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COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-SIXTH MEETING

Held in Vienna, Austria,
on Wednesday, 29 June 1977, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. JANKOWITSCH (Austria)

Report of the Legal Sub-Committee (continued)

Report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee (continued)

Question of convening a United Nations Conference on Outer Space

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(40 p.)

The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

REPORT OF THE LEGAL SUB-COMMITTEE (A/AC.105/196) (continued)
REPORT OF THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL SUB-COMMITTEE (A/AC.105/195) (continued)

Mr. REVOL (France) (interpretation from French): My delegation had not intended to speak in this debate, but we listened with great attention and interest to the various statements made yesterday and I should like in this connexion to make a few comments.

I should like first of all to thank and to congratulate Mr. Carver for his introduction of the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and also Mr. Radel, who presided over the Working Party on direct broadcasting by satellite with skill and effectiveness.

I do not wish to dwell unduly on this particular question of direct broadcasting by satellite, since discussion of it took place in the Working Party and since I stated as precisely as possible the French delegation's position in my statement during the general debate.

I wish at this point, like the speakers who preceded me, to express satisfaction at the results obtained in the Working Party, which did away with practically all of the square brackets and which, above all, made the text clear. This will, in my view, allow in future for an even more orderly debate so that it will be easier to arrive at constructive results.

On this same question, I should like to give the support of the French delegation to the proposal of the Swedish delegation requesting an indication by means of an asterisk of the possibility of reconsidering the entire text, in the light of results obtained, in order to avoid any duplication or ambiguity. In this connexion I believe that the task of simplifying the text will become more useful and easier as ideas become clearer in the course of our debates. In particular those fundamental concepts with regard to unavoidable spill-over and broadcasting directed at another State are, it seems to me, sufficiently clear for us to be able to avoid repetition, and misinterpretation is really becoming difficult.

(Mr. Revol, France)

I should like now to say a few words on remote sensing of the earth by satellite. I support the proposal of the United Kingdom delegation concerning the use of satellites for monitoring the environment. Indeed, that is a most appropriate field for the beneficial use of satellites, all the more so because public opinion in various countries has been made thoroughly aware of the problems of the environment, which are in fact serious problems.

I should like also to support the suggestion made by the Swedish and Canadian delegations -- in slightly different but very closely related ways -- concerning the need to maintain between the various systems of remote sensing that may be in existence a degree of compatibility or even complementarity sufficient to obviate gaps or duplication. The methods of creating this complementarity can vary. It was suggested that a group of consultants might be set up; this is perhaps a slightly expensive solution, but other solutions can certainly be contemplated. What is important is that the Committee be led to reflect on this extremely important question.

With respect to this question, I should like to recall that the delegation of India has quite rightly pointed out that this concern for complementarity and compatibility between the various systems must not lead to excessive standardization which, by doing away with certain adaptations necessary to specific situations, might perhaps result in a certain scientific and technical impoverishment.

As to the substance of the problem of the use which can be made of data from remote sensing, my delegation has made a few proposals to the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and to this Committee also with regard, in particular, to the distinction recognized and expressed in a very precise form by the Sub-Committee between primary data and analysed information.

Indeed, there are inherent in the problem of the dissemination and utilization of data provided by remote sensing concerning the earth's surface contradictory requirements which are most difficult to reconcile: on the one hand, that of the economic development of the world, and, on the other, that of respect for the sovereignty of States. Surely, we have here a problem similar to that which emerged with regard to direct broadcasting by satellite. It is perhaps less serious, because it is no longer a question of intellectual and moral problems, such as those related to information, but of material problems; however, the dilemma is virtually the same.

(Mr. Revol, France)

My delegation has made proposals in connexion with these contradictory requirements, but it is the first to recognize that these proposals are incomplete and unsatisfactory. On the other hand, we have not heard any fully satisfactory proposal. I believe that we are still feeling our way, and we must try to bring out points which are as little contested as possible in order to create a clear-cut situation allowing for action that is as equitable as may be. But all this is still highly empirical.

I believe that if this distinction between data and information is not sufficient for the establishment of a criterion as to dissemination or non-dissemination of what is gathered by means of remote sensing, other concepts must then be added, such as the power of spatial resolution, and, in this connexion, my delegation is delighted at the proposal of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee to request the Secretariat to make a study on the technical definition of resolution and on the practical applications which might ensue from this or that characteristic of such resolution.

(Mr. Revol, France)

In any event, I think that some very simple and fundamental principles have already emerged from the discussions on this point. My delegation has noted one essential principle which we think should provoke no disagreement and on the basis of which we may manage to evolve more differentiated principles, namely, the right of a sensed State to have communicated to it the data or information gathered not later than it is communicated to any other State -- in other words the right of priority of the sensed State with regard to the communication of data gathered on its own territory. That is a fundamental principle to which my delegation attaches the utmost importance and on which we could, perhaps, build the rest of the system by means of differentiated factors.

With regard to the point that was raised by a large number of delegations, namely, co-ordination within the Committee of the work of both Sub-Committees, I should like to recall the French delegation's suggestion at the Committee's last session concerning the agenda of the Committee proper. The Committee has each year a very simple agenda. Theoretically we consider in turn the reports of each of the two Sub-Committees. In point of fact, the discussions do not really take that shape and form at all, and apart from one or two specific items that are considered in the working groups -- as was the case with regard to direct television broadcasting, at this particular session -- the agenda is considered, I would say, rather haphazardly. Not that I would reproach you, Mr. Chairman; the fault lies with the agenda itself. But each delegation speaks in turn, as I am doing myself at this very moment, on absolutely everything; and I think that it would be a very good thing if, in the future, the agenda of the Committee were to be an analytical one -- that is to say, topic by topic -- without taking into account which Suc-Committee may have considered this or that item. Such an item as remote sensing by satellite, for instance, is one that is considered simultaneously by both Sub-Committees. So I revert this year to my suggestion; I think that it would contribute to easing the work of the Committee and, furthermore, ensure better co-ordination of both Sub-Committees.

(Mr. Revol, France)

Finally, I should like to mention one last point, that is, the question of the definition of space. The French delegation has for a long time insisted on the importance it attaches to the definition of space, which, in point of fact, concerns all the future work of the Committee. We are not suggesting or asking that the definition of space be immediately taken up as an item of priority, but, as I have already stated in the general debate, gradually, as other priority questions are settled, the question of defining space should take its rightful place among subsequent priority questions.

Mr. LUTHER (German Democratic Republic): As the delegation of the German Democratic Republic already declared in the general debate, it concurs with the report of the Legal Sub-Committee on its sixteenth session (A/AC.105/196). On this occasion, we should like to add some general remarks with regard to problems on the solution of which further substantial progress in the work of the Legal Sub-Committee depends.

