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COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTEENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 3 July 1980, at 5.20 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. JANKOWITSCH (Austria)

Report to the General Assembly

Closure of the session

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80-61495

The meeting was called to order at 5.20 p.m.

REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee has before it the draft report contained in document A/AC.105/L.121, the first reading of which took place at informal meetings yesterday.

May I correct a statement I made in the Preparatory Committee that, following the adoption of the report in the Preparatory Committee, no further action was required of the Committee, the Preparatory Committee being an independent body.

I would suggest that the Committee adopt the report by sections so that it does not have to go through it paragraph by paragraph, as was the case at the first reading. I shall call out the various sections of the report, which have been discussed previously, and propose them for adoption with the respective amendments that were made to the report at an earlier date.

We shall now consider section I, "Introduction", which includes paragraphs 1 to 19.

Mr. PEDERSEN (United States of America): We do not have before us a clean version of the draft that includes the changes that have been made to it. Is such a version now available?

Mr. ROBINSON (Secretary of the Committee): There will not be the usual clean version, since we could make such a version in one language only, since no document can be distributed to the Committee except in all the working languages, delegations will have to work with the drafts that they have.

Mr. SIMANI (Kenya): We should have preferred to have a clean copy of the report to be adopted. We now understand from the Secretariat that there will not be a clean copy in all languages but that there might be a clean copy in one language and not in the others.

(Mr. Simani, Kenya)

When we were adopting this particular report, we adopted some parts of it in only one language. Is it possible at this late stage to have a clean copy of the report in a language that everyone can understand? Perhaps that would meet our needs. I take it that we should not thus be establishing a precedent.

Mr. JASENTULIYANA (Deputy Secretary of the Committee): The rule of the United Nations is that a draft report is submitted to a Committee and that Committee works on that draft report and adopts it. Then the changes are made, and the report is forwarded to the General Assembly. That is the normal rule of all Committees, and that is how we operate in all languages.

In the past, we of our office have, as a courtesy and a service to this Committee, prepared a copy in English just to help the delegations. We have not done so this year, because earlier the Committee decided that documents would be produced in all languages. An English version could be available to the Committee on Monday next, but not before then.

The CHAIRMAN: I would hope that, with the help of the draft report, which is available in all languages, and on the basis of the work we did yesterday, the Committee might be able to complete its work on this draft. Is that agreeable to the Committee?

It was so decided.

Mr. BUENO (Brazil), Rapporteur: There is a minor modification to paragraph 18 of the draft report. A group of delegations has informally requested that, in the second line, after the word "participation", the following words be inserted: "within the framework of the INTERCOSMOS programme", the rest of the paragraph remaining as it stands.

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any comments on the first section of the report?

Mr. KOLOSSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): It is our understanding that paragraph 18 will not remain as given in document A/AC.105/L.121 but will take the form in which we adopted it, namely with the inclusion of an amendment that was proposed by my delegation.

The CHAIRMAN: Paragraph 17 would read as follows:

"During the course of the session tribute was paid to the former Chief of the Outer Space Affairs Division, Mr. Lubos Perek, who, after more than five years of outstanding work and assistance to the Committee, was returning to the Astronomical Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences."

That is the form paragraph 17 will take in the final report if the Committee so decides.

Does any other delegation wish to speak on section I?

Mr. SIMANI (Kenya): I still have problems with section I. I do not know which paragraphs we are to approve have been amended. In view of the explanation the Deputy Secretary has given the Committee regarding the availability of documentation, on which I reserve my position, I should have preferred our attention to be drawn to the paragraphs of the report to which there were amendments. If those amendments are read out, then, though this is a difficult situation, we shall know what it is that we are adopting.

The CHAIRMAN: If it is the wish of the Committee, we can ask the Rapporteur, prior to the introduction of the various sections of the report, to give us the new versions of any paragraphs that were amended during the first reading. That is, I believe, the position of the representative of Kenya. We would read out only those paragraphs that have been amended. The Rapporteur can inform us which paragraphs were amended, and the Committee can then adopt them in full knowledge of the new texts, all of which I should like to remind the Committee were approved by the Preparatory Committee yesterday.

