

GENERAL
ASSEMBLY

FORTY-SECOND SESSION

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SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE
16th meeting
held on
Thursday, 5 November 1987
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 16th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. AL-KAWARI (Qatar)

later: Mr. FREUDENSCHUSS (Austria)

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87-56733 7317S (E)

Distr. GENERAL
A/SPC/42/SR.16
17 November 1987
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 33: POLICIES OF APARTHEID OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA
(A/SPC/42/L.3 and Add.1-13)

Requests for hearings

1. The CHAIRMAN suggested that since no member wished to comment on the requests for hearings contained in documents A/SPC/42/L.3 and Add.1 to 13, the Committee should grant those requests.

2. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 76: INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE
(continued)

(a) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (continued)
(A/42/20)

(b) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/42/518 and Corr.1)

3. Mr. GONZALEZ (Chile) said that the developing countries, and especially Chile, were aware of the lacunae in space law. Chile especially deplored the lack of provisions establishing mechanisms and procedures for the access of States to the benefits derived from the exploration and utilization of outer space. Co-operation, which had become indispensable for the creation of more equitable and just living conditions within the international community, was the basic concept underlying space law. While the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States and the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, Including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, of 1967 and the pertinent General Assembly resolutions brought out the importance of strengthening international co-operation, it was now important to define the objective legal bases for such co-operation. Accordingly, the General Assembly should request the International Court of Justice to give an advisory opinion on the nature and legal scope of the concept. The international community, relying on that advisory opinion and on other space law instruments which constituted jus cogens, would be in a position to meet the technological challenges in such a way as to allow all countries to share the benefits of technical progress in space.

4. In that connection, Chile was firmly convinced that the proposal submitted by the Group of 77 was the only one that would give all countries access to the data regarding their own natural resources and allow them to share in the economic advantages deriving directly or indirectly from space activities.

5. At the previous session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), there had been a most deplorable hardening of positions. Yet it should be possible to reach agreement on a number of fundamental principles. No one, for example, could deny that Committee's competence with respect to the

(Mr. Gonzalez, Chile)

problem of an extension of the arms race to outer space. In addition, with regard to the implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE 82), the establishment of the Working Group of the Whole, on the initiative of the Group of Latin American States, definitely constituted a step forward. Nevertheless, it was urgent to take appropriate action to avoid the frustrations that might precipitate a new crisis. Regarding the use of nuclear power sources in outer space, the Committee had before it several documents, particularly the document submitted jointly by Argentina and Chile (A/42/52), which might serve as a basis for regulating the use of such nuclear power. It was not a question of prejudicing the use of a given fuel but of defining the safety rules indispensable for mankind's survival. It was also important to fill the legal void created by the absence of a definition or delimitation of outer space. Chile stood ready to co-operate with all countries or groups of countries desiring to overcome obstacles in that area. It was also convinced that in the elaboration of draft principles relating to the attributes and utilization of the geostationary orbit, a limited natural resource, account must be taken of the interests of the developing countries. Lastly, agreement must be reached on the choice of a new item for the agenda of the Legal Sub-Committee.

6. In conclusion, his delegation reiterated its conviction that the only rational way to meet the technological challenges was to develop a legislative framework, one that was not necessarily the result of a consensus but that would guarantee access, on the basis of the proposal of the Group of 77, by all States to the benefits deriving from the exploration and utilization of outer space.

7. Mr. HOHENFELNER (Austria) said that the international community was at a crossroads. It had to decide whether to improve international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space in order to give all States, particularly the developing countries, access to its benefits, or instead to follow a course that might well lead to an arms race in space. His delegation was convinced that international co-operation in space matters, besides the obvious benefits all could derive from it, could do much to help establish a climate of confidence in East-West relations.

8. The record of the work accomplished by the United Nations in such international co-operation was an excellent one. Although the previous session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had not made spectacular progress, some results had been achieved. If that Committee and its two Sub-Committees were to continue to do useful work, consensus must be preserved, with the understanding that it implied compromise. Early agreement must be reached on the choice of a new agenda item for the Legal Sub-Committee. Also, on the basis of the foundations laid by the Working Group of the Whole of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE 82 must be evaluated. Lastly, decisive progress must be made on the question of the use of nuclear power sources. While there were, of course, other areas that deserved attention, those four points formed a realistic programme that warranted a special effort.

