



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 11th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. PIZA-ESCALANTE (Costa Rica)

later: Mr. HASSAN (Sudan)

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

AGENDA ITEM 51: INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 52: PREPARATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE USE BY STATES OF ARTIFICIAL EARTH SATELLITES FOR DIRECT TELEVISION BROADCASTING (continued) (A/33/20, A/33/212; A/SPC/33/L.3 and L.4)

1. The CHAIRMAN announced that Bolivia, Burundi, Costa Rica, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Pakistan and the United Republic of Cameroon had joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/SPC/33/L.3.
2. Mr. CRUZ (Portugal) said that although Portugal was not a space "Power", it attached great importance to activities and discussions in the field of outer space. For that reason, it had asked to participate as an observer in the most recent session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, whose report showed clearly that a number of legal, technical and scientific problems remained which hindered the attainment of full international co-operation, delayed the time when mankind as a whole could enjoy the benefits of the substantial progress made in space activities, and were potentially a disservice to the cause of peace. The access of all countries, particularly the less developed ones, to the benefits of the conquest of space would make it possible, through an open and permanent dialogue, to reduce the social, cultural, economic, technical, political and ideological differences which divided countries.
3. The remote sensing of the earth by satellite was an example of the possibilities offered by outer space activities to the cause of development. While bearing in mind the need to protect the sovereignty of States, it should be realized that, if all States which had the technological means required for remote sensing had been concerned with using them in the cause of development, many countries would have been able to make greater progress.
4. The use of direct broadcast satellites was another area where differences in technological development were evident; television could be a dangerous weapon if it was misused, but it offered vast possibilities which could and should be exploited for the progress of mankind. For that reason, direct satellite broadcasting should be approached with a concern for international co-operation and should be free of any temptation to dominate.
5. His country was opposed to the overcrowding of the geostationary orbit, which should be used only when there was no alternative and when the importance of the satellite mission justified it. However, no legal provisions could be prepared on the matter until outer space had been defined and delimited. His country therefore strongly supported the convening of a second United Nations conference on outer space.
6. With regard to the use of nuclear power sources in space, the subject had correctly been given priority in the agenda of the next meeting of the Scientific

(Mr. Cruz, Portugal)

and Technical Sub-Committee. Until decisions were taken on the matter, those countries that launched space objects with nuclear power sources on board should at least inform the countries concerned of any incident which might lead to the re-entry of radio-active materials to earth. He expressed appreciation to the Austrian delegation for preparing a working paper which could provide a very good point of departure for an agreement governing the activities of States on the moon and other celestial bodies. The document in question affirmed two principles which his country considered basic: the exclusively peaceful use of outer space and the characterization of space as the common heritage of mankind.

7. Space activities were no longer the exclusive domain of a small number of countries but concerned mankind as a whole. Hence, as the United Nations came closer to universality, it needed increasingly to involve itself in such activities and to enable all its Members to express their views, without superiority or inferiority complexes, and co-operate in the interest of the permanent peaceful use of outer space.

8. Mr. VUKOVIĆ (Yugoslavia) expressed satisfaction at the notable results that had been achieved in the field of international co-operation in space research during the past year, with participation by an increasing number of developing countries. The role of the United Nations in that regard was also gaining in importance. In that connexion, he drew attention to the recent international space mission with the joint participation of cosmonauts from Czechoslovakia, Poland, the German Democratic Republic and the Soviet Union within the INTERCOSMOS programme.

9. His delegation also wished to commend Austria for its efforts in preparing a treaty on the moon and other celestial bodies, and it hoped that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space would soon be able to submit a draft text to the General Assembly for adoption.

10. His country supported the Committee's recommendation that the General Assembly should adopt at its current session a decision on convening a United Nations conference on outer space. The plan proposed by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee in annex III of the report could provide an excellent basis for the preparation of the conference. His delegation also supported the recommendation that the Committee should serve as a preparatory committee with its two Sub-Committees as advisory bodies.

11. His country had been following with special attention the work of the Committee concerning the elaboration of principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting. It had unfortunately not been possible to adopt the drafts considered in the Legal Sub-Committee, as certain States had insisted on subordinating the principle of the sovereignty of States to that of freedom of information. The issue was not one of deciding which of the two principles was the more important. What was called for was an examination of the problem with full regard for the striking differences between the degrees of development of various countries and the danger of using those differences for purposes which were completely alien to the principle of freedom of information. While the developing countries were striving

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(Mr. Vuković, Yugoslavia)

to eliminate all vestiges of colonialism, it would be inadmissible that a new and much more insidious form of colonialism should emerge by devious means. His country would strive, together with the non-aligned and developing countries, to find a solution based on the principle of respect for the sovereignty of States. That principle was not at variance with freedom of information and did not preclude an agreement between the States concerned in all cases where television broadcasting was mutually beneficial.