It is, of course, no secret that between States having different social systems there are disparate interests that become evident in the process of the further development and codification of international law and that tend to complicate the work of the bodies concerned with it. Therefore, the content and scope of the progressive development and codification of international law are determined by the political will of the States that are participating in this process. To take an "all-or-nothing" position in this long process -- in which, as everyone knows, States with different social systems are involved -- cannot, in our view, be considered constructive. Rather, every State ought to be willing and ready to compromise. Moreover, the legal principles governing the activities of States in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space can be reasonably developed and modified only in the presence and to the extent of scientific and technological prerequisites for the regulation of a certain subject.

In other words, without secure scientific knowledge about the quality and quantity of the natural resources of the moon, we would not deem it useful to lay down the legal status of those resources and the status of the moon in

(Mr. Luther, German Democratic Republic)

the draft Treaty relating to the moon. Yet, in order to settle this problem by mutual agreement, our delegation supported the proposal made by some States at the sixteenth session of the Legal Sub-Committee that those questions of status be fixed in an additional optional protocol to the Treaty. Such a procedure would not be new, for in the case of international humanitarian law and of diplomatic law it has been a long-standing practice.

In approaching this surely difficult question, we consider, as do many States, that a prospective settlement concerning the moon and its natural resources should offer no unilateral advantage to any State or group of States. In that connexion, we think that a legal definition of the phrase "common heritage of all mankind" is indispensable, because, otherwise, considerable legal problems would arise concerning the scope and content of the rights and obligations of States.

Concerning the elaboration of principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting, my delegation's point of view is that useful work was done at the sixteenth session of the Legal Sub-Committee and within the Working Group. In that connexion, the delegation of the German Democratic Republic strongly supports the statement contained, with others, in annex II of the report of the Legal Sub-Committee on its sixteenth session, that the use of artificial earth satellites for such direct television broadcasting belongs to the field of relations among States and not to the field of human rights.

During the negotiations in the Legal Sub-Committee, the results of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Conference for the planning of the broadcasting-satellite service, which was held in January and February this year, played a certain role. The Final Acts of the Conference indicate that a plan elaborated for regions 1 and 3, that is, Europe, and Africa, Australia and Asia, will come into force for the States members of the ITU on 1 January 1979. Thus, the necessary arrangements in planning have been made for future direct broadcasting of television and radio programmes by satellite. The plan is a code of conduct for the radio administrations of the members of ITU, providing guidance for those administrations in strict adherence to technic parameters in direct television broadcasting by satellites also, but it does not regulate the contents of such broadcasts.

(Mr. Luther,
German Democratic Republic)

We would think it unfounded to interpret the plan as meaning that the consent of the receiving State to the broadcasting to its territory of direct television programmes by satellites would not be necessary. The mandate of that Conference comprised only the preparation of technical parameters, which will surely facilitate the elaboration of legal principles. It is known, however, that for the settlement of all political and legal problems involved in direct television broadcasting by satellite the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space is the competent body. Interpreting the International Telecommunication Union plan in the sense just indicated would in the final analysis lead to doubts about the necessity of elaborating principles for direct broadcasting by satellite at all. Therefore my delegation feels it would only be logical if prior consent for broadcasting to other States, which is stipulated in the ITU instrument, were embodied also in the principles for direct broadcasting by satellite to be worked out by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Our delegation proved its readiness to compromise on this important question by submitting the unofficial paper WG II (1977)/WP.4 at the latest session of the Legal Sub-Committee. That working paper was supported by other States. On this point I wish to state that our delegation is prepared to support all proposals for respecting and maintaining the sovereignty of States and the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other States.

Turning now to the question of the remote sensing of the earth, our delegation is pleased to note that at its latest session the Legal Sub-Committee was successful in elaborating a further six draft principles. We should like to convey our thanks and congratulations to the Working Group, especially its Chairman, Mr. Tuerk of Austria.

However, a central problem -- the application of the principle of permanent sovereignty of States over their natural resources -- remains unresolved. As annex III to the report of the Legal Sub-Committee indicates, a great majority of representatives of States advocated the application of this principle also in the case of remote sensing of the earth

In our legal thinking, the legal scope for practising remote sensing is limited, on the one hand, by the principle of the freedom of outer space and, on the other, by the principle of the permanent sovereignty of States over their natural resources. Over-emphasizing one principle would mean violating the other.

(Mr. Luther,
German Democratic Republic)

The argument against recognition of the permanent sovereignty of States over their natural resources -- the argument that those resources are neither touched nor exploited by remote sensing -- is not convincing. At the latest session of the Legal Sub-Committee we learnt that private groups occasionally misuse data obtained concerning the natural resources of other States to the detriment of the economy of those States. Therefore non-restricted control by each State of its natural resources is a direct expression of its right to self-determination and is in compliance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. In this sense, the United Nations General Assembly has on several occasions requested Member States to refrain from any action hampering one or another State in exercising its sovereign rights over its natural resources.

As regards the legal status of geostationary orbits, my delegation is of the opinion that those orbits are inseparable from outer space. Therefore the delegation of the German Democratic Republic cannot recognize the unilateral claims made by some States in 1976 to parts of the orbits of geostationary satellites in outer space. We consider the freedom of outer space, in which a prohibition of the appropriation of outer space is inherent, to be a yardstick and criterion for the legality of all outer space activities. My delegation holds the view that the freedom of outer space is a universal rule of international law which is recognized by the whole community of States as an imperative norm. For this reason no State can be allowed to override this principle in order to safeguard certain interests of its own. Besides, there is an obvious contradiction in the positions of some States which, on the one hand, propose to declare outer space and the celestial bodies the common heritage of all mankind and, on the other, plead for parts of that heritage to be placed under their national jurisdiction. We think this attitude is hardly likely to contribute to solutions which meet the legitimate interests of the international community of States as a whole.

My delegation reiterates that it is ready to make a constructive contribution towards the solving of pending problems.

Mr. CEAUSU (Romania) (interpretation from French): I have asked to speak again because of the statement we heard yesterday from the representative of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO). My delegation listened with great interest to that statement. It is particularly satisfied because the statement confirmed a position supported by the Romanian delegation at the session of the Legal Sub-Committee when the Working Group on remote sensing considered principle VII.

Indeed, in the present wording principle VII speaks of the dissemination only of information indicating an impending natural disaster. But the statement made yesterday by the representative of UNDRO contained a number of examples of when satellite recordings can supply useful, even vital, information, enabling the State to take the measures necessary to eliminate the consequences of natural disasters.

That is why, at the session of the Legal Sub-Committee, we proposed that principle VII should be expanded to cover that particular aspect also -- that is, the duty of States to transmit to other States afflicted by natural disasters the data necessary to deal with and eliminate the consequences of such aforementioned natural disasters. That is why the Romanian delegation feels that the utilization of data obtained by remote sensing from space within the context of relief activities in such instances should feature among the topics to be considered by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee.

