United Nations
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
THIRTY-FOURTH SESSION
Official Records*

SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
15th meeting
held on
Monday, 29 October 1979
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 15th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. EL-CHOUFI (Syrian Arab Republic)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 48: INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE

AGENDA ITEM 49: PREPARATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE USE BY STATES OF ARTIFICIAL EARTH SATELLITES FOR DIRECT TELEVISION BROADCASTING

Distr. GENERAL
A/SPC/34/SR.15
31 October 1979

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 48: INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE

AGENDA ITEM 49: PREPARATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE USE BY STATES OF ARTIFICIAL EARTH SATELLITES FOR DIRECT TELEVISION BROADCASTING (A/34/20)

1. The CHAIRMAN said that the United Nations shared responsibility for the progress being made in the peaceful uses of outer space. Astounding advances had been achieved since the launching of Sputnik in October 1957. In 1979, the world was celebrating the tenth anniversary of man's first step upon the moon, and plans were continuing for providing even greater benefits to mankind through the peaceful utilization of outer space. The conversion of solar energy for use as a viable power source and the establishment of manufacturing centres in space were two of the creative ideas approaching practical fruition; indeed, space scientists and technicians had only now begun to examine the possible future benefits of outer space. However, scientists and technicians could not ensure that all nations received a fair share of the advantages to be reaped from their efforts that was the task of the whole international community.

2. Through its Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the United Nations had frequently taken the initiative in promoting the expanded use of space technology for the benefit of all nations. The draft agreement governing the activities of States on the moon and other celestial bodies, together with the agreements elaborated during previous years, provided ample proof of the Committee's commitment to safeguarding the equitable distribution of the advantages provided by man's scientific and technical achievements in outer space. The United Nations Space Applications Programme, established in 1969, was designed to promote international co-operation through the exchange of up-to-date technology and information. The report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (A/34/20) reflected the activities of the Programme and of the Committee as a whole during the year.

3. Mr. JANKOWITSCH (Austria), Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, introducing the report of the Committee (A/34/20), said that significant progress had been achieved during the year. In a relatively short period of time, the Committee had been able to draft four important international treaties which had been adopted by the General Assembly and had already come into force with the ratification and accession of a large number of Member States. The Committee had also concluded the draft of a new international agreement concerning the activities of States on the moon and other celestial bodies, and work on two other international instruments was at an advanced stage of preparation.

4. The Committee had organized an international conference on the peaceful uses of outer space in Vienna in 1968; as a result, it had established a modest but effective United Nations programme on space applications for the benefit of developing countries. During 1979, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 33/16,

the Committee had worked out detailed arrangements for the second United Nations Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, to be held in the latter half of 1982.

5. The work of the Committee was based on the results achieved by its subsidiary bodies, the Legal Sub-Committee and the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, both of which had done extensive work in their fields during the year. In resolution 33/16, the General Assembly had called upon the Committee to give priority consideration to three items within the area of responsibility of the Legal Sub-Committee: the elaboration of principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting, the legal implications of remote sensing of the earth from space, and the draft treaty relating to the moon. The draft treaty had already been on the agenda of the Committee for nearly eight years but had not been finalized earlier because of outstanding issues concerning the legal régime governing the natural resources of the moon. However, it had now been finalized, and the text of the draft agreement governing the activities of States on the moon and other celestial bodies was contained in annex II of the Committee's report. The new draft agreement provided for the establishment of an international régime for the exploration of the resources of the moon - which were regarded as the common heritage of mankind - when such exploration became feasible. It established the principle that the exploration and use of the moon should be the province of all mankind and should be carried out for the benefit of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic and scientific development. Equally important was the principle established by the agreement that the moon should be used by all States for peaceful purposes only. The agreement prohibited the establishment of military bases, installations and fortifications the testing of any type of weapon and the conduct of military manoeuvres on the moon. Its provisions would also apply to other celestial bodies within the solar system other than the earth. The draft agreement was a further important step in the progressive development of international space law.

