



General Assembly

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Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Forty-fourth session
Vienna, 6-15 June 2001

Draft report

Chapter I

Introduction

1. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space held its forty-fourth session at the United Nations Office at Vienna from 6 to 15 June 2001. The officers of the Committee were as follows:

<i>Chairman:</i>	Raimundo González (Chile)
<i>First Vice-Chairman:</i>	Driss El Hadani (Morocco)
<i>Second Vice-Chairman/Rapporteur:</i>	Harijono Djojodihardjo (Indonesia)

The unedited verbatim transcripts of the meetings of the Committee are contained in documents COPUOS/T.476- [...].

A. Meetings of subsidiary bodies

2. The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had held its thirty-eighth session at the United Nations Office at Vienna from 12 to 23 February 2001 under the chairmanship of Karl Doetsch (Canada). The report of the Subcommittee was before the Committee (A/AC.105/761).

3. The Legal Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had held its fortieth session at the United Nations Office at Vienna from 2 to 12 April 2001 under the chairmanship of Vladimír Kopal (Czech Republic). The report of the Subcommittee was before the Committee (A/AC.105/763). The unedited verbatim transcripts of the meetings of the Subcommittee are contained in documents COPUOS/Legal/T.639-655.

B. Adoption of the agenda

4. At its opening meeting, the Committee adopted the following agenda:
 1. Adoption of the agenda.
 2. Statement by the Chairman.
 3. General exchange of views.
 4. Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes.
 5. Implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III).
 6. Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on its thirty-eighth session.
 7. Report of the Legal Subcommittee on its fortieth session.
 8. Spin-off benefits of space technology: review of current status.
 9. Enlargement of the membership of the Committee.
 10. Other matters.
 11. Report of the Committee to the General Assembly.

C. Membership

5. In accordance with General Assembly resolutions 1472 A (XIV) of 12 December 1959, 1721 E (XVI) of 20 December 1961, 3182 (XXVIII) of 18 December 1973, 32/196 B of 20 December 1977, 35/16 of 3 November 1980, 49/33 of 9 December 1994 and 55/12 of 1 November 2000 and decision 45/315 of 11 December 1990, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space was composed of the following Member States: Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Benin, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lebanon, Malaysia,¹ Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru,¹ Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela and Viet Nam.

D. Attendance

6. Representatives of the following States members of the Committee attended the session: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, France,

¹ Cuba and the Republic of Korea are also members of the Committee and have rotated every two years since 1 January 1995 with Peru and Malaysia, respectively.

Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay, Venezuela and Viet Nam.

7. At its 476th, 477th and [...] meetings, the Committee decided to invite, at their request, the representatives of Algeria, Angola, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Holy See, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Panama, the Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Sri Lanka and Switzerland to attend its forty-fourth session and to address it, as appropriate, on the understanding that it would be without prejudice to further requests of that nature and that it would not involve any decision of the Committee concerning status.

8. A representative of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) attended the session.

9. The session was also attended by representatives of the European Space Agency (ESA), the International Astronautical Federation (IAF), the International Law Association (ILA), the International Mobile Satellite Organization (IMSO) and the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS).

10. A list of representatives of States members of the Committee, States not members of the Committee, specialized agencies and other organizations attending the session is contained in document A/AC.105/XLIV/INF/1.

E. General statements

11. Statements were made by representatives of the following delegations during the general exchange of views: Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation, South Africa, United Kingdom and United States. The representative of Peru also made a statement on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States. The representative of the Republic of Korea also made a statement. A statement was made by the representative of ISPRS.

12. At the 476th meeting, on 6 June, the Chairman made a statement outlining the work of the Committee at its current session.

13. Also at the 476th meeting, the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs made a statement reviewing the work of the Office during the previous year and the documentation before the Committee.

14. Some delegations reiterated their concern about the intentional re-entry of space debris in the waters of the Pacific Ocean. Those delegations expressed the view that such re-entry threatened the marine environment and its natural resources and constituted a serious threat to human security and the economic activities of coastal States.

15. The view was expressed that the recent re-entry of the Mir space station had been carried out in a controlled and successful manner. That delegation was of the view that steps had been taken to ensure the transparency of the re-entry process,

among other things allowing the public to follow re-entry measures in real time, and expressed hope that such transparency would set an international precedent.

16. The view was expressed that, because of the growing number of cases in which parts of space objects had been found on the ground, the Office for Outer Space Affairs should provide information for advanced alert and localization of decaying space debris that could cause damage on the ground.

F. Symposium

17. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 55/122 of 8 December 2000, a symposium on the theme “The human dimension in space science and technology applications” was held on 11 June under the chairmanship of V. Cassapoglou (Greece).

18. Presentations to the symposium included the following: “Where are we and why? Exploring the universe with the Hubble Space Telescope”, by R. Albrecht (European Southern Observatory); “The World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology (COMEST) report on the ethics of space policy”, by A. Pompidou (France); “Space telecoms to serve humans”, by J. Jipguep (Cameroon); “Ethical aspects of the application of space data to natural disaster mitigation”, by Lingli Tang (China); “Space and society: the Indian scenario”, by G. M. Nair (India); “Preliminary thoughts on the human dimension in Brazilian space activities”, by L. Fortes (Brazil); “Towards a space age humanism”, by J. Arnould (France); and “Ethics and law for outer space activities”, by V. Cassapoglou (Greece). A panel discussion was also held and concluding remarks were made by the Chairman.