I should like to say just a few words on agenda item 7.

The Romanian delegation has already had the opportunity to endorse the proposal concerning the convening of a United Nations space conference. We think the main subject of such a conference should be the application of space techniques, since that undoubtedly contributes to the efforts of developing countries aimed at doing away with the development gap existing between the two worlds.

(Mr. Ceausu, Romania)

Among the major goals of such a conference on outer space, in the opinion of the Romanian delegation, could be the transfer of space technology to the developing countries, the utilization of outer space for technological purposes, the possibility of using outer space for the production of energy, ways and means of promoting international co-operation in this particular sphere, and, finally, the role of the United Nations and its specialized agencies in the development of co-operation and the completion of the institutional framework of the United Nations with regard to outer space.

The Romanian delegation thus endorses the recommendation in paragraph 114 of the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee to set up a working group to consider all the factors involved in the convening of such a United Nations conference on outer space. As recommended by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, this working group could report on the specific objectives, the organizational aspects and the financial implications of such a United Nations conference on outer space.

Mr. ERDENECHULUUN (Mongolia): In connexion with the discussion of agenda items 5 and 6, I should like on behalf of my delegation to make some brief comments. But before doing so I wish to express the satisfaction of my delegation with the work done by the two Sub-Committees under the guidance of their respective Chairmen -- Ambassador Wyzner of Poland and Mr. Carver of Australia. I should also like to thank our Expert on Space Applications, Mr. Murthy, and the head of the United Nations Outer Space Affairs Division, Mr. Perek, for their valuable contributions to the work of the Committee.

In our statement in the general debate we had an opportunity to express our attitude on some of the basic problems dealt with in the reports of the two Sub-Committees. I should now like to touch upon the question of elaborating the principles governing the different aspects of remote sensing which were actively discussed in the Sub-Committees in New York.

The exchange of views by delegations on the question of the remote sensing of the earth by satellite has shown that the essence of the matter lies in the problem of the dissemination of data from remote-sensing satellites, in the light

(Mr. Erdenechuluun, Mongolia)

of the political, legal and technical implications concerning the access of States to data pertaining to their own territories as well as the availability of such data to other States.

While commending the progress achieved at its last session by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee in its efforts to define the terms "data" and "information", my delegation notes with regret that no agreement has been reached in accommodating different views of delegations on the rather complicated issue of the classification and dissemination of such data obtained by means of remote sensing.

As we know, the Sub-Committee has before it the proposal of the Soviet Union on the classification of remote-sensing data into categories such as "global" and "regional" to which free access will be granted by all countries by virtue of their global character, and "local", which will be disseminated only by permission of the sensed State.

In this connexion my delegation is happy to note that this constructive proposal of the Soviet Union has received broad support in the Sub-Committee as well as at the present session of the outer space Committee. And we submit that, in conducting further study of problems connected with the scientific definition of the problem of dissemination of primary data and of analysed information, the Secretariat should bear in mind their important and far-reaching political, economic and legal implications.

At the same time we should like once again to emphasize that in dealing with the draft principles of remote sensing the Legal Sub-Committee should continue to give high priority to its efforts to work out a common text of a generally acceptable principle to safeguard the sovereign right of all countries over their natural resources, as well as over information concerning those resources.

For this purpose we consider that the draft text appearing on page 6 of annex III of document A/AC.105/196 could serve as a basis for the discussion and elaboration of this important principle, which will be in conformity with the obligation of States to be guided in the exploration and use of outer space by the principle of co-operation and mutual assistance, with due regard for the corresponding interests of other States.

(Mr. Erdenechuluun, Mongolia)

We request that this position of our delegation, which is in fact shared and supported by a great number of delegations here, be duly reflected in the report of this Committee to the next session of the General Assembly.

Mr. MEHMUD (Pakistan): The Pakistan delegation would like briefly to comment on the reports of the Legal and the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committees as follows.

Concerning direct television broadcasting by means of artificial earth satellites, the Pakistan delegation supports the position that the receiving State must be consulted and that the arrangements for broadcasting to the receiving State must be arrived at in consultation with and with the approval of the receiving State.

With regard to over-spill after radiation, the Pakistan delegation would like suitable arrangements to be evolved and clearly spelled out in order to avoid any abuse of this phenomenon, since, if that is not done, the regulatory arrangements proposed in the first and second paragraphs under the heading "Consultations and agreements between States" in annex II of the report in document A/AC.105/196 are liable to be compromised.

Coming now to the remote sensing of the earth by satellite, the Pakistan delegation would support the position that all States should have the legal right of full access to remotely-sensed data pertaining to the territories under their control.

With regard to the question of an internationally owned and operated space segment, the Pakistan delegation supports the position that the sensed States should be able to participate in remote-sensing operations within the framework of collective arrangements resulting from an eventual co-ordinating role of the United Nations in this respect. The role should extend not only to possible future operational activities in remote sensing from satellites but also to the current pre-operational experimental phase.

Concerning the United Nations space applications programme, the Pakistan delegation feels that programme has remained at a low pitch since its inception in 1971 on account of limited funds, and that it needs to be expanded both in content and in scope. The Pakistan delegation would like there to be a substantial increase in financial support so that the programme may realize those objectives.

(Mr. Mehmud, Pakistan)

With regard to the convening of a United Nations conference exclusively on outer space matters, the Pakistan delegation fully supports the recommendation to that effect and also the recommendation that at its fifteenth session the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee should meet for three weeks instead of its usual two weeks, functioning for the first week exclusively as a working group of the whole with the mandate to study and report on all procedural matters related to the convening of that conference and to do preliminary work on the drafting of the agenda and other organizational matters.

Mr. DAYRELL de LIMA (Brazil) (interpretation from French): I should like to refer briefly to a subject that has been mentioned by many delegations during the last few days. I am referring to the question of geostationary orbit.

During the general debate my delegation reaffirmed its position on this question. I shall not recall that position now, but I should simply like to repeat that in the opinion of my delegation it is opportune to include in the agenda of our Sub-Committees an in-depth study of this question.

Brazil believes that the very existence of dissimilar conditions among States with regard to the exploitation of that limited resource means, in practice, that the occupation of the synchronous orbit takes place on a "first come, first served" basis. That practice could create situations where the annexation of a particular point of that orbit by a satellite does represent an annexation of space that contravenes the terms of the Treaty of 1967.

From the technical point of view, this presents a very special situation and it therefore seems perfectly natural to us that we should deal with the question of geostationary orbit in a special manner. We feel that the geostationary orbit should be made the subject of special treatment, and an internationally recognized régime should decide on the different aspects of this problem, taking into account the views of all interested countries, and especially the equatorial countries.