6. A draft text of a complete set of principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting had been worked out, but no final agreement had been possible. The main point of contention lay in the differing positions held with regard to freedom of information and the sovereignty of States. On that issue, the position of various members remained unaltered, and it was likely that a consensus could only be achieved through delicate political compromise. An important proposal by Canada and Sweden had sought to resolve the outstanding issues, but the disagreement had persisted. The Committee had, however, recommended that the Legal Sub-Committee should continue at its next session, as a matter of priority, its efforts to finalize the principles in accordance with the General Assembly resolutions relating to the item.

7. With regard to the consideration of the legal implications of remote sensing of the earth from space, the text of 17 draft principles had been formulated,

(Mr. Jankovitsch, Austria)

although some of them remained within square brackets. All the easily reconcilable issues had already been resolved. The complex issues which still awaited a solution had to do with the concepts of freedom of State activity in outer space, freedom of dissemination of remote sensing information, and the sovereignty of States over their natural resources and information. Further negotiations were required on those issues, and the Committee had therefore recommended that the Legal Sub-Committee should, as a matter of priority, consider them further at its next session.

8. The final item on the agenda of the Legal Sub-Committee related to the definition and/or delimitation of outer space and outer space activities, bearing in mind, inter alia, questions relating to the geostationary orbit. The various views expressed during discussion of that item were reflected in the reports of the Sub-Committee and the main Committee. A proposal had been made by the USSR to establish a boundary between outer space and air space at an altitude not higher than 100-110 kilometres above sea level. The proposal had been supported by some delegations, while others had expressed reservations with regard to the need for a specific boundary. The Legal Sub-Committee had been requested to consider the item again at its next session.

9. One of the most important issues dealt with by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee had been the preparations relating to the United Nations Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The main Committee had acted as the Preparatory Committee for the Conference and the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee as the Advisory Committee to the Preparatory Committee. Having considered the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, the Preparatory Committee had made detailed recommendations concerning the preparation of the Conference, which were contained in paragraphs 84-115 of the Committee's report (A/34/20). The first United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had been held in Vienna in 1968, and there had been rapid progress since then in space exploration and the development of space technology and its applications. There was a need, in the Committee's view, to review those developments, exchange information and experience on their actual and potential impact, and assess the effectiveness of institutional and co-operative means of realizing the benefits of space technology. The Committee had concluded that the second United Nations Conference should contribute to the orderly growth of space activities favourable to the socio-economic advancement of mankind, and especially of the peoples of the developing countries, and should also foster an improved co-ordinating role for the United Nations, which was eminently suited to achieve international co-operation with the developing countries in that field.

10. The Committee had made specific recommendations concerning the title, agenda, preparation, organization, bureau and secretariat of the Conference as well as the cost ceiling. It had been agreed that the Conference should be held in the second half of 1982. If the recommendations were adopted by the General Assembly, the Preparatory Committee would continue to make final preparations. The Committee had received an invitation from the Government of the USSR to hold the Conference in Moscow, but it had been agreed that the matter should be held over for a recommendation of the Committee to the General Assembly at the latter's thirty-fifth session.

(Mr. Jankovitsch, Austria)

11. The Committee and its Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee had again considered activities relating to remote sensing of the earth by satellites, including the current pre-operational-experimental phase of remote sensing and possible future remote sensing systems. A proposal for classifying remote sensing data had been discussed, but there had been no consensus on the need for such classification, and the Secretariat had therefore been requested to prepare further studies for consideration in 1980. The Committee had endorsed the view of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee that remote sensing from outer space should be carried out with the greatest possible international co-operation and participation. It had been recognized that assistance should be given to developing countries and that the United Nations, through its Space Applications Programme and the remote sensing centres of FAO, CNRET and other agencies, could play an important role in providing adequate educational and training facilities, particularly to the developing countries.

12. The Committee had approved the 1980 Space Applications Programme, which called for holding further panels, seminars and workshops under United Nations sponsorship for the training of personnel in the various applications of space technology, together with other activities for the dissemination of information to developing countries. The Committee had endorsed the financial implications of the Programme, but the view had been expressed that the latter should be extended in content and scope in order to be of greater value to the developing countries. The Governments of Nigeria, Syria, Argentina, Italy, Costa Rica, Greece, the Upper Volta, Japan and the USSR had agreed to act as hosts to panels or seminars in the 1979-1980 period.

13. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 33/16, a Working Group of experts of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee had been convened to examine the question of the use of nuclear power sources in space. The Working Group had concluded that nuclear power sources could be used safely in outer space, provided that the safety considerations outlined in the Committee's report were met in full. The other conclusions of the Working Group were contained in paragraph 39 of its report (A/AC.105/238, annex II). The Committee had endorsed the recommendation of the Working Group that further studies should be made on certain specific problems related to nuclear power sources. Member States and international agencies had been asked to contribute studies on the technical and safety aspects of nuclear power sources in outer space, and the Secretariat had been asked to collate them for consideration by the Working Group in January 1980. The Committee had also recommended that the Legal Sub-Committee should include in its agenda an item entitled "Review of existing international law relative to outer space activities with a view to determining the appropriateness of supplementing such law with provisions relating to the uses of nuclear power sources in outer space". Member States had been invited to submit their views on that item. The Committee had also discussed issues connected with the physical nature and technical attributes of the geostationary orbit and with space transportation systems. The Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee would, with the assistance of the Secretariat, deal further with those matters at its next session.

14. The Committee had also considered matters relating to the co-ordination of activities within the United Nations sytem and to the exchange of information on

(Mr. Jankowitsch, Austria)

international sounding rocket stations. It had recommended that the General Assembly should continue to grant United Nations sponsorship to the Thumba Equatorial Launching Station in India and the CELPA Mar del Plata Rocket Launching Station in Argentina.

15. Members of the Committee had suggested improving the work of the Committee and its two Sub-Committees by arranging for concurrent session of the Sub-Committees and by eliminating the general debate usually held at the beginning of sessions of the Sub-Committees. As the report of the Committee showed, delegations had expressed different views as to the usefulness of adopting those suggestions.

16. The impact of satellite technology upon global politics was now growing at an increasing rate. Scientists and engineers were now seriously considering daily flights to orbit to serve and supply research and astronomical laboratories, earth resources observatories, manufacturing facilities or communication centres. There was also the possibility of expanding direct-to-home television broadcasting throughout the world and erecting large structures in space. The early demonstration of a large structure, to be part of a large solar experiment, was under consideration. The scientific community was also examining the possibility of setting up earth-like communities several hundred thousand miles up in space. An essential element in realizing such projects would be international agreement and co-operation, not only from the political and legal standpoint but also in the co-ordination of financial and technical assistance. The international community had the right to expect that the pioneers of outer space should also be responsible for developing ways of increasing the participation of all nations in future space activities. Although substantial progress had been made, there were no grounds for complacency about the state of international co-operation, as new technological developments were daily expanding the possibilities of such co-operation. In the more than 20 years of its existence, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had laid the foundations of an international legal framework and of a number of institutions to strengthen international co-operation in exploring outer space for peaceful purposes. Co-operation depended to a large extent on the relations between the major industrial and military Powers, and détente in outer space should be pursued no less energetically than détente on earth. Every effort must be made to negotiate further meaninful space arms control agreements in order to preserve outer space as a predominantly peaceful environment. The Committee would continue to encourage international co-operative efforts in that direction.

17. Mr. WYZNER (Poland) said that the discussion of agenda items 48 and 49 should reflect recent achievements in the peaceful exploration of outer space such as the mission undertaken by the two Soviet cosmonauts Lachov and Riumin, who had established a new record by spending 175 days in outer space carrying out scientific experiments designed to serve the cause of international peace and development within the framework of the extensive INTERCOSMOS programme executed by the Soviet Union with the collaboration of other socialist States, including Poland. He also congratulated the United States on the flight of "Voyager II" towards the planets Jupiter, Saturn and Uranus.

