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at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 21st MEETING

Chairman: Mr. RODRIGUEZ MEDINA (Colombia)

later: Mr. STARCEVIC (Yugoslavia)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 70: INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE
(continued)

- (a) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (continued)
- (b) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SECOND UNITED NATIONS
CONFERENCE ON THE EXPLORATION AND PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE: REPORT
OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

OTHER MATTERS

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 70: 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/38/20)
- (b) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SECOND UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE EXPLORATION AND PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE; REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/38/412)

1. Mr. MISHCHENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the Soviet Union was playing a major role in promoting international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space. Since the launching of the first artificial earth satellite 25 years earlier, the Soviet Union had successfully carried out a number of very complicated technical projects. Recently Soviet science and technology had achieved further success in exploring the planets of the solar system. Two automatic space stations had been put into orbit with the artificial satellites of Venus, and radiolocation imagery of areas of the surface of Venus which could not be observed from earth had been obtained.

2. Space exploration had long been an essential element in economic planning in the Soviet Union. On the basis of instructions from more than 500 economic and scientific institutions, cosmonauts were obtaining information of invaluable use to specialists on the land areas of the Soviet Union and the world's oceans. There was no branch of the Soviet national economy which had not benefited from the exploration of outer space.

3. Recently the Ukrainian SSR had conducted research programmes in such fields as space physics, astronomy, space instrument engineering, the study of the earth from outer space and space biology. In the framework of international co-operation, the Geophysics Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian SSR and the Experimental Physics Institute of the Slovak Academy of Sciences of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic had conducted joint research into the fluctuation of cosmic rays in near-earth and interplanetary magnetic fields. Kiev State University had conducted joint research in the field of astronomy with scientists from the Paris Astrophysical Institute. The Fourth International Symposium on the Physics of the Earth's Ionosphere and Magnetosphere and Solar Wind had recently been held in Lvov. The Symposium had focused primarily on the latest achievements of the INTERCOSMOS programme in the exploration of near-earth outer space. Many eminent scientists and specialists from socialist countries and France and Sweden had participated in the work of the Symposium.

4. It was regrettable that a number of serious obstacles prevented the expansion of co-operation in the exploration of outer space. The plans of the United States Government to militarize outer space and to create different types of weapons systems to destroy targets in space and on earth were particularly alarming. No

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(Mr. Mishchenko, Ukrainian SSR)

demagogic statements about the so-called purely defensive nature of space weapons could hide the fact that the United States considered military space systems a key element in a nuclear first strike capacity. It was obvious that that was another attempt by the blindly anti-communist and anti-Soviet leaders of that country to achieve military strategic superiority over the Soviet Union at any cost.

5. The militarization of outer space threatened to lead to the creation of qualitatively new military technology and turn near-earth outer space into a theatre for military activities. His delegation, therefore, firmly supported those who were opposed to the plans to turn outer space into a source of mortal danger for mankind. In 1981 the Soviet Union had submitted to the General Assembly a proposal on the conclusion of an international treaty prohibiting the deployment in outer space of weapons of any type. It was unfortunate that the Committee on Disarmament had been unable to make any progress in elaborating such a treaty because of lack of co-operation on the part of a number of Western States.

6. At the current session of the General Assembly the Soviet Union had submitted a proposal to conclude a treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from outer space against the earth. In that regard, his delegation felt that COPUOS in view of its long experience in the field, would be able to elaborate such a treaty. The implementation of the Soviet proposal would avert the militarization of outer space and constitute an important basis for broadening international co-operation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

7. His delegation viewed favourably the work of COPUOS. At the same time, he stressed the urgent need to resolve the question of the definition and/or delimitation of outer space by establishing State jurisdiction and ensuring the observance of the principle of territorial inviolability. That would link the principle recognizing the right of States to explore and use outer space to the principle of the complete sovereignty of States with regard to the airspace over their territory and territorial waters. The Legal Sub-Committee should set up a working group to carry out that task so that the question could be resolved at the current session of the General Assembly.

8. He stressed the need to regulate the dissemination of information on the territory of foreign States obtained by remote sensing of the earth with account taken of the sovereign rights and legitimate interests of States. In that regard, his delegation supported the recommendation of COPUOS that the Legal Sub-Committee should make every effort to finalize the draft principles on remote sensing. Lastly, he stressed the urgent need to begin elaboration of a draft convention on principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting in accordance with General Assembly resolution 37/92.

9. Mr. AKIN (Turkey) observed that the highly complex and urgent nature of the issues before the Committee emphasized the need for international co-operation, political will and understanding in the exploration and peaceful utilization of outer space.

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(Mr. Akin, Turkey)

10. With regard to the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, his delegation noted with satisfaction that the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee had devoted due attention to the United Nations Programme on Space Applications and that additional progress had been made in implementing the Programme. Similarly, his delegation welcomed the recognition of the urgent need to implement the recommendations of UNISPACE-82 which had given fresh momentum to efforts to explore the peaceful uses of space technology for the benefit of all countries, especially the developing countries.