We have listened with great interest to the many statements which have been made in this context, especially the statement made in the general debate by the representative of Indonesia. We have also listened with special

(Mr. Dayrell de Lima, Brazil)

interest to the proposal made yesterday by the representative of Australia. That proposal is all the more pertinent, since that afternoon we heard a very interesting statement made by Mr. Robert Cooper of NASA, in which he referred to that question, namely, the occupation of the synchronous orbit by satellites. Now, we have been put on our guard by the fact that concrete problems already exist today concerning the movement of satellites. For example, we were told yesterday that when the satellite situated over India was moved to other positions, the problems raised were very serious, and the satellite encountered at least 40 obstacles on its route and that is a large number. According to information from the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), maximum occupancy of the synchronous orbit would, if I am correct, be about 188 points. We have already reached 40. It will therefore not be very long before all the usable points of the orbit will be occupied. When we hear statements about platforms for the exploitation of solar energy which are going to be replaced by space shuttles, it is quite clear that the question of the utilization of this limited resource must be dealt with immediately from the technical and certainly also from the legal point of view.

That is why I should like to ask the representative of Australia to submit his proposal in writing, so that we can make our own contribution in accordance with what I have just said.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the President of the International Astronautical Federation.

Mr. BARRERE (International Astronautical Federation (IAF)) (interpretation from French): It is a very great honour for me to have this opportunity to speak on behalf of the International Astronautical Federation to the members of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. I am very glad to be able to participate in the Committee's work.

The IAF has presented two annual reports to the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. The last one, dated 15 January 1977, sums up the essential scientific and technical results obtained in 1976 in the space field.

(Mr. Barrère, IAF)

The most important subjects relate to the use of satellites to collect data and to facilitate the research phases in the case of rescue missions. In the scientific field, two subjects were considered: those related to astrodynamics and relativity. Finally, among space operations and programmes, the report highlights a certain number of points concerning transport costs, manufacturing in space, energy systems and non-terrestrial materials. Most of those results were presented at the IAF Congress held at Anaheim, in the United States, from 10 to 16 October 1976.

That Congress was preceded by a two-week workshop on remote sensing and formed part of the United Nations programme on space applications. Thirty participants from 20 countries participated in the work of that group.

The IAF is ready to help, in this field and in other fields, the representatives of developing countries with information on and training in the use of remote sensing and in improved monitoring of the environment.

The IAF has very active working groups headed by the greatest specialists in space questions. Some of the work done by those groups is of direct interest to the Sub-Committee and two reports have been submitted by those groups to this Committee: one is on remote sensing of the earth by satellite and the other is on the costs of and the advantages offered by remote sensing.

At present, IAF is preparing a report on the remote sensing and monitoring of pollution and of the environment, as well as a report dealing with the main trends in the evolution of space activities, to which I shall refer later.

The utilization of remote sensing for the monitoring of pollution and of the environment must take place on two levels: observation of the surface of the earth to detect and control pollution, especially pollution of the seas and oceans; control of the atmosphere and, especially, of the stratosphere -- that is, control of variations in the composition of the stratosphere connected with the penetration of radiation and long-term climatic variations. The IAF is therefore very pleased to be able to participate in the work of the United Nations and is ready to answer any questions coming from this Committee which fall within its competence.

(Mr. Barrere, IAF)

I should like to avail myself of this opportunity to announce the forthcoming Congress of IAF and the symposia of the International Astronautical Academy to be held in Prague from 26 September to 1 October this year. Many subjects will be dealt with, some of them of direct interest to the United Nations Committee. The twenty-eighth Congress of IAF has chosen as its topic "The present and future utilization of outer space". The opening meeting will be held on 26 September, and the inaugural meeting will begin with a lecture by Professor Gazenko of the Academy of Sciences of the Soviet Union, dealing with the subject of man in space now and in the future. As the Soviet astronauts' physician, he is in a good position to speak of the problems of men living in space, on the basis of previous experience and the programmes contemplated for the future. This lecture will be followed by a forum discussion on outer space exploration.

I do not wish to dwell any longer on this programme, which includes more than 300 papers presented by specialists. A detailed copy is with the secretariat of this Committee and may be consulted. These papers and the discussions that will follow will serve as a basis for the drafting of the report to be prepared by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee of the United Nations Committee. That report will refer to the present state of affairs and to evaluations of scientific and technical developments in the exploration and use of space within the international framework. The basic emphasis of the Congress is on industrial activities in space and their consequences in different sectors of human activity: scientific, technological, industrial, ecological, biological and so on. An important place is also reserved for communication satellites, application satellites and space ships used for scientific experiments, all these activities being related to remote sensing. We should indicate two new departures from the work of previous congresses: one concerns the contribution of remote sensing satellites in expanding our knowledge of ocean and earth dynamics; the other within the framework of the Academy symposium relates to the utilization of satellites to study long-term climatic changes and to observe and control pollution resulting from climatic changes. These are, briefly, the different points that might be of interest to this Committee and especially the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee.

(Mr. Barrere, IAF)

I did not mention the participation of our Federation in the meetings of the Legal Sub-Committee, in which we were represented for the first time this year. The International Institute of Space Law of the IAF has among its members many representatives attending meetings of the Sub-Committee and thus very close co-operation in this field and also in the scientific and technical fields is ensured.

In the past an effort has been made by the Federation to respond to requests made by the United Nations, and IAF is ready to continue and even to increase its efforts, which cannot but be of benefit to both organizations and therefore will serve international co-operation.

Mr. DOYLE (United States of America): I have asked to be allowed to speak again in this discussion of the Sub-Committee reports simply to comment on some of the statements made by other delegations, in particular the statement made by the delegation of Canada yesterday afternoon, which we feel is a very positive and constructive attempt to focus work within the existing structures and to make the maximum use of our organs in carrying out the responsibilities of this Committee.

The Canadian delegation has proposed and my delegation, along with others that have done so, would strongly endorse a recommendation from this Committee to the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee to take up as a matter of importance or priority the questions of compatibility and complementarity among possible emerging operational remote sensing systems. The proposal has merit for a number of reasons, but we think the most important single reason is that it is an imaginative attempt to make sure that we do in fact use our existing mechanisms to the extent possible and take advantage of the expertise and competence that those existing mechanisms have. Knowing that the Secretariat is continuing its study on possible co-ordination roles for the United Nations, we think that the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee can benefit from the work of the Secretariat, and the Secretariat could benefit from the work of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. We hope that other delegations will find it possible also to support this very constructive proposal.

I should like to take just one moment to clarify a reference that was made by one delegation this morning to a statement made by Mr. Cooper last night in his reference to the transit in orbit of a satellite from a position in the eastern hemisphere to a position in the western hemisphere. He made reference to the fact that there were some 40 or 44 objects located in the geosynchronous orbit over which the transit was made. I do not recall that at any time those were described as obstacles or that they constituted obstacles to the movement of the satellite. I think that is a very important clarification.