18. Poland had played an important part in the peaceful exploration of outer space, and the Polish cosmonaut Miroslaw Hermaszewski had participated in space flights on

(Mr. Wyzner, Poland)

board Soviet space vehicles and stations, thus opening new horizons for Poland's space research programme, whose results would be shared with the international community. An important field of recent research in space technology had been the study of microgravity influence on the crystallization of three-component semiconductors in which crystals had been obtained with an inner homogeneity six times greater than that produced under normal laboratory conditions. Good results had also been obtained in studies on space material technology, in land surveying and in modern methods of cartography. The photographs taken from the Salyut 6 space station had been of direct value to the Polish economy in the execution of the projects to develop the Vistula River basin and prepare a detailed map of the country's soils. Poland, which was participating in the activities of COSPAR, the International Astronautical Federation and several national scientific bodies, attached great importance to the work of the Outer Space Committee; it had helped to formulate and had ratified the four treaties dealing with the peaceful uses of outer space which had been concluded under the auspices of the United Nations.

19. He hoped that the approval of a new agreement currently before the General Assembly would give new impetus to the efforts to solve other important questions on the agenda of the Outer Space Committee and expected that the efforts of the Committee, and particularly of its Legal Sub-Committee, would be directed towards the preparation of documents on the legal implications of remote sensing of the earth from space and on the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting. He thought that the rapid progress in the exploration of outer space and the development of space technology for the benefit of developing countries fully justified the convening of the second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in 1982.

20. Speaking as Chairman of the Legal Sub-Committee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, he then introduced the draft agreement governing the activities of States on the moon and other celestial bodies, which the Sub-Committee had begun to prepare in 1972 on the basis of the draft treaty relating to the moon proposed by the USSR, the draft Agreement on the principles governing activities in the use of natural resources of the moon and other celestial bodies that had been submitted by the delegation of Argentina, and a set of proposals made by the United States of America and other delegations. In 1973, another draft treaty had been submitted to the Legal Sub-Committee by the delegation of Bulgaria, and in 1978 the delegation of Austria had made a valuable effort to produce a single draft reflecting the widest possible area of agreement. As a result of the Sub-Committee's meetings in March and April 1979, the draft agreement had been completed in July in the main Committee. Although it might not fully reflect the views of every delegation that had participated in its preparation, the text did represent the highest common denominator of agreement. If approved by the Special Political Committee and adopted by the General Assembly, it would constitute an impressive addition to previous United Nations treaties on the peaceful uses of outer space.

21. He concluded by outlining the preamble and 21 articles of the draft agreement, which was contained in annex II of the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (A/34/20).

22. Mr. MESHARRAFA (Egypt) noted that agreement had been reached in regard to the moon treaty, the second United Nations Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the use of nuclear power sources in outer space; it was regrettable, however, that no progress had been achieved in formulating the guiding prinicples governing the use of remote sensing and direct television broadcasting by satellites. He emphasized that, in accordance with the principle of the sovereignty of States over their territory and natural resources, it was essential to secure the prior consent of the State sensed before available data were disseminated or communicated to third parties. The international community should make better use of remote sensing, especially in the third world countries, which urgently needed to survey their natural resources. The remote sensing centre, with equipment for photographing, analysing and classifying data in the Middle East, which Egypt had established in 1971 had been designated by ECA as one of the five regional centres for training African experts in remote sensing. In October 1978, a conference on the role of space technology for development had been arranged in Egypt by the Academy of Scientific Research and Technology with a view to highlighting the importance of utilizing advanced technological applications for development in the fields of telecommunications, meteorology, surveying, land resources, public health, agriculture and scientific research. The remote sensing centre in Cairo would also host the International Conference on Remote Sensing in January 1981.

23. While the international community could greatly benefit from direct television broadcasting, he thought it important to ensure that basic principles such as those relating to the sovereignty, political independence and cultural heritage of all States should be faithfully observed.

24. The Committee had achieved considerable progress, after eight years of work, in concluding the draft agreement on the moon and other celestial bodies, which would be the corner-stone of future co-operation in outer space since it reaffirmed the principle that the moon and other celestial bodies, together with their natural resources, were the common heritage of all mankind to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes. He hoped that an international régime to govern the exploitation of the natural resources of the moon in an equitable manner would be established in the near future.