11. As to the remote sensing of the Earth by satellites, his delegation believed that the various aspects of that issue must be assessed and the feasibility of a world-wide sensing system explored with a view to promoting productive co-operation between the developing and the developed States. Any régime on remote sensing must recognize the sovereign rights of the State concerned. For example, prior notification should be given to the sensed State and its approval obtained for remote sensing activities over its territory. Moreover, the sensed State should, have direct, priority access to primary data concerning its territory and natural resources, and certain categories of data relating to its territory and natural resources should not be disseminated to third parties without its prior consent.

12. Referring to the definition and/or delimitation of outer space, he reiterated that, in the absence of appropriate legal norms, that issue required careful consideration. He stressed that any fair delimitation of outer space must be based on the principle of equity and must take into account all the relevant factors, but in particular unique cases.

13. In his delegation's opinion, the geostationary orbit was a limited natural resource and was part of the common heritage of mankind. Accordingly, it should be utilized to the benefit of all nations.

14. Mr. STARCEVIC (Yugoslavia) said that his delegation strongly supported the steps taken in implementation of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications and of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE-82), as reflected in the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. It hoped that there would be a gradual increase in the funds made available for such purposes, from which all countries, and particularly the developing countries, would benefit.

15. The dangers threatening not only co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space but also the peace and security of the world were on the rise. The demilitarization of outer space was continuing, and the arms race between the super-Powers was being extended to that arena, a trend of grave concern to all but those who participated in that arms race.

16. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had, in its report, urged all nations, in particular those with major space capabilities, to contribute actively to the goal of preventing an arms race in outer space and to refrain from any action contrary to that aim and had declared that the prevention of an arms

(Mr. Starcevic, Yugoslavia)

race and hostilities in outer space was an essential condition for the promotion and continuation of international co-operation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

17. It was, however, becoming increasingly clear that appeals and declarations were not producing the desired results and that a new approach to the problem had to be devised. As the Chairman of COPUOS had said in introducing its report, the present session of the General Assembly might be the last at which it would be possible to state with some confidence that no weapons were known to be deployed in outer space and that, consequently, the present opportunity might be the last to preserve space as the privileged sanctuary that it was meant to be by the adoption of a bold, imaginative and courageous approach.

18. While the present world situation offered no hope for easy solutions or quick agreements between major space Powers, the possibility of its further deterioration made it incumbent upon the international community to attempt to halt the slide into disaster.

19. His delegation had endorsed the request of the General Assembly that the Committee on Disarmament should take action to prevent an arms race in outer space. As the single multilateral negotiating body for questions of disarmament, that Committee was a proper forum for such negotiations, which should begin as a matter of urgency.

20. His delegation also supported the position of the Group of 77 that it was necessary to adopt a legal instrument definitively banning the emplacement of weapons in outer space and embodying verifiable controls and guarantees. It agreed with the representative of Brazil that the task of filling the gaps in international legislation dealing with outer space should begin immediately. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, through its Legal Sub-Committee, was well suited for that task, which could hardly be carried out by the Committee on Disarmament. COPUOS should contribute to the prevention of an arms race in outer space in that aspect in which it could be of most use, and those who opposed its involvement in that question did so either in the desire that there should be no action at all or in the belief that its work and the work of the Committee on Disarmament would be mutually exclusive. His delegation believed that the work of the two Committees would be complementary and mutually supportive.

21. In the view of his delegation, the limited resources of the geostationary orbit should be used for the benefit of all countries. A change was required in the present regulatory mechanism for assigning orbit positions and radio frequencies, and the principle of guaranteed and equitable access, particularly by the developing countries, should be the basis of any new mechanism. While the establishment of a working group on regulatory matters by the Legal Sub-Committee, as proposed by the Group of 77, had been considered unnecessary in the light of the eminent suitability of ITU in that field, there was no overwhelming reason why such a working group could not contribute to the development of the legal basis of a future mechanism.

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(Mr. Starcevic, Yugoslavia)

22. His delegation hoped that it would be possible for COPUOS to make progress in the elaboration of a set of principles on remote sensing of the earth from space in the course of the coming year, and supported the recommendation on that matter contained in paragraph 67 of the report. With regard to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space, his delegation believed that the decision taken regarding the work of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee should be followed by a similar decision affecting the Legal Sub-Committee.

23. Miss EMARA (Egypt) said that her country fully shared the views and hopes expressed by the Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, particularly with regard to the full implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE-82. For Egypt, agenda item 70 was of capital importance. It was in the interest of mankind as a whole to promote the peaceful exploration and utilization of outer space and to prevent an arms race, a conflict or the threat of a conflict in that area, for there was an undeniable link between outer space and international peace and security. Accordingly, it was essential to promote bilateral, multilateral, regional, interregional and global co-operation in order to ensure that the benefits of space technology strengthened the economic and social progress of all nations, particularly the developing nations.