12. In view of the progress made in international co-operation in the sphere of remote sensing, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should accelerate negotiations on the harmonization of principles governing co-operation among States in the use of remote sensing data. In that connexion, the legitimate interests and sovereignty of small States and developing countries must be protected by guaranteeing equal access to remote sensing data and establishing a special régime for developing countries. The Committee should direct its activities towards establishing, within the United Nations system, international centres for the analysis and dissemination of remote sensing data. That would be a step towards solving the complex problems of international law on the subject. His country welcomed the agreement reached with regard to the procedures for dealing with incidents relating to the use of nuclear power sources in space.

13. His delegation agreed with the views expressed by the Portuguese delegation regarding the geostationary orbit. The orbit was limited, and, in view of the ever-increasing number of countries that were becoming involved in space research, the problem should be studied with all due attention.

14. Mr. HOLLAI (Hungary) said that his Government attached great importance to the peaceful use and exploration of outer space, an area in which considerable progress had been achieved in recent years. It was appropriate to cite the missions undertaken by cosmonauts from Czechoslovakia, Poland, the German Democratic Republic and the Soviet Union, who had participated in a special joint mission within the framework of the INTERCOSMOS programme - marking the first entry of countries other than the super-Powers in the space age - as well as the endurance records broken by the Soviet Union.

15. The Legal Sub-Committee had completed much of the work entrusted to it. A welcome development was the draft agreement prepared by the Austrian delegation, which could facilitate a compromise in reaching a consensus on the question of the utilization of the moon and other celestial bodies. With regard to principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting and the question of the legal implications of remote sensing of the earth from space, agreement would be possible only if the sovereignty of States was fully respected. Certain delegations could have been more forthcoming in seeking solutions to those problems.

16. His delegation supported the Soviet proposal for the establishment of a boundary between space and air space at a certain altitude above sea-level, and it

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(Mr. Hollai, Hungary)

hoped that the Sub-Committee would give favourable consideration to that proposal. As to the geostationary orbit, it was inseparable from outer space and clearly fell under the relevant provisions of the Outer Space Treaty of 1967.

17. The question of remote sensing of the earth from space was the most important item on the agenda of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. The proposal for classifying remote sensing data into three categories - global, regional and local - on the basis of spatial resolution continued to merit the closest attention. The dissemination of data obtained by remote sensing should be subject to respect for the principle of the sovereignty of the sensed State and, in the case of data with a certain spatial resolution, should be subject to the consent of the sensed State. In that connexion, Hungary had signed at Moscow on 19 May 1978 the Convention on Remote Sensing of the Earth from Outer Space, which guaranteed the sovereign right of States over their natural resources.

18. His delegation welcomed the progress made towards convening a United Nations conference on the peaceful uses of outer space. He commended the Outer Space Affairs Division for the excellent studies it had prepared for the benefit of all and for its untiring efforts in helping the work of the Outer Space Committee. His delegation was resolved to contribute to the success of that work.

19. Mr. Hassan (Sudan) took the Chair.

20. Mr. GÜRAKAN (Turkey) stressed the progress made in the area of space technology, especially by the space shuttle programme of the United States and the joint missions carried out by the socialist countries. In Turkey, too, although in relatively modest terms, interest in space activities had gained impetus. Turkey had launched programmes in such areas as ionospheric research and gamma-ray astronomy with the existing satellites of the United States and the European Community. In the area of space applications, Turkey had ongoing programmes in remote sensing involving agriculture, forestry, geography, geology, and mineral and water resources. It had recently set up programmes for digital processing of LANDSAT data. The State Meteorological Organization had been using satellite data since 1967.

21. In the field of communications, preparations were almost completed for starting up the first Turkish ground station to operate in the INTELSAT system. Agreements had been concluded with EUTELSAT and ECS for Turkish participation in European communications programmes. Turkey was also planning to co-operate in the experimental broadcasting satellite programmes of the European Broadcasting System.