(The Chairman)

As far as section I is concerned, we have already dealt with various amended paragraphs. The other paragraph which was amended is paragraph 9, and I should like the Rapporteur to read the new version of paragraph 9.

Mr. BUENO (Brazil), Rapporteur:

"At its 207th meeting, the Committee was informed that requests for participation in its work had been received from the Permanent Representatives of Cuba and Democratic Kampuchea to the United Nations. At the 210th meeting the Committee decided that any Member of the United Nations which desired to attend the twenty-third session of the Committee may do so after informing the Secretariat of its wish. Some delegations expressed the view that the participation in the meetings of the Committee of the so-called representative of Democratic Kampuchea was illegal since the said representative represents no one except himself. Other delegations expressed the view that the question of credentials of the delegation of Democratic Kampuchea is a matter within the exclusive competence of the General Assembly. According to the decision of the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session, the delegation of Democratic Kampuchea is the only representative of the people of Kampuchea in the United Nations, and the decision of the Committee on the admission of Democratic Kampuchea can be taken only on that basis."

Mr. KOLOSSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Everything is correct in the Russian text with which we are working, but there is a misprint in the English text. In the second line of paragraph 9, the next to the last word - "representative" - should, it seems to us, be in the plural.

The CHAIRMAN: The report will be corrected accordingly.

If there are no further comments on section I of the report, I shall take it that the Committee decides to adopt it.

Section I of the report (A/AC.105/L.121, paras. 1-19), as amended, was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: The next section of the report which I should like to put to the Committee is contained in document A/AC.105/L.121/Add.2: subsection 1 - "Remote sensing of the earth by satellites" - of section A - "Applications of space science and technology and activities in outer space". There have been a number of small amendments to this section, which I should like the Rapporteur to read to us, after which I shall put it to the Committee for its approval.

Mr. BUENO (Brazil), Rapporteur: It has been proposed that the word "primary" be deleted from paragraph 2.

There would be a new paragraph after paragraph 7, which would read as follows:

"The Committee also took note with satisfaction of the activities of the Remote Sensing Centre in the United Nations Secretariat in New York and encouraged the Remote Sensing Centre of DNRE to continue its work, particularly in view of the benefits to be provided to the developing countries."

Paragraph 9 should begin as follows:

"Some delegations expressed the view that the assistance of UNDP in the field of space ...".

The paragraph continues as previously drafted.

Paragraph 11 should begin as follows:

"Some delegations expressed the view that....",
and so on.

Paragraph 12 should begin as follows:

"As regards the work ...".

It continues until the last line, where the word "relevant" would be deleted.

The CHAIRMAN: If there are no comments, I shall take it that the Committee decides to adopt this part of the report.

Subsection 1 (paras. 1-12) of the report, as amended, was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: The next subsection is entitled "Direct television broadcasting by satellites" and comprises paragraphs 13, 14 and 15. There is only one amendment, to paragraph 15. In the third line of the English text it should read: "its efforts to conclude" rather than "to consider".

If there are no comments, I shall assume that the Committee adopts this subsection of the report.

Subsection 2 of section A of the report (A/AC.105/L.121/Add.2, paras. 13-15), as amended, was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: Subsection 3 is entitled "Definition and/or delimitation of outer space and outer space activities, bearing in mind, inter alia, questions relating to the geostationary orbit". There are a number of amendments, which I shall now ask the Rapporteur to read out.

Mr. BUENO (Brazil), Rapporteur: Paragraph 20 should read as follows:

"The Committee at its current session held a general exchange of views on this question and some delegations expressed once again their support for the concept of establishing a lower limit of outer space not higher ..."
and then it continues as before.

Now at the end of paragraph 21, the text should read as follows:

"Other delegations, however, were of the view that the relevant parts of that resolution referred to polar and certain tropical and desert countries where geographical and climatic conditions affected signals from satellites".

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any comments on this section of the report?

Mr. ALBORNOZ (Ecuador) (interpretation from Spanish): I am very sorry, but there is no such thing as polar and desert countries. That was not the meaning of the amendment proposed by the delegation of Sweden. It was something like "polar areas" or "polar zones". Perhaps our Swedish colleague could clarify this.

