboration of principles governing the remote sensing of the earth. The geostationary orbit should be studied more thoroughly with a view to establishing a régime governing its equitable use for the benefit of all States. The orbit must not be allowed to become saturated, since that would restrict access to a small number of technologically advanced countries. The delimitation of outer space was necessary in order to establish the specific scope of the relevant legal régime. Both Sub-Committees should continue to discuss the question of nuclear power sources in outer space with a view to the establishment of a legal régime specifying the full responsibility of nuclear-power-source users.
4. In line with its support for the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE 82, his Government had offered to host the first meeting of governmental experts, to be held in 1985, to examine the regional needs and capabilities in the field of space science and technology.

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(Mr. Cappagli, Argentina)

5. In conclusion, he expressed his Government's concern about the militarization of outer space. COPUOS should obviously deal with anything which might affect the peaceful uses of outer space. In addition, he expressed the hope that the recently announced Soviet-United States negotiations on a wide range of questions relating to nuclear and space weapons reflected a greater political willingness to take multilateral action in that regard. In his delegation's opinion, the recommendations of UNISPACE 82, General Assembly resolution 38/80 and the statement made on behalf of the Group of 77 at the twenty-seventh session of COPUOS (A/AC.105/L.150) constituted a valid point of departure for negotiations aimed at overcoming the current deadlock without jeopardizing the interests of the developing countries.

6. Mr. NOWAK (Poland) said that his country attached particular importance to peaceful co-operation in outer space and, despite its limited resources, had participated in space exploration, particularly in the framework of the INTERCOSMOS programme and through the development of highly specialized space instruments. Moreover, the activities of Polish institutions in space-related fields had already produced valuable results.

7. However, the threat of the militarization of outer space loomed over the future of space developments. An item on that subject had been included in the agenda of COPUOS in accordance with General Assembly resolution 38/80 and on the recommendation of the majority of States. His delegation shared the view that that problem should continue to be discussed at the next session of COPUOS, especially since no weapons had yet been deployed in outer space and since the situation was still reversible. However, the current "Star Wars" programmes had a destabilizing effect, and he pointed out that any policy aspiring to military superiority was both dangerous and illusory.

8. Accordingly, his delegation strongly supported the proposals made by the Soviet Union for the drafting of two treaties directed towards preventing the militarization of outer space as well as its request for the inclusion of an additional item concerning the exclusively peaceful uses of outer space in the agenda of the current session of the Assembly. To the same end, the Soviet Union had also proposed a general moratorium on the testing and deployment of weapons of any kind in outer space, pending the conclusion of the relevant international instruments.

9. Poland was willing to co-operate with the developing countries in the area of remote sensing, under the auspices of the United Nations, for example by providing training in the uses of remote sensing, by participating in the implementation of projects and by establishing resource inventories for them. His country would therefore welcome the speedy establishment of an interregional remote sensing training centre in Warsaw.

10. Legal instruments based on the 1967 Outer Space Treaty should be elaborated to govern outer space activities. The régime governing the dissemination of remote-sensing data should be based on objective criteria. The need for all

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(Mr. Nowak, Poland)

interested States to have free access to the data obtained did not preclude the need to protect the legitimate rights of sensed States over their territory. The dissemination of some data would require the prior consent of those States, and the sensing State should be held responsible for any damage it caused to a sensed State through the dissemination of such data.

11. The definition and delimitation of outer space were necessary in order to avoid any violation of State sovereignty, and the Soviet proposal on that issue would provide a suitable basis for the discussion of that sensitive matter. The geostationary orbit was inseparable from outer space as a whole and was therefore governed by the provisions of the 1967 Outer Space Treaty. The geostationary orbit was a limited natural resource, and States should have equal access to it, depending on their needs and on their technical capabilities. Moreover, a draft treaty on direct satellite broadcasting should be elaborated on the basis of General Assembly resolution 37/92. Accordingly, his delegation felt that the commendable work of COPUOS should be continued in future for the benefit of all mankind.

12. Mr. SCHOENHERR (German Democratic Republic) said that international co-operation was essential in order to ensure that outer space was used exclusively for peaceful purposes.