22. With reference to the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, his delegation welcomed the decisions of both Sub-Committees to give priority once again to the consideration of questions relating to remote sensing of the earth by satellites, and it especially welcomed the intention of the Legal Sub-Committee

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(Mr. Gürakan, Turkey)

to devote more time to that item. Remote sensing had a significant role to play in the economic and social development of the less developed countries. It was clear that the spirit of co-operation and understanding that Member States had shown thus far would lead to a compromise in which progress and the economic interests of States and of the international community were reconciled with the sovereignty of States over their natural resources.

23. With regard to direct broadcasting by satellites, Turkey shared the view of other countries that particular care should be taken in the formulation of legal principles to safeguard the interests of developing countries, especially in the cultural and educational fields. It was important to respect the cultural identity and legitimate ideals of all countries.

24. With regard to the draft treaty relating to the moon, his delegation felt that the draft prepared by the Austrian delegation should make it possible to reach a just and final solution to that problem. It noted with pleasure the recommendation to hold a second United Nations conference on outer space. Finally, his delegation hoped that the draft resolution presented by Austria, which was co-sponsored by Turkey, would contribute to furthering international co-operation in outer space activities.

25. Mr. AL-KHALIFA (Qatar) expressed appreciation for the excellent report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Man had scored many victories in the field of outer space exploration and remote sensing, but space technology had benefited mainly the developed countries, especially the two super-Powers. Moreover, legal principles governing space activities had not kept pace. It was necessary to overcome that twofold lag and enable the developing countries to share in the benefits of those achievements.

26. With regard to the draft treaty relating to the moon and other celestial bodies, Qatar, too, was convinced that the resources of outer space were part of the common heritage of mankind. It also supported the holding of a second United Nations conference on outer space, as mentioned in the report of the Committee (para. 48 (c)), which should take place before 1983 (para. 78 (c)). With regard to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space, his delegation endorsed the contents of paragraph 76 of the report and felt that the Sub-Committee should devote more attention to that question, since the denuclearization of outer space was a vital problem for all mankind. Although the Austrian delegation should be commended for the working paper it had prepared, Qatar felt that the question required further consultations.

27. The technical gap between the developed and developing countries made it particularly difficult to solve the problem of the use of outer space for television broadcasting. His delegation supported the principle that such broadcasts should be subject to the prior consent of the country receiving them. That was a corollary of the principle of the sovereignty of States and of non-interference in their internal affairs.

(Mr. Al-Khalifa, Qatar)

28. With regard to remote sensing of the earth by satellites, Qatar supported the view stated in paragraph 25 of the report that there was no scientific or technical basis for a sensed State not having timely and non-discriminatory access to data of its territory. Such data should be provided without charge to the sensed State out of respect for its sovereignty and should not be disclosed to third parties without its consent. That was a very important question, given the potential afforded by remote sensing, especially in the study of natural resources, meteorology, agriculture and the forecasting of natural disasters. In that connexion, his delegation drew attention to what was said in paragraph 31 of the report regarding the strengthening of international co-operation in that field. The definition and delimitation of outer space was also a crucial matter.

29. Finally, Qatar was convinced that all developing countries should benefit from remote sensing technology and, in particular, should be given opportunities in the area of education and training. He urged the establishment of a world centre for remote sensing, with the co-operation of the United Nations, to organize training seminars, access to training activities by candidates from developing countries, and the granting of fellowships for universities in developing countries which would receive financial assistance from the centre.

30. Mr. BYELOUSOV (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that over the past 20 years a growing number of countries had embarked on the conquest of space, while space technology applications were increasing substantially. The main characteristic of the times was the intensification of multilateral international co-operation; in recent years that co-operation had made possible many new applications in such fields as physics, communications, meteorology, biology, medicine, and the study of natural resources. For example, data collected in the context of the INTERCOSMOS programme, conducted by the countries belonging to the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, had significantly advanced the state of knowledge regarding the atmosphere, the magnetosphere, cosmic rays and solar physics.

31. As Mr. Brezhnev had emphasized recently, co-operation in the field of space exploration between socialist countries constituted a fine example of the friendly relations that united those countries in their joint effort to ensure the victory of the ideals of communism, and it had made great progress in 1978. Cosmonauts from a number of countries (Czechoslovakia, Poland, and the German Democratic Republic) had been members of the crews of Soviet spacecraft Soyuz 27, 29, 30 and 31 and the Salyut 6 station. Those international flights had made it possible to assemble much data of interest to medicine, biology and geophysics. Specialists of the Ukrainian SSR, working in close co-operation with members of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR and of other Republics of the Soviet Union, had played an active and important role in peaceful space exploration activities, concentrating mainly on the following fields: space materials production and technology, space physics, astronomy, aerodynamics, biology and medicine, and remote sensing of the earth. Scientific research was thus contributing to national development, in accordance with the Fundamental Law of the USSR and the new Constitution of the Ukrainian SSR and the other Soviet Socialist Republics. Ukrainian scientists were

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(Mr. Byelousov, Ukrainian SSR)

also co-operating with specialists from such foreign countries as Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Poland and France in the context of a number of research programmes on storms at sea, the solar corona, the reactions of plants subjected to extreme conditions and the possibility of the appearance of single crystals in weightlessness.