25. Progress was also being made on the second United Nations Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the purpose of which should be to find ways and means for all countries, especially the developing countries, to utilize space technology fully. He noted with satisfaction the progress achieved with regard to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space, especially in the area of notification prior to launching or possible re-entry of spacecraft and in that of emergency assistance. His delegation had proposed the establishment of an adequate global tracking system for use in emergencies in order to ensure better information and earlier prediction of the time and location of re-entry and subsequent debris impact, and he thought it essential that the Legal Sub-Committee should, at its next session, begin the process of elaborating the necessary legal norms and measures in those two areas. His delegation had stressed the need to initiate a programme to train specialized teams from various countries for such emergencies, especially in developing countries which could not cope with them.

(Mr. Mesharrafa, Egypt)

26. The United Nations should become far more active in all outer space activities, especially in the field of remote sensing. His delgation had proposed the establishment of a United Nations remote sensing centre to direct and operate remote sensing programmes for the benefit of all countries, and he hoped that the space Powers would assist the United Nations in implementing that project by building multipurpose satellites which would reduce costs and minimize traffic in outer space, especially in the geostationary orbit. His delegation had emphasized the importance of the role of the United Nations in enhancing regional co-operation and establishing regional remote sensing centres, and it was grateful to the Committee for its recommendation that the centre in Cairo, in addition to the four African regional remote sensing centres, should receive technical assistance and co-operation from the United Nations.

27. He was convinced of the need to examine certain gaps in the drafting of article IV of the 1967 Treaty on Outer Space with a view to adapting it to rapid technological developments and welcomed the suggestions put forward by the delegation of Italy in that regard.

28. Mr. AHMED (India) congratulated the Chairmen of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its two Sub-Committees on their valuable work.

29. During the previous year, the main elements of the Indian space programme had included work on launchers, satellites, space communications, remote sensing, meteorology and geodesy. The launching of INSAT-I early in 1981 should see the start of domestic satellite telecommunications, including television broadcasting, in India. Indian experience in that field had been shared with other countries through a series of seminars, and India remained willing to exchange information and hold consultations with interested countries. The Indian Government was completing an experimental telecommunications satellite called APPLE which would be placed in orbit under a co-operation agreement with the European Space Agency some time in 1980. India's other satellite, BHASKARA, devoted to earth observation, had been launched on 7 June 1979 from a Soviet Cosmodrome. That was an important development in the continuing collaboration between India and the Soviet Union.

30. The Indian Remote Sensing Agency had a number of instrumented aircraft and other processing facilities; a seminar on remote sensing was held at least once a a month, and a number of regional centres had been set up. Some universities had their own programmes on remote sensing.

31. One of the payloads on board INSAT would be a high-resolution radiometer to be used for meteorology; the Indian Government was thus preparing for an operational phase in the field of satellite meteorology.

32. He recalled that the problem of the re-entry of Skylab had been discussed at the last meeting of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and expressed appreciation of the competent manner in which NASA had handled that problem.

(Mr. Ahmed, India)

33. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had not discussed in substance the outstanding issues relating to remote sensing of the earth from space, but he was pleased to note that the Legal Sub-Committee had made progress in drafting appropriate principles. One outstanding issue was the dissemination of data received through remote sensing. In accordance with the principle of the permanent sovereignty of States over their natural resourdes, his Government believed that remote sensing data should be made available to a sensed State on a priority basis and that some categories of data based on spatial resolution should not be disseminated without the consent of the sensed State.

34. The Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and the Legal Sub-Committee had considered the question of the use of nuclear power sources in outer space. His delegation attached great importance to the matter and considered that both Sub-Committees should continue their work with a view to formulating principles for ensuring safety in such activities.

35. He expressed satisfaction that a draft treaty relating to the moon and other celestial bodies and their natural resources had been prepared. Adoption of the treaty by the General Assembly would ensure the exploitation of the natural resources of the moon and other celestial bodies in an orderly and rational manner through the creation of an international régime to ensure that such resources, as the common heritage of mankind, were exploited for the benefit of all mankind.