Mr. DANIELSSON (Sweden): My delegation proposed this amendment to keep the same balance as in paragraph 41 of the report of the Legal Sub-Committee this year. It appears on page 9 of document A/AC.105/271 in the English version and the text read out by the Rapporteur is an exact copy of that text which was proposed by my delegation.

Mr. SIMANI (Kenya): In view of what has just been said, since we are quoting from another document, what the representative of Sweden said should be placed within quotation marks.

Mr. DANIELSSON (Sweden): I just tried to explain where this language had come from, and I think that it could be included in this report of the Committee as reflecting one view. I do not think we have to have any quotation because I believe it is still a view held by those delegations who held it in Geneva last April, and so I think the text could stand as representing their view.

Mr. MOUTARI (Niger) (interpretation from French): It is a question of drafting in the French text. In subsection 3 the word "and" has been omitted from the phrase "definition and/or delimitation".

The CHAIRMAN: I can therefore take it that the Committee adopts this subsection of the report.

Subsection 3 of section A of the report (A/AC.105/L.121/Add.2, paras. 16-21), as amended, was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: I now draw the attention of members to subsection 4 of the report entitled "Use of nuclear power sources in outer space", which comprises in the original draft paragraphs 22 to 28. Once again I ask the Rapporteur to read out the amendments as they were adopted yesterday.

Mr. BUENO (Brazil), Rapporteur: I shall read out paragraph 25:

"The Committee held an exchange of views on this item at its current session. Some delegations expressed their support for the continuation of the Working Group at the forthcoming session of the Sub-Committee, particularly in view of the safety and technical data which it might contribute to the related discussions of the Legal Sub-Committee. The view was expressed that consideration should be given to the establishment of an adequate global tracking system to ensure the best possible information and prediction of re-entry and impact. The view was also expressed that there was a need for the initiation of a programme to train specialized teams from various countries, particularly the developing countries, to deal effectively with cases of accidental re-entry".

(Mr. Bueno, (Brazil), Rapporteur)

Paragraph 27 now reads as follows:

"27. During the current session of the Committee, an exchange of views was held on this question and, in particular, on the arrangements to be made for its further consideration by the Legal Sub-Committee. Some delegations were of the view that this question should be recommended as a priority item for the next session of the Legal Sub-Committee and that a working group be established for its consideration. These delegations were also of the view that the review of international law which had been carried out at the last session of the Legal Sub-Committee had clearly demonstrated that there was a need for the elaboration of new legal provisions governing specifically the use of nuclear power sources in outer space. They therefore believed that the current title of the item should be amended so as to reflect more accurately the current stage of consideration of this item. Other delegations expressed the view that there was no justification for designating this item a matter of priority, establishing a working group or changing the title of the item, all that being premature, at least until the deliberations of the working group within the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee are completed."

Mr. YASH PAL (India): Just to preclude the necessity for reading out the paragraphs, I believe that the text of paragraph 28 has already been distributed to us -- in English, at least -- and part of the changes in paragraph 27 also.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of India for his helpful hint. Indeed, the texts of paragraphs 27 and 28, as amended, have been distributed in all the working languages. We can therefore dispense with reading out paragraph 28.

I should therefore like now to put before the Committee the whole text of subsection 4, "Use of nuclear power sources in outer space". If there are no comments, I shall take it that the Committee adopts that subsection.

Subsection 4 of section A of the report (A/AC.105/L.121/Add.2, paras. 22-28), as amended, was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will now turn to subsection 5, "Space transportation systems and their implications for future activities in space", comprising paragraphs 29 to 31, none of which has been amended.

If there are no comments, I shall take it that the Committee adopts that subsection.

Subsection 5 of section A of the report (A/AC.105/L.121/Add.2, paras. 29-31) was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: We turn now to section B of the draft report, entitled "Programme and activities of the United Nations relating to outer space", contained in document A/AC.105/L.121/Add.1. First, we shall take up subsection 1, "United Nations programme on space applications", comprising paragraphs 1 to 8. There are several minor amendments, and in this connexion I call on the Rapporteur.

Mr. BUENO (Brazil), Rapporteur: Paragraph 6 now reads as follows:

"6. The Committee further expressed its appreciation to UNDRO, UNEP and UNDP and to the specialized agencies, in particular, FAO, UNESCO and WMO for the assistance ..." and so on.