32. The Ukrainian SSR was following with the greatest interest the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its Sub-Committees, whose efforts to extend and co-ordinate international co-operation had already met with considerable success.

33. His delegation noted with satisfaction that the Legal Sub-Committee had succeeded in drawing up the definitive text of a number of principles governing remote sensing of the earth. It felt that the criterion for the definition of data and information obtained by remote sensing should be the photographic spatial resolution, and that no images or data on the Territory of a foreign country with a spatial resolution finer than 50 metres should be disseminated without the express consent of that country, to ensure that the sovereign right of States with regard to dissemination of information on their natural resources was respected, since such dissemination could be prejudicial to their economic interests or their defence. It should be noted that in Moscow in 1978 the socialist countries had signed the Convention on the transfer and use of data of the remote sensing of the earth from outer space, which was designed to facilitate co-operation between States in that field and was open for signature by all States, regardless of ideology.

34. His delegation supported the recommendations made by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee with regard to the objectives of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The agenda of the Conference should be relatively broad in scope, and its preparation should be entrusted to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which was particularly qualified to undertake the task.

35. With regard to the drafting of principles concerning the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting, his delegation reaffirmed its basic position, namely, that the main principle was prior consent of the receiving State. That was an extremely important question, whose judicious solution would make it possible to strengthen friendly relations among States and increase cultural exchanges between them in a spirit of respect for the contribution of each State to universal civilization.

36. Mr. RAHMAN (Bangladesh) recalled that the question of the peaceful uses of outer space had been on the agenda of the General Assembly since 1958. As for the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, established in 1959, since that date it had accomplished very useful work in co-ordinating and promoting international co-operation in that field and in drawing up recommendations that had led to the adoption of several major international instruments.

(Mr. Rahman, Bangladesh)

37. Space technology had a wide range of applications: remote sensing provided valuable information for assessment and management of natural resources and protection of the environment. Satellite communications could be used advantageously for education, health care and measures to deal with natural disasters. Space technology could therefore result in improved living conditions for millions living in developing countries and, as stipulated in the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and other Celestial Bodies, those activities must be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all countries, and must be the province of all mankind.

38. Bangladesh had accorded high priority to developing its technical capabilities in the field of remote sensing. The Government had decided to set up a space research and remote sensing organization that should be ready by June 1981. In the context of its programme, meteorological and research satellites would supply a dual-purpose satellite ground station with data enabling Bangladesh and other countries in the regions of Asia and the Pacific to conduct dynamic feature studies on natural resources, to forecast the natural calamities that frequently hit the region, and to deal with their disastrous consequences.

39. In view of the large-scale benefits that could accrue to the developing countries from the peaceful uses of outer space, a large number of States ought to participate in the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and, in the case of any such expansion, the interests of developing countries should be duly borne in mind.

40. His delegation supported the recommendations of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space relating to the convening of a second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space not later than 1983. It endorsed the Committee's recommendation that its Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee should give priority to the consideration of questions relating to remote sensing of the earth by satellites, co-ordination of space activities within the United Nations system and the United Nations programme on space applications, which should be extended both in content and scope and should receive greater financial support, in particular from UNDP.

41. It seemed most likely, as mentioned by the Special Committee, that satellite remote sensing systems would one day become operational and that the use of the data collected would then form an integral part of national economies and their planning activities. International co-operation, the only cost-benefit approach for acquiring the benefits of those techniques, was therefore needed. In that connexion, however, in order to avoid serious problems in the future it would be desirable to arrive at a more precise definition of outer space. With regard to the draft treaty relating to the moon and other celestial bodies, his delegation endorsed the document proposed by Austria, whereby the resources of the moon would be declared the common heritage of all mankind and an international régime would be established for their exploitation. In conclusion, it wished to thank all the Governments that had acted as hosts or had otherwise assisted in the holding of international training seminars and workshops on space applications particularly for the benefit of the developing countries.