(Mr. Doyle, United States)

One other statement on which I should like to comment briefly has to do with the question of the classification of data obtained by remote sensing and the desirability of compartmentalizing data in certain groupings based on technical parameters. I believe one delegation this morning asserted that there was very strong and broad support for one proposal that has been made in that regard. However, according to my recollection of discussions in the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, the proposal, while deemed to be of merit, did present some substantial problems. Certainly the question arose of whether or not one parameter -- the parameter selected having been resolution, for example -- was an appropriate basis for classification of data. My own delegation at that time spoke at some length about the problems of trying to segregate data on the basis of the uses that may be made of them, because one set of data has innumerable applications, and segregating it or classifying it into separate compartments may prove to be very difficult. We simply wish to offer that word of caution. We look forward with expectation to the conclusion of the special study that is being conducted now by the Secretariat for our consideration at the next meeting of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee.

To conclude, I should like to take special note of the excellent and informative statements that have been presented here by representatives of the Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Bank and the United Nations Disaster Relief organization. Those representatives have put forward an extremely impressive list of highly constructive applications that are being made globally through those United Nations organs and by Member States on a daily basis to improve our management of the world's resources, to predict, to assess and to alleviate disasters and for other beneficial uses.

(Mr. Doyle, United States)

My delegation simply wishes to recognize explicitly the work being done as being extremely important to the world community, particularly for the benefit of the developing countries. We think that these uses of space technology should be encouraged whenever possible, and we would hope that the Committee's report on the current session will give recognition to the excellent efforts made to complement and endorse that work and to encourage all Member States to co-operate with those and other organizations, to the extent practicable within their means, to assist them in their important work.

The CHAIRMAN: At its eighteenth session the Committee decided to grant representatives of the European Broadcasting Union an opportunity to address the Legal Sub-Committee and this Committee when a question of direct interest to that organization -- namely, direct broadcasting by satellite -- is being discussed. In view of that decision, I now call on the representative of the European Broadcasting Union.

Mr. CAZE (European Broadcasting Union (EBU)) (interpretation from French): First of all, I wish to express to you the deep gratitude of the European Broadcasting Union for having been granted this opportunity to attend the plenary sessions of your Committee and of your Legal Sub-Committee. We reiterate this gratitude to you today because we are most pleased with your decision at this session to set up a Special Working Party on Direct Broadcasting Satellites. At issue are problems of deep concern not only to us, an international agency comprising public services in Europe, the Mediterranean basin and the Middle East, but also to the many professionals, from inventors to industrialists, associated with the broadcasting and television industry.

Having thus expressed our gratitude, I must now voice some of our concerns. For one thing, we are concerned because we shall shortly be embarking upon the practical application of direct broadcasting by satellite. Some of our members, such as the Japanese National Public Broadcasting Service, beginning early next year, will be using direct broadcast satellites to serve their national television audiences Yesterday the representative of the European Space Agency informed the Committee of the experiments we are planning to carry out with that Agency, beginning in 1981, using direct broadcast satellites nationally. These experiments will span several years and involve a number of European countries.

(Mr. Caze, EBU)

Thus we are making great strides, at least in the field of broadcasting. What pleases us particularly is that this practical application rests on technological and legal foundations which are both lasting and reliable. And here I wish to highlight the vital importance to our activities in this field of the results of the World Administrative Radio Conference for Space Telecommunications held in Geneva in 1977, and about which much has been said here.

In this tremendous task of the allocation of the 12-GHz frequency band to telecommunication and broadcasting services we took great pains to be extremely precise in order to lay a firm foundation for our work. Indeed, we have established precise specifications not only for the position of the orbit, the power of the transmitter, the direction of the antenna and the widening of the beam angle but also for the polarization of the beam angle and other technical characteristics, in order to eliminate as much ambiguity as possible. All of that has been done on the basis of the fundamental principle of national service, thus laying, as I have just said, a very reliable foundation for a national service for national consumption.

In this the representatives of all 113 Governments present and of the 106 signatories to the Convention worked in a spirit fully in keeping with rule 428-A of ITU's broadcasting regulations. Not only did we study all requisite agreements to cover unavoidable spill-over, but we also co-operated very closely. As has been mentioned, I believe, a vast international -- indeed, intercontinental -- computer network has been set up, and the various national public broadcasting services are pooling their efforts to make the necessary calculations in order to establish the indispensable technical standards for serious future activity in this sphere. Thus, as I say, the ITU Conference made great progress, in terms of close co-operation among national public services.

Now, the criticism might be made that the efforts of the Administrative Conference in Geneva to regulate the use of the 12-GHz band were inadequate because they were based only on the principle of national service. I do not consider that an accurate assessment, because, as you know, approximately 10 countries have received permission from other countries to broadcast over an area extending far beyond their national borders. Furthermore, a great number of countries -- nine Western European countries, for example -- are using the same orbital position in order to facilitate simultaneous coverage by inevitable and, I could say, desirable spill-overs. In consequence, international television has not been overlooked in this effort based on the principle of national service.

(Mr. Caze, EBU)

A further criticism might be made that the results of that planning will be short lived because the planning applicable to 1 January 1979 envisages the allocation of frequencies over a 15-year period. I do not believe that. I think that the results of that planning are very long-lasting. While it is true that we have not considered the planning of higher frequencies -- the 40-GHz or 85-GHz bands, for instance -- those are frequencies on which scientific and technological expertise is still lacking, and their study will doubtless have to be postponed until the next century.

Furthermore, although we have allowed 15 years for the allocation of frequencies, it is not likely that their general and massive exploitation in the service of the national consumer will begin before the 1985-1995 decade. In other words, the receiving industry, which is so important both technologically and socially will not be in a position to muster all its efforts and reveal its importance before the 1985-1995 decade. Indeed, it does not seem likely, irrespective of the sovereignty of international conferences in this as in other fields, that the data that have heralded the dawn of a mass industry which, as we know is one of the forerunners of technical and social progress, will become obsolete much before 1994.

(Mr. Caze, EBU)

That is the reason why we are somewhat concerned. Experiments are about to begin, the technical bases have been laid down and they are precise, reliable, lasting and accepted by a very large number of countries, but we have a feeling of uneasiness because the fundamental principles, with respect to international policy and ethics, have not yet been completely defined, despite the efforts for which we are duly grateful. That is the concern which I wanted to emphasize, while expressing the wish that the thinking, the knowledge and the experience gathered within your Committee and the Legal Sub-Committee will be put at the disposal of governmental delegations which will, as was stated, proceed in 1979 to a general review of the regulations governing radio communications, which, as the Committee is aware, constitute the fundamental charter of our technical activities.