9. Mr. POULSEN (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the twelve member States of the European Community, recalled that eight of those States were also full members of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which had made outstanding contributions by producing fundamental instruments of international space law. Much remained to be done in that field, but the development of new norms required greater international co-operation.

10. The very nature of space activities militated in favour of closer co-operation. They often required international co-ordination, as in the case of satellite communications. Moreover, a number of space operations had better chances of success at lower cost if they were the subject of international co-operation.

11. The Twelve welcomed the recognition by COPUOS that it was necessary to maintain outer space for peaceful purposes and that the way to achieve that was by strengthening international co-operation, through multilateral, regional and bilateral activities and through the promotion of specific projects to assist all countries, in particular developing countries. The Twelve also believed that its two Sub-Committees must give priority to the elaboration of draft principles relevant to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space. They were also prepared to discuss any constructive proposal on the choice of a new item for the agenda of the Legal Sub-Committee. The maintenance of consensus within the COPUOS was of prime importance for the achievement of those objectives.

12. In the light of the financial crisis of the United Nations system, it was essential to preserve a climate of confidence within COPUOS and its two Sub-Committees and to make greater efforts to ensure fruitful discussions. Proposals to that effect made by some Member States required further consideration. In particular, the Twelve were of the view that instead of considering the creation of new bodies, it would be preferable to make better use of existing mechanisms. In addition, while the Twelve acknowledged that it was desirable to avoid an arms race in outer space, they did not believe that COPUOS was the appropriate forum for a discussion of that issue because that would duplicate the work of the United Nations bodies designed to deal with disarmament.

13. The twelve member States of the European Community had firmly committed themselves to the course of international co-operation in space matters with countries in both Europe and other regions, notably developing countries. In view of the technological challenges, increased international co-operation was essential if future generations were to be allowed to benefit from the long-term investments required for the peaceful uses of outer space.

14. Mr. Freudenschuss (Austria) took the Chair.

15. Mr. DIMITROV (Bulgaria) recalled that 30 years previously, on 4 October 1957, the Soviet Union had launched the first artificial satellite, thereby inaugurating an era of space exploration. Aware of the danger posed by the extension of the arms race to outer space, the Soviet Union, the socialist countries and, indeed, the majority of Member States were anxious to avoid the militarization of space.

(Mr. Dimitrov, Bulgaria)

16. At the forty-first session of the General Assembly, his Government had informed the Special Political Committee of its activities in the Intercosmos Programme, of which it had been a member since its inception 20 years previously. Bulgarian and Soviet cosmonauts would be participating in a second joint manned flight scheduled for the first half of 1988. The flight would enable a programme of scientific and technological research to be conducted in a number of areas (space physics, remote sensing, space medicine, etc.). Bulgaria would be participating in the Phobos and Granat projects under the Intercosmos Programme and had co-operated with the Soviet Union and France on the international project to study Halley's Comet. Bilateral co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space was equally important and his delegation welcomed the agreement signed by the two leading space Powers, the Soviet Union and the United States, in April 1987.

17. The report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (A/42/20) testified to the usefulness of the work of that Committee and its sub-committees. His delegation welcomed the General Assembly's consensus adoption at its forty-first session of the Principles Relating to Remote Sensing of the Earth from Outer Space drafted by the Legal Sub-Committee. Modest progress had also been made in relation to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space. Given the extremely dynamic development of space technology, it was essential to address matters relating to the definition and delimitation of outer space, which the Legal Sub-Committee had been considering for 20 years. It was also necessary to adopt principles regulating the activity of States in the use of the geostationary orbit and the delegation of the German Democratic Republic and the delegations of several equatorial countries had submitted proposals to that effect to the Legal Sub-Committee. A decision should be taken at the current session of the General Assembly on the choice of a new agenda item in that Sub-Committee.

18. The Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee had created a Working Group of the Whole to evaluate the implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Bulgaria would continue to comply with those recommendations.