13. He congratulated a number of States on their recent achievements: the Soviet Union, on its 237-day space flight conducted with a view to the eventual establishment of permanently orbiting scientific complexes; India, on the participation of an Indian researcher in activities aboard the orbital station SALYUT 7; and the United States on its latest space activities. He also expressed the hope that those great capabilities would be used for the peaceful exploration of outer space and for the further development of international co-operation. In that connection, his delegation welcomed Poland's intention to establish an interregional training centre on remote sensing in Warsaw, and he expressed his country's readiness to co-operate in that undertaking.

14. Through its participation in the Soviet space programme and through the multi-faceted Soviet support it received, the German Democratic Republic knew that the Soviet space programme was directed towards the peaceful exploration of outer space and that the Soviet Union was doing its utmost to prevent the militarization of outer space. His country participated in the INTERCOSMOS programme, in particular through the development of high-precision instruments which were carried on interplanetary space probes and on the SALYUT 7 station. His country was also co-operating with Cuba in the exploration of the upper ionosphere.

15. Despite the positive results of such peaceful co-operation, there was a growing threat that the extension of the arms race into outer space would undermine the fundamental right of peoples to enjoy the peaceful use of outer space. That danger was evident in the accelerated development of anti-satellite systems, in the military use of space flights and in the establishment of installations to be used for military purposes in outer space or from space against the earth. A West

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(Mr. Schoenherr, German
Democratic Republic)

European magazine had recently quoted the leading proponents of "Star Wars" plans, who had stressed the need to strive for the capability to wage wars through the outer space system. In that connection, he drew attention to the call for the adoption of urgent measures to prevent the militarization of outer space, contained in the communiqué issued by the Meeting of Ministers and Heads of Delegation of the Non-Aligned Countries (A/39/560-S/16773, para. 10).

16. In line with the proposals which it had made in previous years and as a clear indication of its readiness to engage in the relevant negotiations, the Soviet Union had submitted a proposal on the peaceful uses of outer space to the current session of the Assembly. The adoption of the political, legal and material measures contained in those proposals would prevent the militarization of outer space and would bring about the destruction of a whole class of weapons, under reliable verification. Moreover, the appeal from the National INTERCOSMOS Committees, contained in document A/39/666, was directed towards the adoption of measures to ensure the exclusively peaceful use of outer space. The appeal also highlighted the responsibility incumbent on all delegations to spare no effort in order to achieve results.

17. Contrary to the assertion that COPUOS should not discuss the militarization of outer space, his country believed that, in view of the deterioration of the international situation, every possibility should be used in order to avert a nuclear disaster. Moreover, plans for the militarization of outer space endangered its peaceful use, and COPUOS could therefore make a constructive contribution. The fundamental norms of international law limiting the militarization of outer space had undeniably originated in COPUOS and, at its last session, the majority of delegations had considered it to be competent to consider that question.

18. His delegation agreed that COPUOS should expedite the elaboration of binding legal norms in significant areas, such as remote sensing, direct broadcasting, the delimitation of outer space and the geostationary orbit. In that connection, he drew attention to the influential opposition, which accused the United Nations of attempting to control space development and to confiscate space-related profits. However, that argument equated space development with the interests of the big monopolies and failed to mention the rights of States or of peoples. His delegation strongly rejected any attempt to make the profits of monopolies the yardstick for the work of COPUOS. The mandate of COPUOS and of its two Sub-Committees should be utilized fully and should not be undermined on any pretext. The work on the draft principles concerning remote sensing, on the definition and delimitation of outer space and on the geostationary orbit should be accelerated, and work on a convention on direct satellite broadcasting should be resumed.

19. Mr. MITAU (Kenya) said that, although Kenya was a developing country without the necessary resources or expertise, it was very interested in the use of space technology for national development and for the exploration of its natural resources. Kenya had consequently been involved in remote-sensing programmes and it urged the developed countries to continue to assist the developing countries in that regard.

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(Mr. Mitau, Kenya)

20. However, the sovereign rights of the sensed State must be fully respected in the application of remote-sensing technology, and no sensing should be carried out without the prior notification and the consent of the State concerned. Moreover, the sensed State should have direct access to all primary data concerning its territory and natural resources before such data were made available to other States, and then only with its consent.