24. However, Egypt noted with regret that, because of the differing viewpoints of the various parties concerned, only meagre progress had been made in the work of COPUOS and of its two Sub-Committees. Her delegation therefore appealed to all States to display a spirit of co-operation in order to fulfil the hopes of mankind as a whole.

25. Her delegation endorsed the recommendations of COPUOS, in particular the programme of activities proposed under the United Nations Programme on Space Applications for 1984 (A/38/20, para. 19), which took into account the results of UNISPACE-82. In that connection, she expressed the hope that States would contribute generously to the implementation of the UNISPACE-82 recommendations. Egypt, for its part, had informed the Secretary-General on 15 December 1982 of its decision to offer 10 fellowships to African and Arab candidates. Moreover, her country welcomed the three studies selected by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and hoped to participate in their elaboration. In view of the important contribution which the experts of developing countries had made to the preparation of those studies, the United Nations should take the necessary steps to ensure their participation. Lastly, her delegation also endorsed the agendas proposed for the future work of the two Sub-Committees.

26. With a view to preventing the arms race from extending to outer space, Egypt wished to stress that that item should remain on the agenda of the Committee on Disarmament, which was the only multilateral negotiating body of the United Nations. However, her delegation was currently studying all the proposals made with regard to the discussion of that issue in other United Nations bodies and would draw up its final position in co-ordination with the Group of 21 and the non-aligned countries. In any case, Egypt believed that the inclusion of that item in the agenda of other bodies required a specific mandate to that effect for each

(Miss Emara, Egypt)

such body, as well as the establishment of co-ordination between them in order to avoid confusion. Moreover, the consideration of that question in other bodies should not go beyond an objective and constructive discussion and should avoid all forms of propaganda and counterpropaganda: the Committee on Disarmament should still be the only negotiating body to deal with that question.

27. Mr. Starcevic (Yugoslavia) took the Chair.

28. Mr. van WELL (Federal Republic of Germany) noted that international co-operation was an important element of most of his country's major space activities, and that his Government actively participated in the work of COFUOS and in the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE-82. Although a large part of its international co-operation was carried out within the European Space Agency (ESA), it was also engaged in many important bilateral activities with both industrialized and developing countries. Indeed, co-operation was the corner-stone of its fourth space programme, adopted in 1982.

29. In the European context, the first operational European telecommunications satellite ECS-1 had been launched in June 1983. In May 1983, 12 European countries had signed the EUMETSAT Convention, thereby demonstrating Europe's capacity to assume its share in the operation of a global satellite observation system. One of the highlights of 1983 would be the first flight of SPACELAB, scheduled for November. The reusable space laboratory had been developed and built within the framework of ESA with major Federal German participation and under the primary responsibility of its industry. Moreover, a Federal German payload specialist would take part in the SPACELAB flight. Along the same lines, the retrievable EURECA space platform would be launched in 1987. The European launcher Ariane had made two successful flights in June 1983 and had demonstrated its dual launch capability by putting two satellites into orbit.

30. As an integral part of its international co-operation programme, his Government had already taken specific action with a view to implementing the recommendations of UNISPACE-82. For example, aware of the growing importance of appropriate rural development, his Government was stressing the need for the application of remote sensing technology in that field and had hosted and funded an international training course on computer-assisted remote sensing applied to land resources, which had been organized in close co-operation with FAO. Similarly, in May 1984, the Federal Republic of Germany would host the international meeting of experts on remote sensing information systems, which was intended to promote access to data bases world-wide and to make a thorough review of existing remote sensing information systems.

31. Referring to the studies recommended by UNISPACE-82, which were to be conducted with the assistance of experts, he confirmed that his Government would delegate experts and would submit working papers for use in the studies. His Government, which had actively participated in the work of the COFUOS and of its Sub-Committees, noted with satisfaction the agreed text concerning the format and procedure for notification in case of malfunction of a spacecraft carrying a nuclear power source on board. Experience had shown that such malfunction could never be completely ruled out.

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32. Mr. PETROVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that outer space must not become an arena for military confrontation. It must be explored peacefully and creatively in order to promote co-operation among States. There were those, however, who considered outer space as an area for deploying the most sophisticated and deadly systems of destruction. COPUOS had done much to promote the elaboration of fundamental norms of international law limiting the militarization of outer space. Its work had led to the adoption of the Declaration of Legal Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space and the Outer Space Treaty of 1967. COPUOS should continue its useful work in that field and should consider, as a matter of priority, effective measures to prevent the spread of the arms race to outer space.

33. From the very beginning of the space age, it had been the position of the Soviet Union that the concepts of the exploration of outer space and war were incompatible. In 1958, his country had proposed in the United Nations a ban on the use of outer space for military purposes, which had played a decisive role in the adoption of the Outer Space Treaty of 1967. In accordance with that policy of principle the Soviet Union had submitted to the United Nations in 1981 a draft treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of any types of weapons in outer space. However, the negotiations in the Committee on Disarmament on urgent measures to prevent the spread of the arms race to outer space were being sabotaged by those who sought to achieve military superiority through the militarization of outer space.