19. At the past two sessions of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the socialist countries had submitted a working paper (A/AC.105/L.165) in an endeavour to lend momentum to the consideration of ways of ensuring that outer space continued to be used for peaceful purposes, a matter that had been included in the Committee's agenda for the past four years. Unfortunately, certain western States had not approached the working paper with due understanding.

20. The peaceful use of outer space was intimately linked with the problem of preventing an arms race in outer space. Mankind should not enter the twenty-first century burdened by the danger of "Star Wars". His Government supported unreservedly the "Star Peace" programme set forth in constructive Soviet proposals, particularly the proposal to set up an international space organization and an international space centre, and was ready to participate to the best of its ability in their establishment and functioning.

21. Mr. SZELEI (Hungary), noting that 1987 marked the thirtieth anniversary of the launching of the first Sputnik satellite and the twentieth anniversary of the conclusion of the Outer Space Treaty, said that the promotion of international co-operation in outer space had been one of the most remarkable activities of the United Nations. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had played an outstanding role in pursuing efforts to extend to all States the benefits derived from the peaceful exploration and use of outer space. As the work of the United Nations had shown, the significance of space technology and space research for the benefit of mankind, be it economic, social or cultural, had increased tremendously.

22. His Government believed that outer space should be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and it therefore urged in all appropriate fora that the international community should intensify its efforts to prevent an arms race in outer space. It supported all genuine suggestions aimed at strengthening international co-operation to that end, in particular, the establishment of a world space organization. Participation in the peaceful uses of outer space had a direct and beneficial bearing on the scientific and technological development of States and could contribute significantly to improving their economies. At meetings of COPUOS, his Government had also advocated enhancing the role of the United Nations not only in promoting co-operation among Member States but also in strengthening ties between national institutions and research centres. The flow of scientific and technological information among States and institutions must be intensified.

23. In 1986, Hungary had been closely associated with the activities of the Interkosmos Programme. It had also sought to extend further its co-operation with other national and international organizations. Regardless of whether such co-operation was conducted on the regional or on the international level, his Government was guided by the desire to preserve outer space for peaceful purposes.

24. The time had come to take a close look at the future role of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, a major political, legal, scientific and technical organ of the United Nations. His Government was convinced that COPUOS should be the focal point for strengthening the legal régime governing the peaceful uses of outer space and his delegation was ready to join all States that so desired in enhancing the Committee's unique role.

25. Mr. MARIN-BOSCH (Mexico) said that the launching of the first Sputnik satellite 30 years previously had made one of mankind's dreams come true. The question of the peaceful uses of outer space had been included in the agenda of the thirteenth session of the General Assembly, in 1958, and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had been established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 1348 (XIII). The opposition of the socialist countries to that resolution had been motivated by the fact that the Committee's mandate had not mentioned the question of the militarization of outer space and that only three socialist countries had been on the Committee. After agreement had been reached on the Committee's composition, the General Assembly had adopted without a vote at its fourteenth session resolution 1472 (XIV) in which it had decided to convene an international scientific conference for the exchange of experience in the peaceful

(Mr. Marin-Bosch, Mexico)

uses of outer space. The Committee and its sub-committees, as well as international conferences, the most recent of which had been held in 1982, were the essential foundations for United Nations work in that field. Although in creating the Committee the General Assembly had managed to overcome the problems of the Cold War, events of the past decade showed that the exploration and use of outer space, far from being a sphere of peaceful international co-operation, provoked rivalry and confrontation between the two main military blocs. The United Nations had yet to succeed in promoting decisively international co-operation in the exclusively peaceful uses of outer space. In both the Special Political Committee and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the main issues and the potential role of the United Nations seemed to be lost from view and discussions centred on secondary issues. No one could deny that their work had become increasingly bogged down in routine. The Special Political Committee confined itself to yearly renewing the mandate of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, knowing full well that that mandate could not be carried out in full, yet members of the Special Political Committee were prepared to consider including new priority questions in the agenda even if the chances of achieving tangible results were minimal.