At the end of paragraph 8, I shall read out an additional sentence, as follows:

"The Committee, taking note of these and other views, requested the Expert on Space Applications to include in his report to the eighteenth session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee a list of the activities which could be undertaken within the United Nations Space Applications Programme further to assist Member States in their efforts to share the benefits of applications of space technology for development."

Mr. JUWANA (Indonesia): I have asked to speak to give information. With regard to paragraph 5 dealing with the four regional seminars planned, for the region of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), we should like to inform the Committee that the Government of Indonesia has decided to host a United Nations seminar on remote sensing and communications for education and development, which is scheduled to be held approximately in the last quarter of 1981.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Indonesia for the information he has given the Committee; we take note of it with gratitude and appreciation.

If I hear no comments, I shall take it that this subsection is adopted.
Subsection 1 of section B (A/AC.105/L.121/Add.1, paras. 1-8) was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: We come now to subsection 2, entitled "Co-ordination of outer space activities within the United Nations system", comprising paragraphs 9 to 11.

No amendments have been proposed and, if I hear no objections, I shall therefore take it that this section is adopted.

Subsection 2 of section B of the report (A/AC.105/L.121/Add.1, paras. 9-11) was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: We turn now to section C, "Other matters", contained in document A/AC.105/L.121/Add.2. There are amendments to paragraphs 34 and 35, which the Rapporteur will now kindly read out to the Committee.

Mr. BUENO (Brazil), Rapporteur: In paragraph 34, the first sentence ending with the words "for preventing an arms race in space" remains the same. The beginning of the second sentence now reads as follows:

"In this connexion some delegations expressed the view that ...", the remainder of the sentence remaining unchanged.

The beginning of the third sentence now reads as follows:

"Other delegations emphasized the ...",
the remainder of the sentence remaining unchanged.

The fourth sentence reads as follows:

"Some of those delegations further expressed the view that an additional protocol to the Outer Space Treaty should be developed in order to ensure the demilitarization of outer space."

The following sentence is to be added at the end of the paragraph:

"In the view of some delegations, the question of disarmament should be discussed in the appropriate bodies of the United Nations."

Paragraph 35 reads as follows:

"A statement was made by China expressing its intention to seek membership in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space at the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly. However, the Committee recognized that the question of the admission of new members to the Committee was a matter within the competence of the General Assembly."

The CHAIRMAN: If there are no further comments, I shall take it that section C is adopted.

Section C of the report (A/AC.105/L.121/Add.2, paras. 32-35), as amended, was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: We shall now turn to the penultimate section of the report, entitled "D. Future work of the Sub-Committee", contained in document A/AC.105/L.121/Add.2.

The first amendment should be made to the title of section D, which should read "Future work of the Sub-Committees". I now call on the Rapporteur, who will read out the other amendments to this section.

Mr. BUENO (Brazil), Rapporteur: Paragraph 37 has been renumbered paragraph 38, while the original paragraph 38 has become paragraph 37. I shall now read out the new paragraph 38:

"Supported by some other delegations, one delegation proposed that a new item entitled 'Maintenance of health and vital activity of participants in manned space flights of long duration' be included in the agenda of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee at its next session. The Committee decided to recommend to the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee to consider whether this item should be included in its agenda."

After the present paragraph 39 a new paragraph should be added, numbered 39 (bis), which reads as follows:

(Mr. Bueno (Brazil), Rapporteur)

"With respect to the treatment of the item on the use of nuclear power sources in outer space in the Legal Sub-Committee, some delegations expressed their intention, given the absence of an agreement as to future methods of work, to request the General Assembly at its next session to consider what arrangements should be made for the discussion of this item at the next session of the Legal Sub-Committee. In the view of other delegations a discussion of this item by the General Assembly might be based on the agreed conclusions and recommendations adopted in the Legal Sub-Committee on the basis of conclusions and recommendations adopted by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee."

There is also an addition at the end of paragraph 40, which reads as follows:

"The Committee also took note of a suggestion of some delegations that in view of the necessity to have various technical details recorded meticulously for further reference the summary records for the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee should be reinstated."

The second sentence of paragraph 41 should read as follows:

"The Committee, however, recognized the need to keep closely co-ordinated the work of the two Sub-Committees."