I should like once again to thank the Committee for having given me the opportunity to participate in its deliberations and to speak before it.

Mr. HALACHEV (Bulgaria) (interpretation from Russian): My delegation is speaking again in order to indicate its position on the main points in the reports of the Legal and Scientific and Technical Sub-Committees. Our delegation has already stated its position with regard to the items before the Committee in the general debate, but now, when the Committee is considering the reports of both Sub-Committees with a view to giving them guidelines for their future work, we should like to make certain brief observations.

We are in favour of very wide international co-operation, and we cannot visualize such co-operation without a co-ordinating role by the United Nations. Since it has been observed that the United Nations can play a co-ordinating role in the pre-operational/experimental phase of remote sensing and that such a role could, without prejudice to existing bilateral agreements, include internal and interregional co-ordination on such matters as, for example, professional training, technical assistance and the satisfaction through its programmes of the special needs of the developing countries, we can envisage a widening of this co-ordinating role.

It seems to us that the time has arrived to consider the matter and to discuss the co-ordinating role of the United Nations and, in particular, that of our own Committee in a wider form that would include all the activities connected with the peaceful uses of outer space pursued within the United Nations system, even if only to avoid overlapping and the non-utilization of resources.

With regard to the dissemination of information received from the remote sensing of the earth by satellites, we have already said that this should be examined, and it should continue to be included in our agenda.

With regard to direct television broadcasting by satellite, we think that, bearing in mind our position of principle, the principle of prior consent with regard to such broadcasting should find its rightful place in the document which is to be drafted. In this connexion our delegation regrets that at this session the Committee will not have sufficient time to fulfil its obligations and to reach an agreement on such a document.

Finally, I should like to make a few comments on the draft treaty relating to the moon. The drafting of this treaty is really being delayed by disagreement regarding the legal status which should be given to the resources of the moon.

(Mr. Halachev, Bulgaria)

Yesterday I listened to the statements of a number of delegations, setting forth their views on the matter and confirming their position that we must apply the principle of the common heritage of mankind. I fully respect this view; however, at the same time I must recognize that the legal consequences of this concept are unfortunately still unclear. That is why we cannot immediately accept this principle. I may be wrong, since I am not an expert on the matter, but it seems to me that the legal consequences of the application of such a principle are also unclear with respect to the sea. Thus, in my opinion, drawing a parallel between the two concepts is to say the least unjustified, if only because mankind began exploring and exploiting the oceans from the very beginning of its existence, and that was not the case with regard to outer space.

The concept of the common heritage of mankind is not the only solution; there may be other solutions available. As the Committee is aware, in 1974 our delegation made a very far-reaching proposal concerning the general utilization of the resources of the moon by all States, taking into account article V of the draft treaty. For the moment, this concept seems to us to be much clearer and, therefore, more acceptable. Its reasoning is simple, and we can cite much evidence in support of this well-founded principle.

I shall not now introduce the various arguments in support of our view, since we have done so previously. I should like however to request the various delegations supporting the principle of the common heritage of mankind to be so kind as to explain that concept in detail and how they see its legal consequences, in order to demonstrate to us that that principle is well founded. This would certainly help in our future work.

In conclusion, we should like to call attention to the very interesting proposal made by the Soviet Union with regard to the possible establishment of an optional protocol. We should study this proposal realistically for, if positions are incompatible, it might perhaps prove to be a good solution and could take us out of the impasse in which we find ourselves.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee has thus concluded its consideration of agenda items 5 and 6.

QUESTION OF CONVENING A UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON OUTER SPACE

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of Canada to introduce the working paper circulated as document A/AC.105/L.100, dated 28 June 1977.

Mr. BOYD (Canada): I wish to introduce, on behalf of a small drafting group, the working paper that has been distributed this morning to all delegations in document A/AC.105/L.100 of 28 June 1977 entitled, "Possible United Nations conference on outer space".

This paper, which has been prepared by the delegations of Austria, Brazil, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Kenya and Canada, is an attempt to advance the work of this Committee pursuant to paragraphs 109-114 of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee's report (A/AC.105/195). What we have drafted is, in effect, a possible section to be included in the Committee's report, following upon the recommendation of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee concerning the question of a possible United Nations conference on outer space.

Members of this Committee will recall that, at the last session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, an informal drafting group under the chairmanship of Mr. Bumba of Czechoslovakia made a certain recommendation -- recorded in paragraph 114 of the Sub-Committee's report -- that was accepted by the Sub-Committee as a whole. The Sub-Committee recommended:

> "the establishment of a small task force or an ad hoc working group of Member States to consider all the factors involved and any further relevant information and to report to the fifteenth session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee on the specific objectives, organizational aspects and financial implications of any proposed United Nations conference on outer space matters".

Accordingly, a group of interested delegations met a couple of times during this Committee's session and prepared this working paper, which, while faithfully

(Mr. Boyd, Canada)

reiterating the substance of paragraph 114 of the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, also attempts to reflect the thrust of comments that have been made by various delegations in the course of this Committee's debates. In particular, the paper underscores the point that what we have termed a "task force" rather than an ad hoc working group would be directly responsible to, and indeed a subsidiary body of, the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee.

Delegations will note that there are a couple of blanks appearing in this working paper. These omissions are deliberate since the sponsors of this paper would welcome the Committee's endorsement of the substance of the paper as a first step. A number of delegations have indicated their willingness to serve on such a small task force, which, preferably, should number not more than 15 members, but it would perhaps be premature to name these volunteers at this time. Similarly, there are some names in play for the chairmanship of the task force, but again it might be premature to advance those names at this time. However, delegations will note from the working paper that it is envisaged that a chairman will be elected by the Committee before our meetings are concluded.

With these brief introductory remarks, on behalf of the sponsors I commend the working paper in document A/AC.105/L.100 to the Committee for consideration and, I hope, adoption in principle.

Mr. SANCHEZ PEÑA (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): Before referring briefly to the possibility of convening a conference on outer space, I should like to stress -- since I did not have an opportunity to do so previously -- the very detailed and important contributions made by different organizations and specialized agencies of the United Nations, such as, for example, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Very detailed information has been provided to us, demonstrating the very important activities that have been undertaken with regard to international co-operation on that supremely important item, the use of remote sensing for a more detailed knowledge of the natural resources that are becoming increasingly less available in a world where the population is multiplying at a dizzy pace. My country, as a major producer of food in this world, would like to emphasize the importance of this international co-operation and to indicate that it has also participated in some symposia and workshops that have taken place and seeks to maintain the contacts it has made there.

Equally, with respect to the significant contribution made yesterday by the representative of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO), I should like to stress the fact that my country has programmes in which, through the application of by-products of space technology, it is performing a useful task with regard to certain types of disasters in certain regions of the world which create serious losses in agricultural production. An example of this is my country's anti-drought programme, which we are carrying out and with respect to which we are also maintaining close co-operation with other countries.