G. Adoption of the report of the Committee

19. After considering the various items before it, the Committee, at its [...] meeting, on [...] June 2001, adopted its report to the General Assembly containing the recommendations and decisions set out below.

Chapter II

Recommendations and decisions

A. Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes

20. In accordance with paragraph 41 of General Assembly resolution 55/122, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space continued its consideration, as a matter of priority, of ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes.

21. The Committee was of the view that the General Assembly, by requesting in resolution 55/122 that the Committee continue its consideration, as a matter of priority, of ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes and report thereon to the Assembly at its fifty-sixth session, had expressed the concern

of the international community about the need to promote international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space, taking into particular account the needs of developing countries. The Committee, through its work in the scientific, technical and legal fields, had a fundamental role to play in ensuring that outer space was maintained for peaceful purposes. Strengthening that role through new initiatives, in particular through speedy implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III), could add a new dimension to its work.

22. The Committee agreed that it had responsibilities relating to strengthening the international basis for the peaceful exploration and uses of outer space, which could cover, among other things, the further development of international space law, including, as appropriate, the preparation of international agreements governing various practical peaceful applications of space science and technology. The Committee agreed that it also had an important role to play in promoting acceptance of the existing United Nations treaties on outer space.

23. The Committee agreed that beneficial uses of space such as strengthening communications infrastructure, disaster management, education, agriculture, environmental protection and natural resource management had enormous relevance for human development, in particular in developing countries, and that the wider adoption of such beneficial applications would strengthen the goal of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes.

24. The Committee agreed that activities involving international cooperation, such as participation in international scientific campaigns, sharing of satellite data, providing educational and training assistance to other countries and building institutional capacity, should be further encouraged to enable outer space to be explored and used for peaceful purposes.

25. The view was expressed that the success of the Committee's efforts to revitalize its work was indicated by the growing relevance of its work to the international community, as shown by the steady increase over the past few years in the number of other intergovernmental organizations, as well as non-governmental organizations and private firms, that were seeking to participate in the Committee's work.

26. The view was expressed that the Committee had been created exclusively to promote international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space and that disarmament aspects of outer space were more appropriately dealt with in other forums, such as the First Committee of the General Assembly and the Conference on Disarmament.

27. Some delegations expressed the view that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space was a competent organ to consider all issues affecting the peaceful uses of outer space, including any militarization of outer space that would be contrary to international law, such as the Charter of the United Nations and the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (the "Outer Space Treaty", General Assembly resolution 2222 (XXI), annex) of 1967. Those delegations expressed the view that consideration of prevention of an arms race in outer space by the First Committee of the General Assembly and the Conference on

Disarmament should not prevent the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space from also considering related issues.

28. Some delegations expressed the view that there should be a practical mechanism for coordinating the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and that of the Conference on Disarmament.

29. The view was expressed that when considering ways and means to prevent militarization of outer space contrary to international law, discussion in the Committee should not consist only of statements by delegations, but should also include consideration of concrete proposals and the adoption of concrete actions.

30. The view was expressed that the most direct and effective way of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes was the conclusion of one or more international agreements prohibiting the testing, deployment and use of any weapons, weapon systems or their components in outer space, the testing, deployment and use on the ground, in the sea and in the atmosphere of any weapons, weapon systems or components aimed at outer space warfare and the use of any object launched into outer space for the purpose of warfare. That delegation was of the view that consideration of the item entitled "Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes" in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space could naturally include the establishment of a legal regime to maintain outer space for peaceful purposes.

31. Some delegations expressed the view that a trend towards "weaponization" of outer space and towards an arms race in outer space was becoming more obvious.

32. Some delegations expressed the view that the placement of weapons in outer space was contrary to various resolutions of the General Assembly, including resolutions 55/32 of 20 November 2000 and 55/122, as well as the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems. Those delegations expressed the view that the placement of weapons in outer space could undermine the global strategic balance, intensifying arms races on the ground, creating obstacles for established arms control and disarmament regimes and undermining mutual trust among countries.

33. The view was expressed that while some military utilization of outer space might be acceptable, for instance, for the purposes of promoting international security and monitoring compliance with arms control regimes, military uses for the purposes of confrontation and military superiority on Earth were not.

34. The view was expressed that international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space was hindered by non-peaceful utilization of space technology, for example, the development of spy satellites and use of satellites to intercept communications such as telephone conversations and electronic mail (e-mail). That delegation was of the view that such activities were an invasion of privacy and that the technologies involved could be better used for, among other things, crime prevention and humanitarian purposes.

35. The view was expressed that, for commercial and political reasons, there was a trend towards increasing restrictions on the flow of information and technology. That delegation was of the view that the international community should work to remove barriers to the free flow of scientific and technological information.

36. The Committee was provided with information on the International Conference on the Prevention of the Militarization of Outer Space, held in Moscow from 11 to 14 April 2001, which had discussed matters relating to preventing the militarization of outer space and methods for the peaceful exploration and use of outer space.

37. The Committee recommended that, at its forty-fifth session, in 2002, it should continue its consideration, on a priority basis, of the item on ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes.