Mr. DEBERGH (Belgium) (interpretation from French): I should like to propose a small amendment to paragraph 39, concerning the agenda of the Legal Sub-Committee. Indeed, I have the impression that out of enthusiasm we have forgotten one small thing. I should therefore like to propose that to paragraph 39 be added the same sentence as was added last year to paragraph 119 of our report. That sentence reads as follows:

"In addition, it was recommended by the Committee that the Legal Sub-Committee should continue to include on its agenda an item entitled 'Other matters'." (A/34/20, para. 119)

It is clear that I do not know what the Legal-Sub-Committee might discuss next year under such an agenda item as "Other matters". But, looking through the report of the last session of the Legal Sub-Committee, I noted from paragraphs 53 to 55 that certain questions were indeed discussed, in particular

(Mr. Debergh, Belgium)

the dates of the next session of the Sub-Committee and, secondly, the question of summary records. There may thus be questions which arise next year in the same manner and I should therefore propose the repetition of the text of the last sentence of paragraph 119 of last year's report.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now call on the Rapporteur.

Mr. BUENO (Brazil), Rapporteur: In reply to the point raised by the representative of Belgium, that sentence was not included because it was understood that unless it was otherwise decided, we should proceed accordingly.

Mr. KOLOSSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): My delegation cannot support the addition proposed by the representative of Belgium.

Mr. NOLAN (Australia): My delegation supports the proposal made by the representative of Belgium. It is important that we do have an item entitled "Other matters", not only for the reasons mentioned by the representative of Belgium but also because other issues may arise between now and the next session of the Legal Sub-Committee and we should want to have an item on the agenda under which such issues could be raised. As our colleague from Belgium said, my delegation has no idea at the moment what might arise but we must leave that contingency open.

Mr. ZAMBRANO (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish): The delegation of Colombia supports the proposal made by the representative of Belgium. We feel that it is essential for us to be able to deal in the Legal Sub-Committee with items that are not specifically included on its agenda.

Mr. KOLOSSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): It seems to us that we are in a situation analogous to that in which we found ourselves with regard to paragraph 40, the next paragraph. In spite of the fact that many wished to reinstate summary records, one delegation was categorically against that, and there was nothing left for us to do other than to take note of that wish. It seems to us that in the case of paragraph 39 we should proceed similarly.

Mr. KIRSCH (Canada) (interpretation from French): I should like to draw the Committee's attention to the fact that the point just raised by the representative of Belgium and the one to which the representative of the Soviet Union has referred are not identical situations, because, as has been very well emphasized by our Rapporteur, the reason that sentence was not inserted is simply that there had already been agreement within the Committee that an agenda item entitled "Other matters" would be included in the agendas of future sessions. Therefore, in order for an item entitled "Other matters" not to be included in the agendas of future sessions, there would have to be a consensus decision of the Committee, and I do not think that there has been such a decision. It is, then, simply a question of reflecting an agreement that exists. There would have to be another decision for that agreement to be nullified.

Mr. DANIELSSON (Sweden): I should like to associate my delegation with the views expressed by Canada.

Mr. KOLOSSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): If we go into the history of this question, the item "Other matters" was included in the agenda of the Legal Sub-Committee because there was no agreement on the inclusion of a certain specific item. In a spirit of compromise, the delegations agreed to discuss that question under the agenda item entitled "Other matters". Since then, the question that was to have been discussed under "Other matters" has officially been put on the agenda as a separate item, and we do not see why we should continue to have an agenda item entitled "Other matters". We cannot support a decision to that effect.

Mr. KIRSCH (Canada) (interpretation from French): The representative of the Soviet Union has quite well described the situation as it existed in 1978. In 1979, the situation was quite different. The proof of that is that indeed, as the representative of Belgium has emphasized, other questions were discussed in 1980.

Mr. HOUNGAVOU (Benin) (interpretation from French): I am inclined to accept the amendment put forward by the representative of Belgium. I did not understand the background to the matter. I feel that the agendas of all bodies such as this include an item entitled "Other matters". But legally it is dangerous explicitly to include it in the agenda. I would prefer the Rapporteur's formula, because, under the heading "Other matters", ideas on which we did not agree could be introduced and lead to a controversial discussion. In this Committee, of course, we work on the basis of consensus, and it would therefore be preferable, without completely opposing the Belgian amendment, to go along with the Rapporteur's formula, since "Other matters" refers to matters that are not very important to delegations. We do not want important matters to be discussed under that heading.