36. He welcomed the proposal to hold a second United Nations Conference on Outer Space.

37. With regard to the preparation of an international convention on principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting, he recalled that the Outer Space Committee had entrusted the preparation of a convention on those principles to the Legal Sub-Committee and that in 1976 a working group established by the Sub-Committee had formulated nine agreed principles which it had been hoped that the Outer Space Committee would be able to recommend for adoption; in fact, however, it had not yet been possible to achieve a consensus on the principles which should govern consultation and agreements between States. One important factor was that differences in values and social mores in various countries meant that programmes acceptable in one country might be unacceptable, or even cause cultural shock elsewhere. His delegation wished to restate its position that a broadcasting State or entity must consult and enter into agreement with the receiving State or entity if the former was proposing to direct a broadcast programme specifically to the territory of the latter. Such consultation would in no way detract from the principle of freedom of information. He expressed his appreciation to the Canadian and Swedish delegations, which over the years had been making concerted efforts to reach a consensus on the matter. He also noted the efforts of the United States delegation in the Legal Sub-Committee to meet the viewpoints of other delegations. He hoped that at its next session the Legal Sub-Committee would be able to complete the drafting of the principles.

38. His delegation would like the Outer Space Committee to continue discussions on items relating to the definition and delimitation of outer space activities, bearing

(Mr. Ahmed, India)

in mind questions relating to the geostationary orbit. The latter was a scarce resource and should be regulated with a view to ensuring its equitable utilization.

39. India, a member of the Outer Space Committee from the beginning, had always played a positive role in the work of the Committee and its two Sub-Committees and would continue to do so.

40. He expressed appreciation of the work of the United Nations Expert on Outer Space, who had done a magnificent job during his seven-year tenure.

41. Mr. ENTERLEIN (German Democratic Republic) expressed appreciation of the work of the Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the Chairmen of the two Sub-Committees.

42. During the past year, co-operation between States in matters relating to outer space had increased. He welcomed that development as well as the positive results achieved at the session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its Sub-Committees. He shared the view that a policy of peaceful coexistence, international détente and the will to develop co-operation on an equal footing and reduce confrontations had promoted the attainment of the past year's successes. He hoped that that policy, which was of advantage to all peoples and States, would continue.

43. The USSR space venture with Salyut 6-Soyuz was an outstanding contemporary event in outer space exploration, and the many technical and scientific programmes carried out had yielded numerous pioneering results. The Salyut 6-Soyuz station had become a symbol of international peaceful co-operation. With the unselfish support of the USSR, citizens from the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, the Polish People's Republic, the German Democratic Republic and the People's Republic of Bulgaria had been able to participate in Soviet manned space flights, while through its INTERCOSMOS programme, Soviet space technology would open the doors to space for citizens of still more socialist States. A space flight by a Hungarian cosmonaut was planned for 1980, and he wished the venture well. A cosmonaut from France was also preparing for a flight aboard a Soviet space ship, and he wished the project much success. He congratulated the United States of America on its scientific experiments with the Pioneer 11 space probe and extended congratulations to all other States engaged in outer space activities. He expressed appreciation to the United Nations Outer Space Affairs Division and its staff, and to the Expert on Space Applications, for their excellent work.

44. The German Democratic Republic was continuing its outer space exploration activities within the framework of the INTERCOSMOS programme of the socialist States. It participated in activities in the fields of astrophysics, cosmic meteorology, remote sensing of the earth, space communications, biology and medicine. The first space flight of a citizen of the German Democratic Republic had been an important event which he had brought to the attention of the Scientific and Technical Technical Sub-Committee. In experiments in remote sensing of the earth, photographs of extremely high quality had been taken with the multi-spectral camera MKF-6M and with hand-operated cameras made in the German Democratic Republic. Geological,

(Mr. Enterlein, German Democratic Republic)

meteorological and oceanographic analysis and interpretation of those photographs had demonstrated the value which miniature or medium-sized hand-operated cameras could have for remote sensing of the earth. A number of photographs taken with such a camera had been presented to France and other States.

45. Some experiments in biology and medicine had produced encouraging findings. The audiometric examination of cosmonauts for example, had been carried out for the first time aboard a space station with simultaneous monitoring of the sound level of the station; a clear difference had become perceptible in the audiograms as compared with those received on earth. Similar differences had also been identified in the "bacteriological growth" experiment.

46. Interesting results had also been obtained in scientific experiments to produce new materials. A mono-crystalline bismuth-antimony alloy and a mono-crystalline lead telluride had been produced, and in those experiments special conditions for the processes of melting and solidification, different from those obtaining on earth, had been noted. When all analyses became available, important conclusions would emerge for further scientific experiments in the production and testing of new materials. He would give information on further activities of the German Democratic Republic in outer space exploration in the relevant annual report.