26. The military component of the great progress achieved over the past 30 years in the conquest of space and the applications resulting from space techniques was increasingly disturbing. The Committee had concentrated on promoting international co-operation in the exploration and use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes, and emphasis had been placed on the need to set up a legal framework to regulate States' activities in that field. The Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies had entered into force 20 years previously. In June 1987 Mexico had proposed that the States parties should meet during the current session to examine the possibility of amending article IV so that it applied to all weapons, not merely objects carrying nuclear weapons or weapons of mass destruction.

27. The members of the Working Group of the Whole, set up to assess the implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, had yet to reach an agreement on the most effective way to promote international co-operation in space, as could be seen from paragraph 28 of document A/42/20. For its part, Mexico had taken account of the recommendation requesting all States, particularly those with major space capability, to inform the Secretary-General concerning those space activities which could be the subject of greater international co-operation (A/AC.105/383, para. 11). On the basis of those replies, the Secretary-General could better assess the future of such international co-operation. Moreover, with regard to the recommendations concerning the Secretariat, his delegation believed that the latter should play an active role to thwart the criticisms levelled at the Organization by some ultra-conservative circles.

28. Continued progress in space would also depend on progress at the political level. It could only be hoped that the cessation of the arms race, to which some

(Mr. Marin Bosch, Mexico)

developments seemed to point, and the changes of attitude regarding the role of the international organizations would make it possible to institute genuine international co-operation in the exclusively peaceful uses of outer space for all peoples.

29. Mr. SHAH (Pakistan) said that the item on international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space, currently before the Committee, provided a unique opportunity to construct an international régime which ensured the exploration and utilization of outer space for the benefit of all mankind. In that regard, the international community must sincerely and constructively undertake three specific tasks. Firstly, outer space should not be threatened by the international community's quarrels and differences, and must be used exclusively for peaceful purposes. Secondly, the benefits accruing from the advances in space technologies, i.e., satellite-based communications, remote sensing and space medicine, must be equitably shared by all countries. Thirdly, a new body of international law which would regulate States' activities in the exploration and exploitation of outer space must be developed urgently.

30. The militarization of outer space was a major question which preoccupied not only the members of the Committee but also all who had the interests of future generations at heart. Weapons placed in outer space would jeopardize current parities, exacerbate vulnerabilities and threaten peace and stability. In that context, his delegation expressed its disappointment at the attitude of those countries which questioned the relevance and competence of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) and its ability to deliberate on the critical issue of the demilitarization of outer space. The argument that the Conference on Disarmament had exclusive jurisdiction in matters relating to the demilitarization of outer space was unacceptable. On the contrary, COPUOS and the Conference on Disarmament could play mutually supportive roles and could both devote their energies to that important issue, just as ITU participated in the examination of the geostationary orbit. Pakistan was convinced that COPUOS could play a constructive role by developing some guidelines and terminological definitions to prevent the militarization of outer space. The non-militarization of outer space and the peaceful uses of outer space were two complementary goals. Pakistan was in favour of a comprehensive convention to prevent an arms race in outer space, which should be negotiated together with supplementary or interim measures concerning the same objective. The legal and scientific aspects could be considered by the two Sub-Committees of COPUOS, which could itself make a useful contribution to the work of the Conference on Disarmament. The Conference should strengthen and amplify the existing legal régime, in particular by remedying the existing ambiguities and lacunae in space law and identifying the issues which could be the subject of an agreement in the current situation. Particular attention should be devoted to banning anti-satellite weapons and the ballistic missile defence systems which could be used in outer space, as well as to dismantling such weapons already in existence. His delegation urged that the multilateral and bilateral legal instruments relating to outer space should be strictly respected.

(Mr. Shah, Pakistan)

31. Since 1987 marked the twentieth anniversary of the Outer Space Treaty, it was an appropriate occasion to recall that, pursuant to article IV of the Treaty, States parties to the Treaty had undertaken not to place in orbit around the Earth or in outer space any object carrying nuclear weapons or weapons of mass destruction. His delegation felt that the limited resources of the geostationary orbit should be used for the common benefit of all mankind and that every State should have equitable access to it. The elaboration of principles governing its rational and equitable use was an issue of particular interest to the developing countries. His delegation therefore supported the Legal Sub-Committee's continued examination of that question in order to arrive at a solution guaranteeing the availability of that limited resource to all States. Pakistan was concerned that the progress made to implement the recommendations of UNISPACE 82 had not been very satisfactory owing to inadequate financial support. Despite its limited resources, Pakistan had made modest yearly contributions as a token of the importance which it attached to the recommendations of UNISPACE 82. His delegation urged the members of COPUOS to extend maximum co-operation and understanding during the forthcoming deliberations of the Committee, in order to enable it to play its role as the focal point for international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