21. Kenya believed in freedom of information, and direct broadcasting technology would help to increase the flow of information. However, that technology could be abused, for example to spread misinformation, thereby generating conflict, and such abuses must be prevented.

22. His delegation welcomed the establishment of the Working Group to examine the question of the definition and delimitation of outer space and the character of the geostationary orbit. Kenya, which was an equatorial State, considered that such States had a legitimate claim over the segment of the geostationary orbit located above their territories. While his country did not object to allowing other States to have access to the orbit, equatorial countries should be given special rights, and he suggested that the Working Group should take that position into account in drafting principles to govern the orbit. He drew attention to the fact that that concern had already been noted by the International Telecommunication Union at the Plenipotentiary Conference held in 1982 in Nairobi.

23. He stressed that outer space should be used only for peaceful purposes. Therefore, everything must be done to prevent an extension of the arms race into outer space, and international co-operation was essential in that regard.

24. Mr. McGRADY (Ireland), speaking on behalf of the 10 States members of the European Community, said that the exploration of outer space and the resultant rapid development in space science and technology had been of great practical benefit to mankind, especially in the fields of remote sensing and telecommunications. Future activities promised further practical benefits as well as major challenges. That rapid progress made it imperative that the present significant level of international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space should be further strengthened and enlarged to ensure that the considerable benefits could be shared by all countries. Such contribution to a significant improvement in the social and economic life of mankind could be secured only if the international community maintained its commitment to co-operation in that field. The outcome of UNISPACE 82 was a valuable contribution to such international co-operation, and the follow-up activities were of great significance for the legitimate interest of developing countries.

25. In addition to opening up extensive areas of benefit to mankind, the rapid development of space activities had also raised many difficult legal, scientific and technical problems. The States members of the Community agreed that the peaceful uses of outer space must be based on a legal order acceptable to the whole international community. They were also committed to the aim of preventing an arms race in outer space.

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(Mr. McGrady, Ireland)

26. They welcomed the achievements of COPUOS in co-ordinating international co-operation in outer space, promoting national policies and shaping international relations. The various legal instruments resulting from its work represented important progress and the spirit of co-operation, and the consensus approach which had so far guided that Committee's work must be continued if it was to be equally successful in the future.

27. That Committee's efforts to meet the aspirations of the international community to ensure the use of outer space for peaceful purposes for the benefit of all countries could be effective only if they were based on the consent of all member States. The Ten therefore strongly urged that the spirit of consensus should be restored. The Committee should focus not only on resolving differences in current outstanding problems but also on new areas of international co-operation with the potential to yield practical results for all States and in particular for developing countries.

28. Miss EMARA (Egypt) endorsed the appeal made by other delegations to all States to spare no effort to encourage the work of COPUOS and its two Sub-Committees and expressed her country's readiness to co-operate in order to promote the spirit of consensus in those bodies.

29. It was in the interest of the whole of mankind to promote the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes and to prevent any confrontation or arms race in that field. There was an obvious link between outer space and international peace and security. Bilateral, multilateral, regional, interregional and international co-operation in space technology must be encouraged in order to contribute to the social and economic progress of all nations, especially the developing nations.

30. Egypt participated in the work of COPUOS and its two Sub-Committees and regretted the lack of progress achieved due to divergences of views. It therefore appealed to all States to show a spirit of conciliation and co-operation in order to realize the hopes of all peoples.

31. Her delegation approved the recommendations of COPUOS, in particular the programme of activities for 1985, and reiterated the urgent need to implement fully the recommendations of UNISPACE 82, to which it hoped to see States contribute generously in cash and in kind. At the last session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, her delegation had supported the Nigerian proposal that additional funds from the regular budget of the United Nations should be allocated to financing the space programme.

32. Her delegation noted with satisfaction that in accordance with General Assembly resolution 38/80, the Group of Experts on remote sensing, the Group of Experts on the geostationary orbit and the Group of Experts on direct broadcasting satellites had carried out their tasks. Those three studies would stimulate the work of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee in 1985.