(Mr. Sanchez Pena, Argentina)

Concerning the United Nations conference on outer space, I should like to say the Argentina supported from the very beginning the convening of such a conference, regardless of the fact that items relating to space activities can be dealt with within the Conference on Science and Technology. I should like to say that the space conference should be convened at the most convenient time, which, on the basis of our studies, could be some time in 1980. Last year at the plenary meeting of the Committee in New York, my delegation supported the idea of holding such a conference. We also stated that view at the meeting of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee held in New York at the beginning of this year. At that time we stressed the need to set up a working group. The establishment of such a group is advisable and we should therefore like to support the proposal made by the representative of Canada, which appears in document A/AC.105/L.100, and which has been supported by a number of other delegations. Preparations should be made at the present session. The proposal should be examined not only at the next session of the United Nations General Assembly but also at the next session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee next year. As we already said at the beginning of the year during the session of that Sub-Committee, the working programme could be organized so that we could have one week of work possibly after the meeting of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. During that particular week the working group could devote itself to detailed planning of matters of a general nature as well as administrative and financial questions. Most important, it could draw up an agenda and define the various technical and scientific items, and perhaps also legal items, to be dealt with, the progress of space technology and the chief objective of the Conference. In this manner, at the meeting in 1978 we would already have a perfectly clear idea of the planning and the work programme.

Mr. PIRADOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): In reference to the Canadian proposal which appears in document A/AC.105/L.100, the Soviet delegation would like to state the following, particularly with regard to the advisability and possibility of convening a new United Nations conference on outer space. In this connexion, our position

(Mr. Piradov, USSR)

was made known in the Soviet reply to the questionnaire of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. We believe that the convening of such a new conference on outer space could be justified only if we were all absolutely certain that we have fully exhausted the other possibilities of considering matters relating to outer space within the framework of existing bodies, including the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The final decision on this matter, in our opinion, must depend on the results of the work of the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology, which is scheduled for 1979.

Nevertheless, in order to take into account the wishes expressed by a large number of delegations, we would in the first place have no objections to convening a working party, provided that it would be directly answerable to the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. Secondly, we would not object to the consideration by that party of the need and advisability of convening a new conference on outer space. Thirdly, we would not object to the Pakistan proposal to prolong for this purpose the session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. That is what appears to us to be possible and reasonable. However, that working party must be open to all States and not just to perhaps 15 members, as is being suggested here. I think that our suggestion is logical and fully justified.

(Mr. Piradov, USSR)

Furthermore, the group should meet at the same time as the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. The group should submit a report to that Sub-Committee and possibly also a report to the Legal Sub-Committee, if necessary. What appears to us unreasonable is, above all, the idea of convening the group at the time when the thirty-second session of the United Nations General Assembly is being held, since the group must take account of the deliberations of the General Assembly. That is why we think it is indispensable, or at the very least desirable, to introduce amendments in that respect to paragraphs 3 and 5 of document A/AC.105/L.100.

I should like to take this opportunity to suggest that a resolution could very well be drafted to thank the Government of Austria for the hospitality shown us and the outstanding organization of the work of this twentieth anniversary session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

Mr. LINSENBARTH (Poland): I should like to express the opinion of my delegation on the question of a second United Nations conference on outer space matters.

Questions concerning the convening of a United Nations conference on outer space have very often been discussed, and different opinions have been expressed by various representatives. In a sense the situation has been complicated by the decision concerning the convening of the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development scheduled for 1979. We have been of the view that there is no necessity to organize a special conference on outer space, since those matters might be presented and discussed at the Conference on Science and Technology for Development. On the other hand, we have noticed that many delegations, mainly from the developing countries, are interested in the holding of a special conference on outer space matters. In view of this, we are ready to agree that all aspects connected with the possible convening of such a conference should be examined by a special working group established within the framework of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and that an appropriate report should be presented at the next session of the Sub-Committee.

Mr. PIKUS (United States of America): I should like to address myself only to document A/AC.105/L.100. We can support this document in principle, but we should like to emphasize several relevant points.

Concerning the size of the working group, we see advantages in having a smaller, more efficient group. However, the group should certainly be open to all interested countries to allow them the opportunity to participate. We see this working group as an assessment group. It is not, in our view, a group concerned with the planning of a conference. Perhaps that will come later, but, as we understand it, this working group is not to deal with conference preparations.

We agree that this working group should be viewed as an organ of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, and should in fact report to that Sub-Committee the results of its discussion. We see the need to proceed with that discussion promptly and expeditiously. On the other hand, it is quite important for us to be aware of all the various forums in which space technology and its applications are discussed, especially as they relate to problems of development.

Therefore we reiterate the thought that any resulting conference on matters of outer space applications must be based on and must take fully into account the results of the 1979 United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development. That Conference, we expect, will provide a very coherent, balanced view of the role of all technologies, including space technology, in the development process.

Mr. de ICAZA (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation has already had occasion, in the general debate, to state its views on the convening of a conference devoted specifically to outer-space matters. As we said at that time, we favour the holding of such a conference, as long as we can be assured that it would produce concrete results and recommendations that would facilitate international co-operation in outer space activities.

As for document A/AC.105/L.100, which contains a suggestion of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, we would support it, albeit with the reservation that we favour the view expressed this morning by the representative of Pakistan, to the effect that the working group involved should be a plenary-type group, or at least, as the representative of the United States has suggested, a working group that would be open to all member delegations of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee.

Mr. MEHMUD (Pakistan): My task has been made easier by what has been said by the representatives of the Soviet Union, the United States and Mexico. The proposal presented in document A/AC.105/L.100 is not exactly what the Pakistan delegation had proposed earlier. We would still suggest that the need for such a conference and its agenda should be decided on by the holding of a meeting, which should be open to all Member States. That could be done before the commencement of the main meeting of the fifteenth session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. I would not add anything more to that. I am in agreement with the delegations of the Soviet Union, the United States and Mexico in this particular connexion.

Mr. OXLEY (Australia): There has been some evolution of the Australian position on the question of the convening of an outer space conference, and I should like therefore to set it out briefly here for the record.

During the last session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, my delegation declared its preparedness to support the consensus of the Committee on the question of when a conference should be held. Since that meeting, the question has been reviewed in Canberra, and it is now my Government's view that a second outer space conference should be convened. The international community is on the threshold of a new era in the peaceful uses of outer space. You, yourself, Mr. Chairman, listed at the beginning of this meeting a number of issues to which you felt the Committee might direct its attention in future. The advent of deep space probes, with the greater activity in outer space which the space shuttle will permit, once operative, is the result of some of the recent developments in technology which make your suggestions credible. But it is also the emergence of these very questions which merits the attention of the entire international community and requires concentration on the means to secure greater international co-operation in this sphere.