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42. Mr. CAMPS (Uruguay) said that the question of the peaceful uses of outer space, which had been on the General Assembly's agenda for 20 years, was a matter of growing concern to all nations of the world because of the direct repercussions of the uses of outer space not only on science and technology per se but also on many other sectors, and particularly the political, economic and agricultural sectors and also on over-all national development. It was the belief that international co-operation in that field was in keeping with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter that had prompted the establishment of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Over the years, the rapid development of space technology had led a growing number of countries to set up their own national structures in that sphere, while the international community had seen fit to adopt a Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and other Celestial Bodies. The Committee had performed and continued to perform an extremely useful task, particularly in facilitating the formulation and adoption of important legal instruments; Uruguay was a party to all those instruments, without exception. Although more than 11 years had elapsed since the entry into force of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, it had to be admitted that the Treaty had not led either to the legal developments or to the practical implementation that might have been desired. His delegation therefore considered it necessary to urge that those two short-comings should be remedied and that the Treaty should be made universal and extended to all countries, even those not participating directly in space activities and not directly benefiting from them.

43. Since the very beginning of the space age, Uruguay had followed a policy of encouraging the development of space research and technology by setting up, for example, specialized bodies such as the Aeronautical and Space Research and Dissemination Centre, under the auspices of the General Directorate of Civil Aviation. The Centre's principal functions were to carry out research which could be put to practical use in the national interest, to publicize the results of that research, to provide advice and assistance to various public and private entities, to arrange for Uruguay's participation in international programmes, to study the legal problems involved in the exploration and peaceful uses of space, with a view to laying down regulations in that field, to develop and distribute scientific and teaching materials and to collect and process technical documents and information.

44. Uruguay, which had co-sponsored resolution 32/196 B, had for years aspired to active membership in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, an ambition which had so far been frustrated. Because it was precisely the less developed countries that most needed assistance and co-operation from the United Nations in an area in which they increasingly lagged behind the developed countries, Uruguay believed that the membership of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should be increased to enable developing countries to participate more actively in the Committee's activities, in accordance with the spirit of resolution 32/196 B.

(Mr. Camps, Uruguay)

It emerged from the Secretary-General's report on replies of Member States on that question that most countries were in favour of enlarging the Committee, some, such as the Philippines, Kuwait and Turkey, for reasons similar to Uruguay's. The arguments put forward by the opponents of increased membership were quite reasonable in so far as they were inspired by a positive desire to increase the Committee's effectiveness. Perhaps, however, those countries should consider whether the reasons for a measure that would protect the interests of developing countries were not more valid in terms of equity. His delegation would be willing to decide the matter at the current session, but would bow to the wishes of the majority if it preferred to postpone a decision until the next General Assembly session.

45. His delegation approved, on the whole, of the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. It was in favour of the elaboration of principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting, based on strict respect for the principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other States and the need to obtain the prior consent of the sensed State. The basic principle to be taken into account in the elaboration of a draft treaty relating to the moon was that the natural resources of the moon should be available to all States. Uruguay, which had participated actively in the first United Nations Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, held in Vienna in 1968, was in favour of holding a second United Nations space conference, which would have the objectives that were enumerated in paragraph 110 of the Committee's report (A/33/20), plus those of the first Conference. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space would serve as a preparatory committee for the conference, on the understanding, however, that all States wishing to speak in the discussions would be allowed to do so.

46. Mr. KI (Upper Volta) said that since the dream of space exploration had become a reality, man had become increasingly aware of the need to establish international co-operation in that sphere; such co-operation should be reflected both in law and in action. It was therefore important that the Legal Sub-Committee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should continue the dialogue on the elaboration of draft principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting, its consideration of the legal implications of remote sensing of the earth from space, the draft treaty on the moon and other celestial bodies and the definition of outer space.

47. Among the questions considered by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, one was of particular interest to the developing countries, and especially to the Upper Volta: remote sensing of the earth by satellite. It had clearly emerged from the various conferences on science and technology for development that the main reason why developing countries lagged behind was that they lacked access to or mastery of certain technologies. Remote sensing, which hitherto had been a virtual monopoly of certain countries, was a powerful research tool which, with a minimum of expense and time, made it possible to gain a synoptic and synthetical view of

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(Mr. Ki, Upper Volta)

certain phenomena by permitting rapid selection of the areas or aspects to be studied; it facilitated study of the development of certain ecological imbalances, of particular importance in Africa, and lastly, it had many varied applications relating both to the identification of the natural resources available to man and the relationship between man and his environment, while also enabling the effects of certain natural disasters to be contained. His delegation fully shared the conclusions of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee concerning the need to enable developing countries to use that technology and the need to continue international co-operation in that field, and concerning the vital role to be played by the United Nations in seeking to ensure the compatibility of the different systems and in facilitating access by States to that technology.