32. Mr. MAYORSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the launching of the first artificial satellite from Earth on 4 October 1957 had been the indisputable beginning of the space age. The Soviet people were justifiably proud of being the first socialist Power to create the first sputnik. They joyfully and sincerely placed their space achievements at the service of all the peoples of the world. On the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of that event, a symposium on co-operation in outer space for peace on earth had been organized in Moscow, in which over 900 scientists, technical experts and other eminent figures had participated, including 500 from abroad. The diverse fields of specialization represented had made it possible to organize informal multilateral discussions. The work of the symposium had shown that the large-scale exploration of outer space required broad international co-operation and, to that end, outer space must remain peaceful.

33. In welcoming the participants to the symposium, Mr. Ryzhkov, the President of the Council of Ministers of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, had said that co-operation in outer space could and should be a bridge between States and peoples to strengthen mutual trust and understanding, making it possible to reduce the fatal danger of a world war. In their final declaration, the participants in the symposium had declared their firm conviction that the peaceful exploration of outer space was a matter of concern to all mankind, and that world-wide international co-operation in outer space was in keeping with the aspirations and interests of all peoples and helped to create a climate of trust. They believed that one of the tangible reflections of that co-operation could be the proclamation in 1992 of an international space year, whose programme would include joint activities for the study of global environmental changes, planets, the Moon, the heliosphere, research in astro physics, radio-astronomy, solar physics, the industrialization of outer space and the use of space techniques in education and medicine.

(Mr. Mayorsky, USSR)

34. That concrete and interesting proposal by the international space community deserved careful attention. Consideration could also be given, within the framework of the International Space Year, to organizing an international conference for studying new ways to explore outer space and more rational methods of organizing co-operation in that area. The calls for international co-operation in the exploration and peaceful use of outer space had always resulted in practical measures in the Soviet Union, such as the Vega international experiment, which had become famous because of its scope and the results achieved and had made it possible to explore Venus thoroughly and observe Halley's Comet. The Phobos international project was currently being prepared thanks to co-operation between scientists and experts from the USSR, Austria, Finland, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, the German Democratic Republic, Poland, Bulgaria and other countries. Under that project, interplanetary automatic stations, from which an expedition would set out for Mars in 1988 in order to carry out multiple tasks, were being manufactured.

35. The preparatory work for the Interbol project, one of whose basic objectives was to study the dynamic processes in magnetospheric plasma, was proceeding successfully. Scientists from the USSR, the German Democratic Republic, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Canada, Finland, Sweden, Cuba and other countries had collaborated in that work. With regard to the manned flights on the Mir orbiting station, he referred to the flight of the Soviet-Syrian team the previous July. The Syrian astronaut's scientific programme had included experiments in space medicine, the study of materials in outer space, geophysics and photographing the territory of Syria for economic purposes. Two other joint flights were planned for 1988 with the participation of Bulgarian and French astronauts, and talks were under way with other States. The Soviet Union was prepared to launch into outer space peaceful apparatuses of other countries and international organizations using Soviet carrier rockets, under mutually acceptable conditions, including for commercial purposes. The USSR reiterated that proposal, which had been made with the best of intentions, and hoped that it would be acted upon.