Additionally, as the Canadian delegation has correctly pointed out, we can envisage the possibility of several different remote sensing systems evolving. The Canadian suggestion that this issue is one meriting treatment at a conference is a relatively new one, which, while yet to be thoroughly considered by my authorities, has the initial attraction of logic to my delegation.

(Mr. Oxley, Australia)

The question of how space technology can be applied to the needs of developing countries is a major issue before us. My delegation appreciates the rationale of the proposition that before taking a decision on when a conference should be held, we should wait until it is clear to what extent the application of space technology for development needs will be dealt with in the Conference on Science and Technology to be held in 1979.

But my delegation doubts that the Conference on the Application Science and Technology for Development will be able to deal as comprehensively with the question of the application of space technology for development as would a conference devoted exclusively to outer space. Furthermore, the important new areas of application which we can see emerging, to which I referred a moment ago, and which are not directly inspired by the application of technology for development purposes, cannot be adequately discussed at the Conference on the Application of Science and Technology for Development.

(Mr. Oxley, Australia)

Therefore, while it would be logical not to hold an outer space conference before the Conference on Science and Technology has met, the likelihood that there may be common subjects discussed at both meetings should not inhibit us before that conference is held from deciding when a second outer space conference should be convened.

There are a couple of conferences which may have a direct bearing on the subject matter to which a second space conference might address itself. I refer primarily to the World Administrative Radio Conference (WARC) scheduled for 1979 and the meetings to be held in 1978 to permit the necessary preparatory work for that Conference in 1979 to be carried out. Current indications suggest that the World Administrative Radio Conference in 1979 will be important, and it would therefore be desirable that the second outer space conference be convened with the conclusions of that Conference serving as part of the backdrop for it. To convene the space conference before the World Administrative Radio Conference in 1979 would not be conducive to the most productive outcome possible.

Therefore, my delegation is able to lend its whole-hearted supported to the working paper introduced just a few moments ago by the Canadian delegation. Rather than seeing a need for unique arrangements to be made to enable the task force to meet, my delegation supports the philosophy of the working paper to the effect that the task force meet at convenient times, that is, at times when representatives participating can readily meet in conjunction with other meetings.

It is our understanding -- which we should like to underline -- that the task force is not to engage specifically in preparatory work for the conference.

Mr. ARTEAGA-ACOSTA (Venezuela) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation agrees with what has been said by the delegations of Mexico, Pakistan and the United States about the proposal concerning a working group contained in document A/AC.105/L.100.

We believe that, if it cannot be a group of the whole, its meetings should at least be open to all participants in this Committee.

Mr. LUTHER (German Democratic Republic): We are grateful to the representative of Canada for introducing document A/AC.105/L.100.

My delegation is of the view that the working group envisaged should be open to all States members of this Committee. Furthermore, we believe that any decision of this working group should be arrived at by consensus.

We also support the opinion expressed by other delegations that the group should report to the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee.

Mr. CEAUSU (Romania) (interpretation from French): As I said this morning, Romania supports the proposal concerning the convening of a United Nations outer space conference.

My delegation agrees in principle with the proposal made by seven delegations with regard to the setting up of a task force to study all the factors involved and any relevant information and to report to the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee at its fifteenth session on the objectives, the ways and means, and the financial implications of holding such a conference.

With regard to the composition of this task force, my delegation favours in principle the setting up of working groups or committees open to all States Members of the United Nations or of committees with restricted membership, as is the case of our own Committee. That is why I should like to make a suggestion in order to reconcile the various points of view. We might envisage including in this task force 15 members of the Committee and enabling all the other members of the Committee to participate without any restriction whatever. I think that the proposal to have 15 members of the Committee appointed to the task force is motivated by a desire to ensure the participation of at least 15 members of our Committee and is not made with a view to excluding any of the other members of the Committee.

With respect to the dates on which the task force would meet, we have heard the suggestion that it meet in New York at least once in conjunction with the thirty-second session of the General Assembly. One or two delegations objected to the proposal, suggesting that we should await the outcome of the deliberations of the next session of the General Assembly. I think that these two points of view can be reconciled. In order to be in a position to take into

(Mr. Ceausu, Romania)

account any possible directives which the General Assembly might give to the Committee at its thirty-second session, the task force could very well meet after the consideration in the First Committee of the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Thus the task force could duly take into account the findings of the General Assembly session.

Mr. WILLIAMS (Nigeria): My delegation wishes to address itself to document A/AC.105/L.100, which was introduced by Canada.

We agree in principle to the proposal to convene a United Nations conference on outer space. We should like to point out that a small task force could on an ad hoc basis consider the factors involved and report to the fifteenth session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee on the objectives, organizational aspects and other matters.

However, my delegation is of the opinion that the membership of the task force should be limited, since its report will have to be considered by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee.

Mr. MAGNO (Italy) (interpretation from French): The Italian delegation supports the proposal that a task force be set up. I think that the observations and objections made by various delegations have dealt with the substance of the question and can be discussed either in the special task force or in the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee.

With regard to the composition of that special task force, several possibilities have been suggested. The working paper refers to 15 members, but I think that the idea put forward by the representative of Romania is a good one, namely that a special task force should be constituted, composed of 15 members who would form a sort of mandatory presence; meanwhile the task force would be open to all other members of the Committee that wish to participate, on a voluntary basis, in the work of that body.

I should like to make an additional observation with regard to the text proposed by the representative of Austria and others. When referring to the objectives of the proposed conference, he said that it should deal with "questions of outer space". Given the fact that the special task force is to be set up as a subsidiary organ of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, I should like to propose the addition of the word "all" so that the phrase reads "all questions of outer space". That may be obvious, but I say it in order to prevent anyone from thinking that the questions relating to outer space with which the conference will deal lie solely within the competence of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee.

Mr. EDMONDS (Canada): I wish only to point out that we have had a very interesting debate on this subject. Various viewpoints have been expressed and compromises have been proposed. I would propose, as a procedural suggestion, that we leave this item open for the time being so that any drafting changes that may be necessary can be made.

The CHAIRMAN: I would suggest instead that we conclude our consideration of this item and that, until such time as this matter comes up in the draft report, those delegations that are interested in the matter should conduct consultations as intensively as they can, so that the viewpoints that do not seem to be too far apart may be reconciled and so that by the time we come to this matter in the report we may have a text agreed on by all delegations.

I think that this might be the procedural approach that would allow us to continue on to item 8 in the afternoon and to begin consideration of certain portions of the draft report because, as representatives are aware, the pressure of time is building up and I think that we should proceed with all due speed. If the Committee is in agreement, I shall take it that we have concluded our debate on item 7 of the agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.