48. Since 1974 Africa, under the guidance of the Economic Commission for Africa, had been acquiring the necessary facilities. It had been decided, at the recommendation of a group of ECA experts, which had been ratified by the Conference of Ministers held in Kinshasa in March 1977, to set up an African Remote Sensing Council to co-ordinate the efforts of African countries to introduce sensing technology to the continent, to set up five user centres in Cairo, Ouagadougou, Ifé, Kinshasa and Nairobi, and two ground receiving stations, to which a third would eventually be added. An intergovernmental Committee, of which the Upper Volta was a member, was responsible for drawing up the Council's statute. Its report had been submitted to the Conference of Ministers Plenipotentiary held in September 1978 at Ouagadougou which had officially established the Council, thus marking a turning-point in the history of African scientific co-operation. His Government was also making considerable efforts to ensure that the Ouagadougou Remote Sensing Centre would become operational as soon as possible. Under the agreements concluded with the French, Canadian and United States Governments, the establishment of the centre would take place in two stages; during the first, which had already begun, a training and assistance programme for the centre's users would be set up and equipment for storing existing images and for reproducing and interpreting LANDSAT data would be installed; in the course of the second stage, which would start in 1979, a ground installation would be set up for the direct reception of LANDSAT data and the production of original images and magnetic tapes, and the facilities for analysis would be expanded.

49. The use of outer space for peaceful purposes still presented many problems, which affected all countries. Only through international co-operation could they be solved. In that connexion, the second United Nations Conference on Outer Space would enable the existing basis for co-operation to be strengthened and made more dynamic.

50. Mr. Piza-Escalante (Costa Rica) resumed the Chair.

51. Mr. SOLA VILA (Cuba) said that his delegation attached great importance to the work of the Outer Space Committee; the development of space technology could be a means of international co-operation and have beneficial effects on the economic, cultural and social life of developing countries. However, the progress made in

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(Mr. Sola Vila, Cuba)

that field over the past 10 years required many technical and legal studies on the part of the international community, in order to meet its members' desire for peace and co-operation.

52. As a developing, non-aligned and socialist country, Cuba was participating on a basis of equality with other socialist countries in the INTERCOSMOS programme in the fields of meteorology, biology, physics and telecommunications. It would be the first Latin American and developing country to send a man into space in 1979 side by side with Soviet cosmonauts. Cuba's collaboration with the USSR and the socialist countries was an example of fraternal co-operation of a new kind in that field.

53. His delegation believed that, with regard to remote sensing of the earth by satellite, every sensed State should have free access to the information gathered concerning its own territory and that such information should not be communicated to a third State without the prior authorization of the sensed State, which might otherwise suffer serious economic and other detrimental effects. The Outer Space Committee should give greater attention to that question.

54. His delegation supported the convening of a second United Nations conference on outer space. The conference should be carefully prepared and should deal not only with technical, scientific and legal questions, but, above all, with their practical aspects as they related to economic development, teaching, communications, environmental protection and meteorology.

55. The question of States' utilization of artificial satellites for purposes of direct television broadcasting had political repercussions. Some States advocated the principle of free information and free dissemination of ideas. Cuba subscribed to that principle if it was placed in the service of peace, détente, friendship and mutual respect among peoples. However, many countries and UNESCO itself had stressed that mass communication media could be a subtle form of cultural and educational colonialism that was often more dangerous than undisguised colonialism. Accordingly his delegation strongly supported the principle that the receiving State should give its prior agreement to any programme broadcast to its country. At the present time, it was the capitalist countries which had the means to invest in such new techniques, and their programmes were aimed essentially at the maintenance of the status quo and the ideological infiltration of the young States which had just freed themselves from racism and colonialism. An example that might be cited was the Guantanamo base, which was illegally occupied by the United States and where there was a television station which broadcast programmes to Cuba. That programme, which was directed against Cuba, made a point of giving a systematically distorted picture of world reality and the reality of Cuban life.

56. It was to be hoped that the international community would become fully aware of the dangers entailed for friendly relations among States by the satellite broadcasting of programmes which did not have the prior approval of the receiving State.

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57. Mr. OYONO (United Republic of Cameroon) said that his country was one of the 10 new countries recently admitted as a member of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, under General Assembly resolution 32/196 B, which reflected his country's growing interest in the work of the Committee.