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(Miss Emara, Egypt)

33. The Egyptian delegation approved the programme of work proposed for the two Sub-Committees in the hope that it would be approached with the necessary spirit of conciliation.

34. Egypt had been among the first countries to demand the complete prohibition of the use of outer space for military ends. However, existing international agreements still did not prevent the militarization of outer space, and it was regrettable that it already existed, despite the sincere efforts made to prevent it. That question was a source of serious concern, not only for Egypt but also for all mankind.

35. Egypt and Sri Lanka had sponsored General Assembly resolution 38/70 which reiterated that the Conference on Disarmament had a primary role in the negotiation of an agreement or agreements on the prevention of an arms race in all its aspects in outer space. Those two countries, with others, had also been sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/39/L.37/Rev.2, which contained similar provisions and had just been adopted by the First Committee.

36. Egypt, as a member of the Group of 77, had also sponsored the amendment which had been the basis of paragraph 15 of General Assembly resolution 38/80, which requested COPUOS to consider as a matter of priority questions relating to the militarization of outer space, taking into account the mandate given to the Committee on Disarmament and the need to co-ordinate the efforts of those two committees, which were complementary. It was impossible to prevent COPUOS from expressing its opinion on all matters connected with outer space. It was to be hoped that the Conference on Disarmament would start negotiations aimed at agreement on that matter as soon as possible.

37. Mr. SORZANO (United States of America) said that his delegation approached the discussion of the current agenda item with a mixture of anticipation and concern. On the one hand, there were dramatic new opportunities in the peaceful uses of outer space. The United States was resolved to expand its already extensive collaboration with other Governments in promoting the peaceful exploration and use of outer space for the benefit of all nations. For the past 25 years, his country had given freely of its knowledge and resources to make the results available to all nations. That record was a substantial contrast to the closed nature of the space programmes of other nations with comparable technical means.

38. On the other hand, it was greatly concerned about the future ability of the United Nations to play an effective role in promoting international co-operation in outer space activities. The focal point for United Nations activities, COPUOS, currently faced a crisis threatening its future effectiveness. The thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly had already disregarded two decades of tradition based on the consensus principle by adopting resolution 37/92 by vote, even though a number of countries, including his own, had had serious objections to it. In 1983, the General Assembly had again adopted resolution 38/80 by vote. The United States and other Governments had objected, inter alia, to directing COPUOS to take up, as a priority, disarmament matters relating to outer space and directing the

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(Mr. Sorzano, United States)

Legal Sub-Committee to negotiate new legal principles to governing the geostationary satellite orbit, taking into account the need for a definition or delimitation of outer space.

39. The United States and other countries considered that, in the absence of a firm commitment to the principle of consensus, the work of COPUOS would become increasingly difficult and polemical. Other countries believed that the principle of consensus had become an impediment to further substantive progress. However, the commitment to harmonize the diverse interests of all guaranteed that the eventually negotiated results would be not only accepted but also implemented by all. The principle of consensus required a recognition that it embodied not only a commitment to achieve progress in those areas where agreement was possible but also a commitment to avoid confrontation in areas where fundamental differences existed.

40. His country's mounting doubts regarding the future of COPUOS also concerned the Committee's recent tendency to involve itself in disarmament and other matters outside its competence. That trend was largely accountable for the sterile environment recently plaguing the Committee, which was also conducive to the use of political approaches to technically complex, scientific and legal issues in the areas where the Committee did have competence.

41. There had been a growing deterioration in the Committee's scientific and technical work, which had been the principle focus envisaged in its terms of reference set forth in General Assembly resolutions 1348 (XIII) and 1472 (XIV). In the provisional schedule of work for the Committee's thirty-seventh session, the time allotted for consideration of scientific and technical matters had been reduced by 40 per cent, as compared with the past session, while disarmament had provided the principal focus of its agenda.