34. In the past 12 to 18 months alone, a number of top-level decisions had been taken in the United States to develop and deploy in earth orbit a series of weapon systems. The mass media in the United States had been literally inundated with sensationalist reports about ways and means of waging space war.

35. The hypocritical attempts to depict future United States space weapons as defensive deceived no one. Their purpose was to destroy the space early warning command, control and communications systems of the other side in order to make it as vulnerable as possible to a pre-emptive strike. The objective was to be able to deliver a nuclear first strike and remain safe from a retaliatory strike. Such a concept could only increase the risk of a nuclear conflict by undermining strategic stability, which was an important factor in preventing the threat of nuclear war.

36. The massive expenditures required in such an endeavour would be greater than all the resources which mankind had thus far wasted for destructive purposes. Well-known scientists in the Soviet Union, the United States and other countries had convincingly demonstrated the inherent danger of developing the means for space warfare. Many of them had called upon the leaders of the two super-Powers to reach, without delay, an agreement which would prevent such a course of events. His country, which was aware that the current juncture was crucial, had given those appeals great attention. The Soviet Union had reiterated its proposal to ban the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space and was prepared to reach agreement on the total prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from outer space against the earth. As was well known, the Soviet Union had submitted a draft treaty on that subject at the current session of the General Assembly.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

37. The objective of the draft treaty was to prohibit the threat or use of force in outer space, in the earth's atmosphere and on earth through the utilization of any space objects as instruments of destruction. An important distinctive feature of the draft treaty was the combination of political and legal obligations with concrete practical measures to guarantee the fulfilment of those obligations. He emphasized that the draft treaty envisaged a radical and final solution to the question of anti-satellite systems. Such weapons must disappear from the military arsenals of all countries without exception.

38. The obligation unilaterally assumed by the Soviet Union not to be the first to station any kinds of anti-satellite weapons in outer space provided that other States refrained from launching such weapons was convincing proof of its sincere commitment and good will. The United States should follow that example as the first step towards a complete prohibition and elimination of anti-satellite weapons.

39. The Soviet proposal on the non-use of force in and from outer space would be a major contribution towards achieving the goal of using outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes. It was time to move from rhetoric to the concrete elaboration of an international treaty. COPUOS was the most appropriate forum for that endeavour.

40. The work of COPUOS over the past year had demonstrated that it could accomplish difficult tasks in a competent manner. His delegation supported the consistent implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The Soviet Union welcomed the consensus reached in COPUOS and stressed the importance of working on the basis of consensus in order to guarantee that the decisions taken fully reflected the agreed point of view.

41. In response to an appeal made by the Conference, his Government had decided to make a substantial voluntary contribution to the implementation of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications. The Soviet Union was prepared to provide, on an annual basis, fellowships to train 10 candidates from developing countries in aerial photogeodesy and to host annually or biannually United Nations seminars on space communications and remote sensing of the earth from outer space.

42. His delegation supported the comprehensive approach of COPUOS with regard to remote sensing of the earth from outer space. He stressed the urgent need for the speedy elaboration of draft legal principles governing the activities of States in remote sensing of the earth by satellites. The main objective of such a document should be to protect the rights and the legitimate interests of States from the misuse of remote sensing technology.

43. It was unfortunate that the work of COPUOS had been impeded by the delaying tactics of some of its members. That had been made abundantly clear by the unjustifiable delay in reaching agreement on draft principles governing the activities of States in international direct television broadcasting.

(Mr. Petrovsky, USSR)

44. The same tendency had also made itself felt in the approach to the question of the definition and/or delimitation of outer space, included in the agenda of the Legal Sub-Committee almost 20 years earlier. It should not be forgotten that the question of the upper limit of airspace was at the same time that of the upper limit of State sovereignty, and its meaning transcended pure theory. His delegation supported the proposal made by the Group of 77 that the Legal Sub-Committee should establish a working group to consider all aspects of the question.

45. With regard to direct television broadcasting, the General Assembly had, in its resolution 2916 (XXVII), considered it necessary to elaborate principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting with a view to concluding an international agreement or agreements. Accordingly, the Legal Sub-Committee should begin work without delay on such an agreement.