36. With regard to more rational forms of co-operation in outer space, his delegation recalled that the USSR had taken an important initiative in proposing the establishment of an international outer space organization. In making that proposal, the Soviet Union had been inspired by IAEA, a unique international organization whose functions related to both co-operation and monitoring. Such an organization responded to the necessary requirements for a non-nuclear and non-violent world. His country had in mind a new type of very effective and dynamic universal organization devoid of bureaucratic structures and rigidity. It could carry out two essential tasks. Firstly, it could co-ordinate national space exploration plans, facilitate the exchange of the results of space research, ensure the participation of all countries in outer space activities and serve as an organization centre for joint and commercially advantageous projects. In other words, it could have both ideological functions and functions relating to the organization of international co-operation in outer space. Secondly, it could monitor the implementation of agreements on the prevention of the spread of the arms race to outer space. In a recently published article, Mr. Gorbachev had

(Mr. Mayorsky, USSR)

proposed setting up, under the auspices of the United Nations, an international monitoring mechanism to verify the implementation of agreements on reducing international tension, arms limitation and observing the military situation in areas of conflict. That role would also extend to outer space. The Soviet Union had made concrete proposals at the Conference on Disarmament in order to prevent weapons from being placed in outer space. Those proposals provided for the establishment of an international monitoring centre which would have the right to visit all installations used to launch space apparatuses, the permanent presence of inspection groups on launching platforms and the transmission of information on all planned flights to the inspectors. Although that mechanism would make it possible to ensure true transparency of outer space activities, it required that stereotypes should be abandoned. Peaceful outer space was an integral part of the general system of international security, whose elements were currently being elaborated in the United Nations through collective efforts. Mr. Gorbachev had stated at Baikonur that the peaceful outer space policy of the USSR was an expression of its peace-loving foreign policy and that the Soviet Union was proposing co-operation in the peaceful exploration of outer space to the international community. The USSR wished to see the role of the United Nations enhanced in all international affairs, including the peaceful uses of outer space.

37. COPUOS had been considering for three years the question of ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes. The inclusion of that priority item in the agenda of COPUOS had been the subject of a consensus in the General Assembly which imposed moral obligations on all States. Nevertheless, no progress had been made on that question and the work of COPUOS on the item was practically at a standstill. Certain delegations in COPUOS hoped that, in the consideration of that item, disarmament questions which, in their view, fell within the purview of the Conference on Disarmament, should not be discussed. The USSR did not agree with that position and considered that it was unjustifiable to set up a barrier between COPUOS and the Conference. The work of those two bodies on the prevention of an arms race in outer space must be complementary, yet certain delegations had categorically rejected that idea. In view of the situation facing COPUOS, the socialist countries had proposed a compromise solution which did not contain any elements relating to disarmament, in order to promote the development of peaceful co-operation in outer space on the basis of a recommendation adopted by the Working Group of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. That proposal had not been accepted by those same delegations, and COPUOS had been unable to make progress on that item. One could legitimately ask whether, with regard to that agenda item, COPUOS was empowered to request Member States to inform the Secretary-General about their outer space activities in which there could be increased international co-operation. The delegations which maintained that it was not empowered to do so were opposing the consensus on the inclusion of that priority item in the agenda of COPUOS. That recommendation had also been adopted by consensus by the Working Group of the Whole and by COPUOS, as stated in paragraph 27 of its report (A/42/20). In order to respect the consensus, that recommendation should be implemented, which would help COPUOS to make progress.

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(Mr. Mayorsky, USSR)

38. Appeals for international co-operation were not effective unless they were supported by examples and specific deeds. With regard to the use of nuclear energy in outer space, the USSR had proposed in 1986 a programme for setting up an international régime for the peaceful development of nuclear energy, which concerned all countries. In that connection, his delegation proposed setting up in 1988, during the session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, a working group on the technical aspects of the use of nuclear power sources in outer space which would consider, inter alia, the proposed international régime. Lastly, his delegation recalled that 1987 also marked the twentieth anniversary of the conclusion of the Outer Space Treaty, which represented the birth of outer space law. He expressed the hope that the General Assembly and its bodies would continue to maintain their commitment to the fundamental principles of progress which governed, under the Treaty, man's outer space activities.

39. The CHAIRMAN, referring to the Working Group on Questions Relating to Information, which was traditionally chaired by a Vice-Chairman of the Committee, said that he had been informed by one of the Vice-Chairmen, Mr. González (Chile), that the Chilean delegation was proposing that Mrs. Miranda, a member of that delegation who had experience in the field, should chair the Working Group. He said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the members of the Committee supported that proposal, it being understood that it should not constitute a precedent.

40. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.