To avoid any controversy, we could accept the formula put forward by the Rapporteur.

Mr. van KESTEREN (Netherlands): For the sake of clarity, my delegation supports the amendment proposed by the delegation of Belgium. However, we share the view expressed by the Rapporteur, supported by the representative of Benin, among others, to the effect that an item entitled "Other matters" is usually included in the agenda of a United Nations body. In other words, that title covers things such as statements by the Chairmen, and the organization of work. We do not decide upon the inclusion of an item entitled "Opening of the session", but nevertheless such an item is included. In my view, that is true also of an item entitled "Other matters". It is a purely formal point that is included in every agenda of every body of the United Nations. Therefore it seems to me that even without specific provision it should be included in the agenda - or we should reach a consensus on leaving it out.

Mr. DANIELSSON (Sweden): I hesitate to prolong this debate any further, and I apologize for speaking a second time on this matter. I think that we could, perhaps, in a spirit of compromise on the last day of this session accept the interpretation so suitably put forward by the Rapporteur and supported by the representatives of Benin and the Netherlands, on the understanding that this is a matter that will in the future be included in the agenda of the Legal Sub-Committee.

Mr. DEBERGH (Belgium) (interpretation from French): In view of the lateness of the hour I will not press my amendment, but I find it strange that we cannot set down in black and white that something which, supported by a consensus, has been expressed as the view of the Rapporteur. I do think there is a consensus on that opinion now.

Mr. NOLAN (Australia): In a spirit of compromise, my delegation also will go along with the understanding expressed by the Rapporteur that next year's agenda of the Legal Sub-Committee will include an item entitled "Other matters".

My delegation finds it very difficult to understand why any delegation would oppose an agenda item which would allow issues to be raised which may arise between now and next year's session of the Legal Sub-Committee. It is our understanding that the work of this Committee has always been to keep ahead of developments in the peaceful use of outer space.

Mr. KOLOSSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Our delegation, also, understands that any delegation may raise any question during the session, in the main Committee or in the two Sub-Committees, even a new one. Indeed, our delegation did raise one such question; during the session we proposed a new agenda item. So the absence from the agenda of the Legal Sub-Committee of a special item entitled "Other matters" does not deprive delegations of the opportunity of raising other questions. However, the formal absence of that item means that other delegations are free not to participate in its discussion of it.

Mr. BORTZMEYER: (France) (interpretation from French): I apologize for speaking at this late hour, but a second reading is intended to redress the errors and omissions of the first reading. My delegation has always maintained that it is a good idea for the meetings of the two Sub-Committees to be held concurrently. I should like account to be taken of that by adding, in the last part of section D, a sentence along the following lines:

"Some delegations expressed the view that the two Sub-Committees should meet concurrently."

The CHAIRMAN: Are there any other comments? May I take it, then, that the Committee adopts section D, including the sentence that France has suggested?

Section D of the report (A/AC.105/L.121/Add.2, paras. 36-41), as thus amended, was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: The last section is entitled "Schedule of work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies", and, as representatives have noted, various amendments and corrections have been made to the dates concerned in document A/AC.105/L.21/Add.2 - namely, the dates of the session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, which should now read 2-13 February 1981, and the dates for the session of the Committee, which should read 22 June-3 July 1981.

If there are no comments, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to adopt section E.

Section E of the report (A/AC.105/L.121/Add.2) was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: I now place the full report before the Committee. If I hear no objection I shall take it that the Committee wishes to adopt the report as a whole.

The report of the Committee as a whole (A/AC.105/L.121 and Add.1 and 2) was adopted.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

Mr. HOUNGAVOU (Benin) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the African Group members of the Committee, and on my own behalf, I should like to express to you the sincere satisfaction of our Group at the objective and outstanding way in which you have conducted the work of the twenty-third session of our Committee, which is ending this evening. Although certain important questions were not totally resolved within the Preparatory Committee for the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, we did make significant progress, thanks to your diplomacy and skill, and thanks to the members of your Bureau and to the Secretariat, which has very skilfully aided you in your difficult tasks. We wish to thank them all for their co-operation.