46. The Soviet Union had made and would continue to make substantial contributions to the development of international co-operation in the use of outer space. Ten international missions had been carried out aboard Soviet spacecraft in the INTERCOSMOS programme, involving cosmonauts from all the Socialist countries and from France. An eleventh mission was to take place in 1984, with the participation of an Indian cosmonaut and would involve medical, materials and remote sensing experiments. Two Indian cosmonauts were already in training using simulators of the SALYUT station and the SOYUZ spacecraft. A Soviet-Indian symposium had been held in February 1983 in Bangalore to commemorate the tenth anniversary of co-operation in space and had outlined an extensive programme for the further development of bilateral co-operation. Preparations were under way for an international scientific experiment which would make use of Soviet space technology in order to study Halley's Comet and Venus. The international committee established to monitor that experiment was made up of scientists from the USSR, Bulgaria, Hungary, the German Democratic Republic, Poland, Czechoslovakia, France, Austria and the Federal Republic of Germany. The launching of another Soviet biological satellite at the end of the year was being prepared in co-operation with scientists from the Socialist countries and specialists from the United States and France. The well-known COPAS-SARSAT international space experiment carried out on a co-operative basis by the USSR, the United States, France, Canada and Norway had helped to save dozens of human lives in the present year alone.

47. The SALYUT-7 long-use orbital station now in earth orbit was an upgraded version of previous prototypes, and many of the instruments it had on board had been developed with the participation of the foreign colleagues of Soviet scientists and engineers. In 1982 cosmonauts Bereaovoi and Lebedev on board the station had set a new record for time spent in outer space of 211 days. For the last four months cosmonauts Lyakhov and Alexandrov had been working on board that station. The placing of the Soviet Venus-15 and Venus-16 interplanetary stations into orbit around Venus in October 1983 had been a major achievement, and radar pictures of parts of the surface of Venus which could not be observed from the earth had been received for the first time.

48. Mr. RANGEL (Venezuela) observed that, although UNISPACE-82 had not fulfilled all the aspirations of the countries of the third world, it constituted a milestone in international co-operation between the developed and the developing countries. However, a great deal remained to be done, particularly with regard to ensuring that peace prevailed in outer space. In that connection, his delegation supported the appeal issued by the Chairman of COPUOS with regard to the urgent need to prevent the militarization of outer space. That appeal deserved the Committee's serious consideration, particularly in view of the growing threat of a space war as a result of the unbridled arms race between the great Powers.

49. Venezuela, together with other Latin American members of COPUOS, had stressed that it was essential to prevent the growing militarization of outer space, which was in flagrant violation of the spirit of the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies. Accordingly, his delegation would continue to support the elaboration of an appropriate instrument to reflect the new developments in space activities and to supplement the 1967 Treaty. In that connection, he welcomed the fact that, in accordance with paragraphs 13 and 14 of the report of UNISPACE-82 (A/CONF.101/10, p. 5), the COPUOS had urged all nations, in particular those with major space capabilities, to contribute actively to the goal of preventing an arms race and hostilities in outer space (A/38/20, para. 77). Moreover, it was very important that COPUOS had also recommended the early preparation of pertinent legal instruments for preventing any further militarization of outer space, which was the common heritage of all mankind and which must be an area of co-operation, not confrontation, between States.

50. In accordance with that position, which was shared by all peoples committed to peace and coexistence between States, Venezuela would support the amendment proposed by Mexico to the draft resolution to be submitted on that item. By the same token, Venezuela supported the proposal to the effect that, within the limits of its mandate, COPUOS should consider, as a matter of priority, the question of preventing an arms race in outer space, taking into account the need to co-ordinate its efforts with those of the Committee on Disarmament. In his delegation's opinion, those matters were of crucial importance. The developing countries, as well as many developed countries, could not remain passive in the face of the intransigent, selfish attitude of certain countries which had presented the militarization of outer space as an element of East-West confrontation.

51. Venezuela welcomed the successful efforts of the Legal Sub-Committee in elaborating an agreed text concerning the format and procedure for notification in case of malfunction of a spacecraft carrying a nuclear power source on board. That subject deserved special attention in view of the fact that, early in 1983, the remains of a COSMOS satellite, whose reactor had contained 48 kilogrammes of enriched uranium, had fallen on a neighbouring country. If the satellite had not disintegrated in the atmosphere, it would have caused serious human and material damage. Because of the proliferation of nuclear power sources, Venezuela considered that appropriate legal instruments must be elaborated as a matter of urgency in order to regulate such activities and that the Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects must be fully observed.

(Mr. Rangel, Venezuela)

52. The question of the geostationary orbit was also particularly important, in view of its saturation by non-military satellites. Venezuela had always contended that the geostationary orbit was a limited natural resource and that a set of rules should be elaborated to regulate access to it and to ensure that it was used in a fair and rational manner for the benefit of all States. The absence of such rules facilitated the preponderant use of the orbit by those States capable of placing satellites there, and it limited the possibilities of the equatorial countries and of other developing countries to do so. His delegation therefore supported the establishment of a working group within the Legal Sub-Committee to consider, on a priority basis, matters relating to the definition and/or delimitation of outer space and to the character and utilization of the geostationary orbit, including the elaboration of general principles to govern the rational and equitable use of the orbit.