47. He noted that the Legal Sub-Committee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had prepared four agreements which formed a solid basis for the exploration and use of outer space. That basis had to be extended by detailed regulations concerning such matters as remote sensing and direct television broadcasting via satellites. The draft agreement governing the activities of States on the moon, adopted by consensus at the twenty-second session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, contained valuable concrete provisions governing the use of outer space. It was of special importance that, as article III of the draft agreement provided, the moon was to be used by all States Parties exclusively for peaceful purposes. It was vital for peace and détente that the draft agreement should confirm the demilitarized status of the moon and other celestial bodies and forbid the placing in orbit around such bodies of objects carrying nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction.

48. With the adoption of that agreement, another significant part of outer space and the scope of activities therein would be covered by specific and detailed provisions binding under international law. The fact that it had been possible to evolve the draft agreement by consensus gave striking proof of the value of the consensus principle in drawing up legal provisions concerning outer space.

49. The principles to govern direct television broadcasting via satellites should regulate the exchange of information aimed at enhancing co-operation among States, so that any legal rules established for that new medium would promote co-operation and confidence among States and be conducive to safeguarding peace and advancing the process of détente. He therefore regarded the draft submitted by Canada and Sweden at the recent meeting of the Legal Sub-Committee as a balanced compromise, particularly with regard to the principle of consultations and agreements between

(Mr. Enterlein, German Democratic Republic)

States, and he endorsed that draft. If all States were ready to compromise, it should be possible in the near future to reach agreement on principles relating to direct television broadcasting via satellites.

50. The matter of remote sensing had been on the agenda of the Legal Sub-Committee for many years, and a number of principles had been agreed upon by consensus. The rules governing remote sensing should ensure respect for the principle of the freedom of outer space and for the sovereignty of States. On the one hand, the admissibility of activities related to remote sensing of the earth by satellites should be recognized, but, on the other hand, it was essential, in order to safeguard sovereign economic and security interests, that a sensed State should have the right to make restrictions and to classify the use and dissemination of information of a highly sensitive nature regarding its territory. The proposal concerning the dissemination of data and information which the USSR had submitted to the Legal Sub-Committee was a well-balanced compromise.

51. The question of the line of delimitation between outer space and air space had also been under discussion in the Legal Sub-Committee for many years. The Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee had discussed the scientific and technical aspects of the matter and had submitted its conclusions to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. He hoped that a solution could be found in the near future; the proposal submitted by the USSR to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space provided a sound basis for such a solution.

52. The problem of the geostationary orbit was closely linked to that of delimitation. The regions occupied by geostationary satellites were undoubtedly part of outer space and therefore open for exploration and use, and they must not be subjected to national appropriation. The placement of geostationary satellites in outer space conveyed no rights of ownership over their orbital positions. There would soon be a problem of saturation of geostationary orbits, particularly in such regions as the sun-synchronous satellite orbits or the libration positions, and it might become necessary to stipulate regions for disposal orbits. Such problems could be solved only by close international co-operation. The pertinent recommendations and decisions of the International Telecommunication Union and the work in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its Sub-Committees should guarantee that outer space would be used for the benefit of all States.

53. In its report to the General Assembly (A/34/20), the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space recommended that the planned second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should be held in 1982. The German Democratic Republic, as a co-sponsor of the relevant resolution, believed that the recommendations of the Outer Space Committee should be endorsed by the General Assembly at its present session. He thanked the USSR for its offer to accommodate the Conference in Moscow and urged that that offer be accepted.

(Mr. Enterlein, German Democratic Republic)

54. The German Democratic Republic had participated in the preparation of three draft resolutions which were shortly to be submitted to the Special Political Committee. He felt that they reflected the views of an overwhelming majority of Member States and it would be helpful for the successful continuation of the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space if they were adopted by consensus.

55. The CHAIRMAN urged members wishing to submit further draft resolutions to do so by the end of business on Wednesday, so that voting could be concluded on Friday.

The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.