58. Cameroon had a telecommunications ground station at Zamengoe, which had been built by the Ministry of Postal Services and Telecommunications, with the co-operation of friendly States. It had become operational in 1973 and was used by the International Telecommunications Company of Cameroon (INTELCAM). It qualified technically as a class A station and had a capacity which had increased from 12 to 44 circuits (established with France, the Ivory Coast, Italy, Greece, Spain, Senegal, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Nigeria). It had two control antennae for telemetric and tracking operations, as well as for remote control and monitoring, in particular for geostationary satellites located in the regions of the Atlantic Ocean and the Indian Ocean, in accordance with the contract concluded between INTELCAM and INTELSAT. Data links with the International Operations Centre at Washington provided INTELSAT with information on the state of the satellites on an ongoing basis.

59. With regard to the report of the Outer Space Committee, his delegation attached particular importance to the remote sensing of earth resources by satellite. The information gathered should be used primarily for purposes of economic development and should be made available to the sensed countries without discrimination. With regard to the dissemination of the data gathered, a sensing State possessing primary data more refined than a certain photographic spatial resolution concerning a sensed State should not communicate those data to a third State without the authorization of the sensed State, because the latter might find itself exposed to all kinds of cupidity and ambitions on the part of other members of the international community. It should therefore exercise its sovereignty fully with regard to the fate of such data.

60. Remote sensing by satellite had become an essential element of all programmes for the prospecting and exploitation of natural resources. In view of the importance of the potential of the correct evaluation and interpretation of such data for the developing countries, his delegation recommended that a third remote sensing centre should be established in one of those countries. The development of the transfer of technology and training was also particularly important, and the United Nations should play a leading role in that field. To that end, the United Nations programme on space applications should be enlarged and have increased financial resources available to it.

61. The question of the use of nuclear power sources in outer space, to which Canada had rightly drawn the attention of the United Nations, was of primordial importance, since the consequences of an accident in that field were particularly serious and difficult to estimate - especially for the developing countries, which were generally not equipped to cope with such an eventuality. His delegation therefore welcomed the Outer Space Committee's decision to establish within the framework of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee a working group to study technical aspects and safety measures relating to the use of nuclear power in outer space.

(Mr. Oyono, Cameroon)

62. His delegation also hoped that the difficulties being encountered with regard to the draft treaty relating to the moon and other celestial bodies and, in particular, the question of the moon's natural resources would be ironed out. It was gratified by the efforts made in that field by the Austrian delegation and hoped that that country's text, together with other proposals which had been submitted at earlier sessions, would make it possible to adopt an international instrument expeditiously. Future work on that subject should take account, firstly, of the fact that the moon and other celestial bodies belonged to mankind as a whole and, secondly, of the fact that general and complete disarmament in outer space was indispensable.

63. His delegation supported the recommendations of the Outer Space Committee concerning the convening of a second United Nations conference on outer space and, realizing the importance of the peaceful uses of outer space, wished to become a sponsor of the draft resolution on that question.

64. Mr. RIAZ HUSSAIN (Pakistan) said that the problems of the exploration and conquest of space were not insoluble, given sincerity of purpose and agreement on the role to be played by the United Nations in co-ordinating all space activities, so that the resources of outer space and celestial bodies, as the common heritage of mankind, were exploited for the benefit of mankind as a whole.

65. His delegation attached particular importance to remote sensing for gathering information on natural resources and their management, and fully supported the recommendation that sensed States should have full access to the data pertaining to their territories and should be able to participate in the activities undertaken by sensing States. Pakistan had laid special stress on the development of the necessary ground facilities and would be more than happy if the ground receiving station to be set up in Pakistan were to be used as a nucleus for a United Nations sponsored regional training centre. The United Nations space applications programme should be expanded to allow greater participation by the developing countries. The United Nations should also take the lead in assisting the nationals of developing countries to acquire further experience and training in fields related to space applications. To enable the United Nations to effectively discharge its many duties and to assist the developing countries in maximizing the benefits they could derive from advances in space technology, his delegation recommended that the Committee should consider the setting up of an international space agency, on the pattern of the International Atomic Energy Agency, with an adequate organizational structure backed by the necessary finances.

66. His delegation supported the recommendation to convene a second United Nations conference on outer space matters and announced that it had become a sponsor of the resolution on the peaceful uses of outer space.

67. Mr. IPSARIDES (Cyprus) said that the two questions under consideration, perhaps more than any other with which the General Assembly was seized, were of

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(Mr. Ipsarides, Cyprus)

crucial importance to the survival and prosperity of mankind. Space activities had already yielded significant benefits to mankind and would certainly yield immeasurable ones if continued within a framework of co-operation regulated for the benefit of all.