We should also like to thank all the members of the Committees for the work that has been done here. We believe that at the next session the pending issues will be resolved in a spirit of solidarity, understanding and international co-operation.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I thank the representative of Benin, and the African Group whose spokesman he was, for the kind words he expressed to me personally and to the other officers of the Committee and the Secretariat.

Mr. ALBORNOZ (Ecuador) (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the Latin American members of this Committee, I wish to express our satisfaction at the way in which you have conducted the work of this session and helped us to make progress on complicated issues - issues which we expect to be resolved soon. We also appreciate the important work done by the other officers of the Committee who collaborated with you, particularly the outstanding performance of the Rapporteur, an outstanding diplomat from Latin America, as well as the efforts of the Secretariat and the support of the Outer Space Affairs Division. We especially applaud the work performed by that outstanding Indian scientist, Mr. Yash Pal, who presided over the meetings of the Preparatory Committee for the Second United Nations Conference on the Peaceful Exploration and Use of Outer Space. We are all interested in that event, and I am sure it will be beneficial to all participants - not only from the standpoint of science and technology, but also from the economic, social, legal and other points of view - as well as to the advantage of the international community.

During this session, we have noted the significant progress made by certain space Powers, and we have had occasion to express our congratulations to and admiration for what they have done.

We trust that the work of this Committee - which enjoys so much prestige and has made so many concrete contributions to the international community - will, together with the Preparatory Committee for the Second United Nations Conference on the Peaceful Exploration and Use of Outer Space, contribute to the further development of international law through its work on the new space law which is taking shape here day by day, and which will continue to progress in future, thus fulfilling the great purposes of the United Nations and, above all, promoting the well-being of peoples and understanding and peaceful coexistence among them.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I thank the representative of Ecuador for the kind words he expressed to me personally and to the other officers of the Committee.

Mr. PAL (India): Mr. Chairman, as this session draws to a close, I wish, on behalf of the Asian Group, to echo the sentiment expressed by other delegations - that you have managed to bring the work of this session to quite a successful conclusion. With your guidance, both from the Chair and also in the corridors of the United Nations and outside in New York, we have been able to address several difficult questions which faced this Committee, particularly in regard to the preparations which the Preparatory Committee has to undertake for the Second United Nations Conference on Outer Space.

I particularly recall, Mr. Chairman, your "threats" to have several night meetings and to work on a holiday and to continue our work into next week. While that "threat" did work, we were all confident that one way or another we would all be finished today. And thanks to your remarkable capabilities in guiding this Committee, we have been successful in that.

(Mr. Yash Pal, India)

Our thanks are also due to the Secretariat and to all the officers of the Committee who have borne with us during trying times. Some of us have not behaved very well, and I should like to apologize to the Secretariat, at least on my own behalf, for that having happened.

We are really at an important stage of our work, particularly with regard to the preparations for the Conference. For most of our countries this Conference means a great deal. It faces us with a challenge in that we have to find new ways of making the coming of the space age a reality for our countries so that it can begin to touch the lives of all the people living in our countries. We hope that many of our countries will be both contributors and, to a greater degree, recipients. Space cannot work just by itself. It must find an appropriate interface and tie-up with the real issues and problems. In our country, even the people at the grassroots have to learn to innovate, to initiate and to establish this particular interface; so we are looking forward to a co-operative effort in that Conference from all States to convert this enterprise of space more and more to suit the real needs of people in all countries, and I am sure that as we progress in that direction we will achieve substantial success in that regard.

There are a lot of things I could have said, Mr. Chairman, about this session, which has been a dramatic and, on the whole, an exceedingly successful session under your leadership, but it is getting late and I will stop here.

Mr. van KESTEREN (Netherlands): Mr. Chairman, it is an honour for me to address the Committee on behalf of the member States of the Group of Western European and Other Countries represented on this Committee. In doing so I should first of all like to express the thanks and appreciation of our delegations for the way in which you again guided our work with your skill and your usual friendliness so familiar to all of us.