53. Referring to the question of remote sensing of the earth by satellites, he regretted the fact that only very meagre progress had been made in that regard. The time had come for countries to reach agreement on the legal implications of remote sensing, taking into account all questions relating to the permanent sovereign right of States to their own natural resources and priority access for the sensed State to data concerning its territory. International liability should also be established to cover cases in which the sensing State or governmental or non-governmental organizations disseminated data to the detriment of the sensed State. Remote sensing of the earth by satellites must be directed towards strengthening the sovereignty of States and must therefore benefit international co-operation, peace and security.

54. The international community currently faced an enormous legal vacuum in terms of equitable rules and principles governing outer space. However, efforts to remedy that situation encountered a lack of political will, and efforts to implement the recommendations of UNISPACE-82 encountered a lack of the necessary financing. Venezuela therefore supported the appeal to countries having greater resources to submit their voluntary contributions without delay.

55. In Latin America, the necessary steps were being taken to make international co-operation a reality, thereby fulfilling the principle of UNISPACE-82 that the benefits of space technology should strengthen the economic and social progress of the developing countries. In that connection, he expressed appreciation to the Government of Argentina, which had offered to host a regional meeting of experts, to be held in March 1984, and he expressed the hope that the results of that meeting would help in identifying suitable regional projects in the field of space science and technology.

56. Mr. OUYANG Chuping (China) said that one of the important tasks before the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space was the implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE-82), so as to contribute to further scientific development in that field and to enable all countries, in particular the developing countries, to share the benefits of space science and technology in an equitable manner.

(Mr. Ouyang Chuping, China)

57. The decision of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to endorse the recommendation of its Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee concerning the three studies to be carried out on a priority basis (A/38/20, para. 30) was of great importance and would play a positive role in promoting practical applications of space technology by the developing countries. An appropriate number of experts from developing countries should participate in the expert groups on each item, so that the views of the developing countries would be duly reflected. His Government was prepared to take an active part in those studies, in accordance with the arrangements envisaged in the report.

58. In order to promote the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space, international co-operation should proceed on the basis of equality and mutual benefit. At the recommendation of UNISPACE-82, the United Nations Programme on Space Applications had been expanded to include such features as a fellowship programme for in-depth training, technical consultancy and information services and co-operation in space applications and space technology. Those activities would be financed mainly from voluntary contributions and a reordering of priorities in the next regular United Nations budget, and his Government was willing to do its best to contribute to the smooth implementation of the various recommendations of UNISPACE-82.

59. His delegation noted with approval that the Legal Sub-Committee had succeeded in elaborating an agreed text concerning the format and the procedure for notification in case of malfunction of a spacecraft carrying a nuclear power source on board, and that the parent Committee had recommended that the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee's Working Group on the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space should be reconvened at its next session.

60. Given that remote sensing of the earth from space would soon go beyond the experimental stage, the time had come for agreement on its legal implications, and his Government hoped that the Legal Sub-Committee would make further efforts to reach such agreement in those areas where consensus was possible.

61. Implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE-82, increased exploration and use of outer space and the promotion of international co-operation in space activities all required that outer space should be used exclusively for peaceful purposes. The arms race between the super-Powers was, however, rapidly being extended into outer space in violation of the fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter and of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, Including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies. At UNISPACE-82 and at the recent session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, most of the developing countries and of the small and medium-sized countries had expressed great concern at the situation and had appealed for an immediate halt to the militarization of outer space. Such appeals were entirely proper and reasonable, and his delegation hoped that the General Assembly would give them due consideration and would adopt practical measures to reverse that trend.

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62. Mr. MARIN BOSCH (Mexico) said that the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (A/38/20) drew attention to the future role of the recommendations of UNISPACE-82. In that connection, the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee had given priority to the following three international studies: assistance to countries in studying their remote sensing needs and assessing appropriate assistance for meeting such needs; the feasibility of using direct broadcasting satellites for educational purposes and of internationally or regionally-owned space segments; and the feasibility of obtaining closer spacing of satellites in the geostationary orbit and their satisfactory coexistence, including a closer examination of techno-economic implications, particularly for developing countries, in order to ensure the most effective utilization of that orbit in the interest of all countries. However, that Sub-Committee had made little progress on two other priority questions, remote sensing of the earth by satellites and the use of nuclear power sources in outer space.

63. The Legal Sub-Committee had made some progress in establishing draft principles on remote sensing and an agreed text concerning the format and procedure for notification in case of malfunction of a spacecraft carrying a nuclear power source. It had, however, achieved no positive results concerning the definition and/or delimitation of outer space and the character and utilization of the geostationary orbit.

64. In the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, many had expressed the concern of the international community about the slowness of the Committee's work and, above all, the increasing threat of the extension of the arms race to outer space, which had become one of the main items on its agenda. It was no longer possible for COPUOS to continue to discuss that vital subject under "other business". The General Assembly must find a way of ensuring that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space could help to end the militarization of outer space. It should also take into account the role to be played by the Committee on Disarmament. Such action could not be postponed.