42. Yet there was no scarcity of multilateral forums where disarmament matters could be and were appropriately discussed. When COPUOS had first been established by the General Assembly in 1958, there had been a clear understanding that it would have no role to play in disarmament. The United States proposal had been to include in the agenda of the thirteenth session of the General Assembly an item entitled "Programme for international co-operation in the field of outer space", and the explanatory memorandum accompanying that proposal had stressed the potential uses of outer space for peaceful purposes and had referred to parallel efforts to conclude agreements on the disarmament aspect of outer space. The General Assembly had established an ad hoc Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in resolution 1348 (XIII) and had made that Committee permanent in resolution 1472 (XIV). That Committee, which had had a membership of 53 countries, had been given the mandate to discuss the state of the art and future developments in the peaceful uses of outer space, to review international co-operation in that area and to study practical and feasible means for achieving and pursuing programmes to promote such co-operation, as well as to study the legal problems that might arise from the exploration and uses of outer space and to organize the exchange and dissemination of information relating to space activities.

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(Mr. Sorzano, United States)

43. Over the years, COPUOS had carried out scientific, technical, economic and social studies, promoted the orderly growth of co-operative space activities, particularly by drafting and concluding international treaties covering a number of vital issues and had given impetus to an international education and training programme by establishing and guiding the United Nations Programme on Space Applications. That record, of which all could be proud, made it all the more regrettable that the Committee's ability to function constructively was in serious doubt. If those doubts were not dispelled, the role of the United Nations in promoting international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space would be diminished. That was regrettable, particularly because of the constructive ideas put forward by the Chairman of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee.

44. The United States was prepared to consider any reasonable proposal to make COPUOS function effectively once again in the interests of all nations. Without its exclusive dedication to the peaceful uses of outer space, however, and the removal of disarmament from its agenda, that would not be possible. Disarmament agreements could not be achieved, nor would the prospects for disarmament co-operation be improved, by simply adding another multilateral disarmament forum. On the other hand, co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space could be expanded by reinvigorating the principles of consensus in COPUOS. He hoped that, after due consideration, other delegations would come to the same conclusion.

45. Mr. ASLING (Sweden) said that international co-operation was the cornerstone of his country's outer space activities. Sweden had benefited greatly through its membership in a number of international organizations and through bilateral co-operation in various satellite projects. The United Nations and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had a special role in enabling all countries, regardless of their level of development, to enjoy the benefits of space science and technology. The fact that COPUOS was facing grave difficulties was cause for a serious concern. In the past, it had made much progress because it had functioned on the basis of consensus. Efforts should be made at the current session of the General Assembly, therefore, to return to the spirit of conciliation and co-operation which had proved so effective in the past. COPUOS was particularly useful to small countries because it was a forum in which they could make their views known to the more powerful States.

46. The militarization of outer space must be considered in the general context of disarmament. His country firmly supported General Assembly resolution 38/70, which reiterated that the Conference on Disarmament, as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, had a primary role in the negotiation of an agreement on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. He stressed the need to respect the role of the Conference in that regard because a proliferation of disarmament forums would only impede progress and further complicate matters.

47. His delegation would welcome efforts by the Soviet Union and the United States to initiate serious bilateral talks on matters relating to an arms race in outer space. Such talks would facilitate the work of the Conference on Disarmament, particularly with regard to a ban on anti-satellite weapons. Moreover, the

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(Mr. Asling, Sweden)

concerns of the entire international community could be addressed only through multilateral negotiations in the Conference. The development and deployment of anti-satellite systems would create a dangerously unstable situation and further impede the development of peaceful space activities. He, therefore, called upon the Conference on Disarmament to take immediate action to ensure that outer space remained an area of peace and co-operation.

48. All countries should have equitable access to the geostationary orbit. The International Telecommunication Union was the appropriate form for considering the questions regarding the use of radio frequencies and problems of interference. He expressed the hope that the ITU World Administrative Radio Conference on the use of the geostationary satellite orbit would be able to work out a system which would meet the needs of all countries. It was regrettable that the General Assembly at its last session had not recognized the important role of ITU. His delegation looked forward to studying the report of the Working Group set up to consider matters relating to the geostationary orbit. Progress on that question could only be made on the basis of a generally agreed mandate. The work of COPUOS in that connection must be carried out in full respect for the role of ITU.