We equally extend our appreciation and thanks to Professor Yash Pal, who presided over your former working group on the Conference with great ability and humour. To Mr. Bueno of Brazil, we should like to say that both his work as Rapporteur and his relentless efforts to reconcile the views regarding the Conference have filled us with admiration.

(Mr. van Kesteren, Netherlands)

Mr. Robinson, our Secretary; Mr. Perek, to whom we say farewell now; the members of the Outer Space Affairs Division and the other members of the United Nations Secretariat, including those who worked for us behind the scenes - we all know that their contribution to our work was of essential importance and we are very grateful to them.

I should like to address a special word of thanks to the interpreters. Their work is the basic prerequisite for what we all tried to achieve - mutual understanding.

Mr. Chairman, once again we thank you and all the others who made our Committee work so well.

Mr. KOLOSSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): With respect to the complexity of the tasks that faced the Committee at this session, with respect to the importance of the matters with which we were dealing and with respect to the difficulties we have just encountered, our two weeks of work remind me of the work of the space teams. Sometimes the members of our delegations felt themselves to be in no less difficult conditions than the cosmonauts thought themselves to be in. Therefore, in these very last moments of our work at this session, we should like to congratulate all the participants on the successful conclusion of our work, a work of space flight, everyone who assisted us to overcome difficulties and helped us who spoke different languages to understand one another and primarily, of course, we should like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on the successful conclusion of this space flight because of the enormous difficulties and responsibilities that must always be borne by the captain of a space team.

The CHAIRMAN: Since no other delegation wishes to speak, I now call on Dr. Lubos Perek, our - if I may so refer to him in French - ancien directeur, who wishes to say a few words.

Mr. PEREK: I should like to take this opportunity to thank the Committee for the kind words about me included in the report. It was a privilege and, indeed, a pleasure to assist the Committee in its work in an area that has always

(Mr. Perek)

been at the centre of my interest and which, as we see it, will have a deep influence on mankind, both in the immediate and in the distant future.

For the support and friendly co-operation and encouragement I received, I wish to express my thanks to you, Mr. Chairman, to all the officials and representatives in the Committee and Sub-Committees and last, but not least, to my colleagues in the Outer Space Affairs Division.

The CHAIRMAN: We have thus come to the end of our deliberations and to the end of our twenty-third session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. I should like to express to all representatives, as well as to the other officers of the Committee and to the members of the Secretariat, my deep indebtedness to you all for the exemplary manner in which you have once again co-operated during two exceedingly difficult and - as somebody appropriately said - dramatic weeks, which, however, we are now finishing. Again I should like to say, in all modesty, in record time, within an ambitious time frame that we set for ourselves and during which, contrary to the fears of the pessimists and defeatists - among which I sometimes count myself - we have achieved so much.

I fully realize that not every delegation that came here, as happens to be the case, achieved everything it had in mind, but we have achieved a lot together. We have achieved a new sense of purpose. We have achieved, I hope, a new comradeship that grows in difficult moments like the ones we faced during various phases of our work, moments that I hope will regenerate the spirit of compromise and understanding and, I hope, of friendship that binds us together.

This Committee is sometimes regarded by its own members, as well as by Members of the United Nations, as being one with a particular ability to achieve results, to make progress and to overcome even the most difficult situations. But I believe that we should not regard this as an excuse for self-satisfaction and self-congratulation. We had a mission to carry out, a mission entrusted to us by all Member States, a difficult mission perhaps - as one representative just said a space flight in itself - under conditions that are sometimes quite different from conditions encountered in other bodies. I do not refer to the lack of gravity or other difficulties, but indeed sometimes we get impatient that we are treading on uncharted ground and that a great deal of imagination and mutual understanding is necessary if we are to make progress.

(The Chairman)

As we once again leave this hall, we do so with a sense of achievement, of common purpose and of work well done and with a report that we can be proud to present to the next regular session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, having complied with our mandate.

I am particularly grateful to all of you who have helped to achieve this goal, which now enables us to look forward with more confidence and with more hope not only to the Conference in 1982 but also to the next session of the Committee. I personally very much look forward to finding all of you here again next year when we convene the twenty-fourth session of the Committee.

I should like once again to thank you all and wish Godspeed to those of you who are travelling home after this session.

I declare the twenty-third session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space closed.

The meeting rose at 6.40 p.m.