65. Mr ABDEL-RAHMAN (Sudan) said that many third-world countries, including the Sudan, had begun to pay increased attention to outer space in spite of the material difficulties which they faced. Although the achievements recorded since October 1957 were a result of the efforts of the traditional space Powers, those achievements should be used in the service of mankind as a whole. In order to ensure that outer space should be restricted to peaceful purposes and that it should be a field for international co-operation, space technology should be made available to the developing countries. In the nature of things, that would not be possible without the assistance of the industrialized countries and, in particular, of the two super-Powers.

66. The holding of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE-82) had been a landmark of peaceful co-operation and had laid a firm foundation for the future. With regard to the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE-82 (A/38/412), his delegation considered that co-operation between the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system working in the field

(Mr. Abdel-Rahman, Sudan)

of outer space or space-related matters and the international funding agencies had not made the progress envisaged in General Assembly resolution 37/90. The Secretary-General should perhaps be called upon to adopt new measures to promote close co-operation with the international funding agencies, in particular with the World Bank, for the purpose of funding the activities of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications. In spite of the lack of progress, his delegation expressed its appreciation to those States which had made voluntary contributions, and it considered that to have been one of the most important achievements of the Conference, since national efforts for the peaceful uses of outer space required support at the international level. In that connection, his delegation commended the Outer Space Affairs Division, particularly for its efforts in the field of training. His delegation also hoped that the specialized agencies would strengthen their programmes and plans for the implementation of the recommendations UNISPACE-82, in accordance with the request by CUPUOS in paragraph 44 of its report.

67. Sudan was making great efforts to build the infrastructure necessary for the peaceful uses of outer space. It was anxious to take maximum advantage of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications for agricultural development, telecommunications, meteorology, television broadcasting and natural resource exploration. A national technical committee on the peaceful uses of outer space had been established, and a Sudanese expert would take part in the work of the group of experts to be established for the study on the feasibility of using direct broadcasting satellites for educational purposes.

68. With regard to remote sensing, a matter of particular importance to developing countries since the information thus obtained could be used by them in exploration for and the development and exploitation of their natural resources, his delegation was of the view that the Legal Sub-Committee should complete its formulation of the draft principles on remote sensing in a manner in keeping with the interests of the developing countries. The study on that subject should be based on the real needs of the developing countries, and the specialized agencies should make available whatever studies they had carried out in that field.

69. His country regarded the question of the geostationary orbit as a matter of the most extreme importance and was disturbed by the fact that more than one third of the objects in the geostationary orbit were being used for military purposes, a proportion which was rising sharply. In considering the question, due consideration must be given to the right of the developing countries to make use of it. In that connection, the Arab States belonging to the Arab Satellite Communications Organization which were participating in the ARABSAT satellite project had been deeply disturbed that a certain State in the region had decided to launch a satellite in 1986 and had applied to register its orbit as the same as that of ARABSAT, which would interfere with and distort its signals. Such an action was a flagrant violation of international law and custom, and his delegation called upon all the bodies concerned, in particular ITU, to take all possible measures to ensure that the ARABSAT project was carried out on schedule.

(Mr. Abdel-Rahman, Sudan)

70. In carrying out the studies required in implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE-82, the United Nations should meet all the expenses of the experts from the developing countries, since the participation of those experts was in itself an essential contribution.

71. His delegation wished to express its concern at the acceleration of the arms race and its extension to outer space. It was also concerned at the use of nuclear power sources in outer space and at the possible consequences of accidents to spacecraft. Adequate preventive measures should be taken to regulate the use of such power sources in outer space.

72. Mr. CAPPAGLI (Argentina) said that, by emphasizing the various ways in which new space technology contributed to social and economic development, UNISPACE-82 had made an important contribution to the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. His delegation was therefore disappointed at the meagre results achieved by that Committee, which had always been extremely efficient. Its activities seemed to lack a definite objective, whereas the rapid advancement in technology required a constructive approach and true political will.

73. The lack of co-operation shown by some countries in the development of legal principles relating to the various aspects of that activity was of particular concern. His delegation therefore welcomed the successful efforts of the Legal Sub-Committee to elaborate an agreed text concerning the format and procedure for notification in case of malfunction of a spacecraft carrying a nuclear power source. The Sub-Committee should continue its work on the use of nuclear power sources in outer space, bearing in mind the heavy responsibility borne by the users of that technology.

74. International co-operation should be the fundamental norm in any space programme. Argentina attached special importance to the intensification of that co-operation, in order that the benefits of space technology should be available to all countries without discrimination. The training of scientific and technical personnel in space science was particularly important, and special attention should be paid to the developing countries' right to have access to the information and technology of more advanced States.

75. The activities of States must be governed by the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space of 1967, recognizing the full responsibility of the protagonists, respect for the sovereign rights of States and the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States.

76. His delegation was concerned at the lack of progress made on the remote sensing of the earth by satellites and considered that the drafting of principles governing all such activities should be given special priority.