49. His delegation looked forward to the results of the three studies to be carried out relating to remote sensing by satellites, direct broadcasting satellites and the geostationary orbit. The slow pace of the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE 82 was somewhat disappointing. The implementation of those recommendations depended largely on the availability of voluntary financial contributions. His delegation urged all countries which had not done so to make such contributions in the near future.

50. The slow progress made by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee with regard to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space was regrettable. It was hoped that the Working Group dealing with that question would be able to reach agreement in 1985 on some recommendations of substance. The Legal Sub-Committee had made no progress on that question. Internationally accepted safety regulations governing the use of nuclear power sources in outer space must be adopted speedily. The Legal Sub-Committee should continue to draft principles on that subject. That task would not be difficult if all sides were willing to accept international supervision of activities which might prove harmful. The Legal Sub-Committee should give priority to consideration of that question. Furthermore, the title of that item should be changed to reflect the recommendation of COPUOS endorsed by the General Assembly at its last session that the task of that Sub-Committee should be to elaborate principles for the use of nuclear power sources in outer space.

51. The participation of technical experts would improve the work of COPUOS and the two Sub-Committees. His delegation supported the general thrust of the proposals made by the delegation of Australia in that regard and welcomed the general exchange of views on how to enhance the work of COPUOS.

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52. Mr. KOLOSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the political, economic, legal, scientific, technical and social problems related to international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space must be considered as an interrelated whole. In recent years, the Soviet Union had set forth a series of large-scale initiatives in the United Nations aimed at the exclusion of war preparations from outer space. Work carried out by the Soviet Union in the exploration and use of outer space was directed towards solving basic scientific and economic problems. That work was conducted both in accordance with the Soviet Union's national programme and on the basis of international agreements.

53. The Soviet crew on board the SALYUT 7/SOYUZ research orbital station had recently completed a record-breaking 237-day mission. The crew had conducted research and experiments in the further use of similar stations. The USSR took an active part in the co-operative programme of 10 socialist countries known as INTERCOSMOS. The development and refinement of the Intersputnik system was continuing. Intersputnik had international agreements with CMEA, OIRT, ITU and INMARSAT. Preparations were currently under way for the possible launching of second generation INMARSAT satellites by Soviet launchers.

54. The Soviet Union continued to co-operate with the United States, Canada, France and a number of other countries in the international COSPAS-SARSAT satellite system for locating ships and aircraft in distress. The USSR Academy of Sciences took part in the annual congresses of the International Astronautical Federation and Soviet jurists participated in the annual colloquia of the International Institute of Space Law. In 1984 the first Indian cosmonaut had participated as a member of the international crew on board the Soviet SALYUT 7 research station. The USSR was further developing its bilateral co-operation in space research with all the socialist countries and with India, France, Sweden, Austria, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands and other countries.

55. The Soviet Union attached great importance to co-operation within the framework of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which should remain the focal point for promoting co-operation among States and setting forth legal norms governing relations in outer space.

56. Under the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, his country had hosted an international training seminar for developing countries on remote sensing applications to forestry. Preparations were under way for hosting a similar training course on space telecommunications. The Soviet Government would continue to sponsor such seminars every two or three years. As of 1984, the USSR was offering 10 scholarships annually in order to train nationals from developing countries in the field of space geodesy. The Soviet Union, therefore, was playing an active role in implementing article 1 of the Outer Space Treaty of 1967.

57. The militarization of outer space represented a very serious threat to peaceful co-operation in outer space. Certain circles were turning the idea of "Star Wars" into a strategic concept. Big business was already calculating the profits which it would derive from supplying military space hardware. The plans to achieve military superiority in outer space were illusory and adventuristic. The

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(Mr. Kolosov, USSR)

Soviet Union had the necessary means to prevent the disruption of the approximate military strategic balance which currently existed. Soviet leaders had repeatedly stressed the need to undertake concerted efforts within the United Nations to prevent the extension of an arms race to outer space. The Soviet Government had transmitted an official statement to the Government of the United States drawing attention to the need for urgent measures to prevent the militarization of outer space. In its reply, the United States had invited the Soviet Union to work out rules governing an arms race in outer space, which would amount to legalizing it. That was totally unacceptable.

