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**FIRST COMMITTEE 985th
MEETING**

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Chairman: Mr. Miguel Rafael URQUIA (El Salvador).

AGENDA ITEM 60

Question of the peaceful use of outer space (A/3818 and Corr.1, A/3902, A/C.1/L.219, A/C.1/L.220) (*continued*):

(a) The banning of the use of cosmic space for military purposes, the elimination of foreign military bases on the territories of other countries and international co-operation in the study of cosmic space;

(b) Programme for international co-operation in the field of outer space

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. AMADEO (Argentina) was glad that the question of outer space had been included in the Committee's agenda. In spite of the fact that very few countries were in a position to explore cosmic space, the question concerned the whole international community. Consideration of the question by the General Assembly was therefore timely. The difficulties raised by that question were so complex, however, that it seemed indispensable to establish a special body to study them and to propose solutions to the General Assembly at its fourteenth session. In the meantime, to adopt a position in advance would amount to prejudging that body's conclusions.

2. His delegation considered that it was necessary to make a clear distinction between the peaceful use of cosmic space and the question of disarmament, so as to separate political questions from matters of a technical, cultural or scientific nature. That was why it could not support the Soviet Union draft resolution (A/C.1/L.219), which again raised questions connected with disarmament.

3. It would, however, support the twenty-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.220), which dealt with the question of the peaceful use of outer space quite apart from current political tensions. From that point of view, the draft resolution was in keeping with the spirit of the International Geophysical Year, which provided an

example of the possibilities for co-operation in such matters between countries separated by deep ideological differences. The draft resolution consequently merited the support of all Members of the General Assembly and particularly those which by their unceasing efforts had made possible the present consideration of the question.

4. A tribute should certainly be paid to the countries which had taken the initiative in exploring outer space, but their privileged position could not in any circumstances prejudice the legitimate right of other States to use outer space. It followed that, without prejudging the legal status of outer space, the Assembly should affirm at once that all States had absolutely equal rights with regard to the use of outer space. He was grateful to the sponsors of the twenty-Power draft resolution—and particularly to the United States representative—for having, on the whole, taken into account the concern originally expressed by the representatives of Brazil and Argentina and shared by the delegations of other Latin-American countries.

5. His delegation agreed that the *ad hoc* committee proposed by the twenty Powers should not have too many members, but was of the opinion that that body should not be composed solely of the countries most advanced in astronautics; there should also be room in it for some countries representing those which were not yet in a position to explore outer space.

6. His delegation interpreted operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution not only as meaning that the committee would avail itself of the help of such experts and private organizations as it might wish to consult, but above all that it would be invited to seek the very useful collaboration of existing bodies.

7. His delegation considered that the "international centre for outer-space research and experiments" proposed by the Italian representative at the 982nd meeting would be a useful by-product of the General Assembly's discussions and that no better choice could be made for the headquarters of that body than the capital of Italy.

8. Mr. WEI (China) noted that, although the two new fields of exploration which science had penetrated, the atomic world and outer space, offered to some an opportunity to acquire new knowledge of great importance and to others the prospect of improving the life of mankind, they were full of promise and danger for every man and nation of the world. Only effective international co-operation could save the human race from annihilation and enable it to enjoy the fruits of science.

9. Since the creation of the United Nations, the danger of atomic weapons had grown steadily, in spite of the General Assembly's resolutions and the establishment of the International Atomic Energy Agency in pursuance of the programme called "Atoms for peace", and as had

happened in the case of stocks of fissionable materials, in a few years it might be impossible to draw up any inventory of modern weapons which made use of outer space for their delivery. With regard to outer space, the situation today was the same as it had been in 1953 for atomic energy. His delegation supported the twenty-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.220), which it thought might be entitled "Space for peace".

10. The exploration and use of outer space constituted an undertaking with important consequences. A broad space programme would give impact to fundamental and applied research in many fields of science and engineering. Scientists from many countries would certainly want to participate in the great task. Inasmuch as few countries could afford to sponsor a major space project, opportunities should be given to competent scientists of small nations to give their assistance. His delegation was of the opinion that the exchange of scientific personnel might start before the proposed ad hoc committee had submitted its report.

11. He agreed with those who thought that the juridical aspects of the question should be left to the ad hoc committee, and he would therefore refrain from stating the views of his delegation on those matters. He did, however, wish to make an earnest appeal on three important points to all members of the Committee, and especially to the Governments of those countries which were conducting or intending to conduct scientific space experiments.

12. First, it was essential to safeguard celestial bodies for the sake of science. There was a general interest in the question whether there was any form of living organism on the planets. Unless proper precautions were taken, a probe might inadvertently introduce some living organisms from the earth into

the planets. Such an accident might cause irreparable damage.

13. Secondly, while some secrecy was bound to exist in military and industrial matters, there should be none in international scientific co-operation. At the Second International Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy, held at Geneva from 1 to 13 September 1958, all representatives had greatly appreciated the frankness with which the "nuclear Powers" had reported their efforts to achieve nuclear fusion.

14. With regard to outer space, the situation was unfortunately different. He quoted an article from The New York Times of 6 October 1957, according to which five days before the launching of the first sputnik on 4 October 1957 by the USSR, three Soviet scientists participating at Washington in an exchange of views among scientists sent by a dozen nations in connexion with the International Geophysical Year had refused to give any relevant details of the Soviet satellite to be launched or any indication of the date of its launching.

15. Thirdly, the space-nuclear age would demand one open world for all mankind. According to present scientific forecasts, it would be possible in a few years to install telescopes and television instruments on artificial satellites and full information on the universe would thus become available to man. Such scientific progress would also permit an aerial inspection of the earth's surface, which would automatically put into effect President Eisenhower's "open-skies" plan. He expressed the hope that such technical advances would help break the deadlock over disarmament.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.