77. The Argentine Government fully supported the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE-82 and in 1984 was to host the meeting of the group of

(Mr. Cappagli, Argentina)

government experts to analyse the machinery for regional co-operation in space science and technology and its applications. The possibility of establishing a Latin American space agency would also be discussed.

78. His Government considered that the geostationary orbit should be studied in detail, with a view to the establishment of a régime which would take into account its special characteristics and determine its use by each member of the international community on an equitable basis. It was in favour of the establishment of a working group on that matter.

79. It was also necessary to progress in the delimitation of outer space, so that the scope of application of the legal régime for outer space could be established precisely.

80. His delegation reiterated the importance which it attached to the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting. General Assembly resolution 37/92, although it was a compromise text reached after 10 years of efforts and so not completely satisfactory, did ensure balance between the free flow of information and respect for the sovereignty of States including the defence of their cultural heritage.

81. Another subject of concern to his Government was the militarization of outer space. His country has strongly condemned not only the emplacement of weapons in space but also the use of all types of satellites for other than peaceful reasons. It deeply regretted the lack of political will of a few States which constantly obstructed even the recognition by the United Nations of the use of outer space for other than peaceful purposes. Current developments in space science and technology had opened up to States hitherto unknown types of applications which eluded the control of the rest of the international community. All States Members of the Organization and especially those with the means to do so must abstain from any space activity which increased the arms race in outer space and, in particular, must respect the spirit and the letter of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Uses of Outer Space of 1967. That Treaty clearly established that States should carry out their activities in the exploration and use of outer space in the interest of maintaining international peace and security and promoting international co-operation and understanding. His Government hoped that the international community would find a rapid solution to that serious question.

82. Mr. LINDAHL (United States of America), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the statement made by the representative of the Soviet Union was wholly mendacious. His delegation, like many others, was deeply disturbed by the shameful manner in which the Soviet Union had attempted to manipulate concern about an arms race in outer space in order to gain some semblance of acceptability for its so-called "initiative" at the current session.

83. Most delegations realized that important work on the question of an arms race in outer space could have begun at the previous session of the Committee on

(Mr. Lindahl, United States)

Disarmament, if the Soviet Union had not blocked consensus on the mandate for the establishment of a working group, a Western mandate which had been found acceptable by most of the neutral and non-aligned members of that Committee. The Soviet delegation and its supporters now said that the Committee on Disarmament was not the proper forum for consideration of that question, because it had not made sufficient progress.

84. His delegation also wondered how much confidence Soviet spokesmen had in the authenticity of their own initiative, inasmuch as they were apparently not anxious to have their draft treaty subjected to scrutiny by disarmament experts. It also wondered why, in the General Committee, the Soviet Union had requested and been granted assignment of agenda item 141 to the First Committee but now felt that another forum was more suitable. The reason was obvious: that was the latest in a series of ploys intended to further Soviet propaganda goals, regardless of the fact that such ploys could seriously jeopardize the ability of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to further its programme of co-operation in the exploration of outer space. That was the same nation that pledged not to be the first to use force in outer space, while failing to acknowledge that it had repeatedly tested and deployed for many years the only operational anti-satellite weapon system and had continued to launch into low earth orbit, military satellites powered by nuclear reactors, which became unstable with lamentable frequency.

85. The United States delegation hoped that the Soviet Union would soon take a more responsible approach in the appropriate disarmament forum to the solution of problems it had created.

86. Mr. MAJORSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that often, when people became angry, it meant that they were in the wrong. He did not fully understand what the United States representative had said, because the question of where the Soviet initiative should be considered had hardly been discussed at the current session. The United States representative had probably become angry because his country would clearly not like the new Soviet proposal for the preparation of a draft treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from outer space against the earth to be considered by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The United States representative was also probably fully aware of the so-called constructive position of the United States delegation in the Committee on Disarmament during the consideration of earlier Soviet initiatives relating to the non-deployment in space of weapons of any kind.

87. With regard to the mandate of the working group, the establishment of which had been discussed for the past two years, it was no coincidence that it had again been mentioned at a time when a new Soviet initiative had been embarked upon.

88. At the preceding meeting, the representative of Sweden had also implied that the Soviet Union was currently carrying out tests of anti-satellite weapons. He wished to point out that his country had made a formal and permanent commitment to refrain from launching any such weapons into space, provided that other States refrained likewise.

89. Mr. LINDAHL (United States of America), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, pointed out that the representative of the Soviet Union seemed to be angrier than he was himself. He hoped that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space would realize from the current discussion what might happen if it insisted on bringing the arms race into what had so far been a productive committee.

OTHER MATTERS

90. The CHAIRMAN said that some members of the Committee had expressed concern at delays in the distribution of summary records. He drew attention to General Assembly resolution 36/117 B on the simultaneous distribution of documents in the different official and working languages of the United Nations. However, the situation could be improved if the summary records were circulated as soon as they were available in English, French and Spanish, rather than being delayed until translation into all the languages had been completed. If there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to follow that procedure.

91. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.