58. The Soviet Union consistently strove to ensure peace in outer space and had made specific proposals in that regard. At the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly it had proposed the conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from space against the Earth. Parties to the treaty would be obligated not to test or create new anti-satellite systems and to destroy any anti-satellite systems which they might already have. At the current session of the General Assembly, his Government had submitted draft resolution A/C.1/39/L.1 calling upon all States to take urgent measures to prohibit for all times the use of force in outer space and from outer space against Earth as well as from Earth against objects in outer space and to ban and eliminate space attack systems.

59. At its next session, COPUOS could elaborate similar general provisions regarding the total inadmissibility of the use of force in outer space or from space against the Earth. The Soviet draft treaty provided for a combination of political and legal obligations by States to prevent the use of force against one another in outer space and from outer space as well as measures of a material nature to prevent the militarization of outer space. The Conference on Disarmament could take up the questions of a material nature and COPUOS could examine the question of political and legal obligations. Such obligations could comprise an additional protocol to the Outer Space Treaty of 1967. That could still be done before the militarization of outer space had become irreversible. The Special Political Committee should instruct COPUOS to proceed, within its mandate as defined in General Assembly resolution 38/80, to draft in 1985 such an additional protocol to the Outer Space Treaty of 1967.

60. The elaboration of the principles on remote sensing of the Earth from outer space had reached a stage where it was possible to set specific dates for the Legal Sub-Committee to complete that important work. One problem remained to be solved - determining whether dissemination of data and information collected through remote sensing of foreign territory should be limited or whether States and private corporations should be given a free hand in that respect. His Government reiterated its position that such activities should be limited. States whose satellites were used for remote sensing should assume international responsibility for disseminating remote sensing data which was damaging to States. That was in conformity with the principle of respect for State sovereignty. The Working Group on matters relating to the definition and delimitation of outer space and to the character and utilization of the geostationary orbit should continue its work. The

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(Mr. Kolosov, USSR)

Legal Sub-Committee should do everything possible to find generally acceptable solutions to those problems without infringing on the competence of ITU. The Soviet Union would continue to support the efforts of COPUOS to find a comprehensive solution to the pressing problems of international co-operation in outer space.

61. Mr. ESCHERIKH (Tunisia) said that, by adopting the recommendations of UNISPACE 82, defining its objectives and determining priorities, the international community had already shown the great importance which it attached to the peaceful use of outer space for the benefit of all mankind. It had also expressed its concern at certain aspects of the use of outer space.

62. In view of the vast potential of the use of space technology and its impact on economic and social development, it was logical that countries should be concerned about all aspects of the question. In a world where even the most sophisticated technology became out-of-date before it had become widely known, it was essential to define the rights and duties of all concerned. Ignorance of rights, especially if they had economic implications, was a source of conflict. His delegation fully appreciated the difficulties encountered by the members of the Legal Sub-Committee, especially since their work was inevitably affected by the crisis in East-West relations.

63. What concerned his delegation most was the statement by some countries which wanted to postpone work on that important aspect of the question, perhaps in order to obtain the exclusive rights to the peaceful use of outer space. The work of establishing legal principles was always a laborious process but an essential one.

64. When the General Assembly, in resolution 38/80, had requested COPUOS to consider, as a matter of priority, the arms race in outer space, it had certainly expressed the unanimous concern of UNISPACE 82. It could not ignore the growing concern of all its members. A nuclear conflagration had so far been avoided because of the balance of strength between the great Powers. However, when one of them possessed, or thought it possessed, the means of neutralizing the nuclear devices of the other, the possibility of a conflict which would mean the end of mankind became much closer. The militarization of space might lead to such an end. It was an exaggeration to consider the involvement of COPUOS in the control of the arms race in outer space as an error. The news that the Geneva negotiations were to be resumed in January 1985 gave cause to hope that Geneva might take over that responsibility from Vienna and enable COPUOS to concentrate on the work for which it had been established. Although the discussion was the primary responsibility of the Conference on Disarmament and depended on the will of the great Powers to attain that end, the international community should not be prevented from contributing to the search for a solution and should be kept informed of what might determine the fate of future generations.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.