68. His delegation had witnessed with profound admiration the series of space flights carried out as part of the Soviet INTERCOSMOS programme in which cosmonauts from the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Poland and the German Democratic Republic had participated - thus highlighting in the most effective way the spirit of international co-operation in space exploration and research - as well as the remarkable space advances made by the United States in the space shuttle programme, which would open a new era in space transport.

69. The peaceful uses of outer space posed not only scientific and technical problems, but also had incalculable mental and moral effects and could be instrumental in introducing a new spirit into international relations and in reducing differences and tensions, with their inherent dangers. By opening up new horizons, space exploration increased the awareness of all peoples of their interdependence and common destiny, encouraged them to abandon their narrow concepts and prejudices and turned humanity away from antagonism and strife and led it towards co-operation and peace.

70. His delegation fully supported the proposal to convene a second United Nations conference on outer space in New York in 1983. He commended the Austrian delegation on the working paper which it had submitted on the draft treaty relating to the moon and regretted the stagnation in that field. The moon and its natural resources were the common heritage of mankind, and their exploitation should be undertaken in accordance with an international régime. He expressed the hope that, in 1979, further negotiations would yield a draft based on those principles.

71. Remote sensing of the earth played an important role in development, particularly that of developing countries. He expressed the hope that the Legal Sub-Committee would hasten its work on the elaboration of the principles that should govern such activities. The principle of the sovereignty of the sensed States over their natural resources should be safeguarded, and the sensed State must have continuous and priority access to data and information obtained by sensing States.

72. Regarding the use of direct broadcast satellites, reconciling the principle of the sovereignty of States and non-intervention in their internal affairs, on the one hand, and the principle of freedom of information on the other, remained one of the thorniest problems. However, any State wishing to make an international broadcast by satellite to another State should obtain the agreement of the receiving State.

73. His delegation supported the recommendations of the Legal Sub-Committee on the question of nuclear power sources in space. The use of geostationary orbits

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(Mr. Ipsarides, Cyprus)

should be rationalized. Moreover, priority consideration should be given to the definition and delimitation of outer space before serious problems arose, as had been pointed out by the representative of Nigeria.

74. The international community must endeavour to establish true co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space and to advance scientific progress hand in hand with international law if it wished to save humanity from the threat of self-annihilation.

75. Mr. AYUBZAI (Afghanistan) welcomed the decision taken by the General Assembly to expand the membership of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, thus enabling the developing countries to be better represented and, by participating more actively in the work of the Committee, to have a positive impact on the use of outer space for the benefit of all mankind.

76. Spectacular achievements had occurred in space activities. It was time for the international community to give attention to using those achievements for the benefit of all its members, in particular the developing countries. All countries must resist the temptation to monopolize the resources of outer space, a policy which, although it might offer short-term advantages, in the long run would be in conflict with the reality of genuine interdependence.

77. Turning first to the question of the draft treaty relating to the moon and other celestial bodies, he expressed the hope that further progress would be made in defining the legal régime to govern the exploitation of the natural resources of the moon, so that agreement could be reached on the text of the draft treaty. He reiterated his country's insistence on the principle that the moon and other celestial bodies were beyond the limits of national jurisdiction and that their exploration and exploitation should therefore be considered the common prerogative of mankind and be safeguarded against any imperialistic or exploitative attempts. As far as the question of direct broadcast satellites was concerned, the principle of the sovereignty of States should be given the highest priority.

78. Regarding the question of the remote sensing of the earth, he was pleased to note that agreement had been reached on the text of five further draft principles, albeit with some reservations. The consent of States on whose territory remote sensing had been conducted must be given before the data and information collected could be disseminated and was an integral part of the right of permanent sovereignty of States over their natural resources. Likewise, States had the right to access to data and information relating to them and obtained by remote sensing activities. Those principles were applicable, in particular, when the current pre-operational phase ended and global operational remote sensing systems were established.

79. His delegation supported the recommendations of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space regarding the convening of a second United Nations conference on the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space.

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(Mr. Ayubzai, Afghanistan)

80. The preparation of an international convention on principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting was of great importance, particularly in view of the great benefits that the developing countries could derive from it in the fields of education, agriculture and health. Accordingly, his delegation urged the Committee to expedite its work and submit the draft of the proposed principles to the General Assembly for the speedy conclusion of an international agreement or agreements on that subject.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.