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Chairman: Mr. CHOO (Malaysia)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 75: INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE
(continued) (A/44/20, A/44/469; A/SPC/44/L.18)

1. Mr. FREUDENSCHUSS (Austria) introduced draft resolution A/SPC/44/L.18, prepared by the Working Group on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, and drew attention to the differences between the draft and the previous resolutions of the General Assembly on the item. The changes, which updated the text and took up the conclusions of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) at its twenty-sixth session, occurred in the seventh preambular paragraph and in paragraphs 5, 6, 13 and 20 to 23 of the operative part. While recognizing the competence of the Fifth Committee, the Working Group recommended that the Special Political Committee should invite the Chairman of the Legal Sub-Committee of COPUOS, bearing in mind the substantive legal objectives of the Sub-Committee, to make the necessary arrangements with the Secretariat with regard to conference services in order to utilize the available resources more efficiently.

2. Mr. JERKIĆ (Yugoslavia) said that the exploration and utilization of outer space by all were inseparably linked to the progress of mankind and that, although advances had been made in that field, much remained to be done. In particular, since outer space was the common heritage of mankind, it was necessary to ensure that science and technology were placed in the service of mankind as a whole and that the arms race did not extend to outer space. It was also necessary to continue the search for means of broadening that co-operation, particularly since the current climate of international understanding offered new perspectives in that direction.

3. His delegation accorded special importance to the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, whose application should be promoted, particularly with regard to training and education programmes, as well as the themes of the safe use of nuclear power sources in outer space, the delimitation and definition of outer space and the character and use of the geostationary orbit. As a developing country, Yugoslavia also accorded special importance to the theme of the legal aspects related to the application of the principle that the exploration and utilization of space should be carried out for the benefit of all States, consideration of which should begin as soon as possible in view of the increase in space activities and their increasingly complex character.

4. Mr. ERDENECHULUUN (Mongolia) said that the positive trends in world politics augured well for the promotion of international co-operation in the exploration and utilization of outer space. In view also of the concrete advances in that co-operation in 1989, which Mongolia valued highly, including the results achieved at the recent sessions of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and the Legal Sub-Committee and in the field of the execution of training programmes and various aid benefits, particularly those in favour of developing countries, it must be concluded that in 1990 COPUOS would make substantial headway in the solution of outstanding problems.

(Mr. Erdenechuluun, Mongolia)

5. With regard to future action, Mongolia considered that the Legal Sub-Committee should consider the legal aspects of the definitive version of the principles on the use of nuclear power sources in outer space and the item concerning the legal aspects related to the application of the principle that the exploration and utilization of outer space should be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all States. To that end, an appropriate relevant working group should be established at the Sub-Committee's next session.

6. COPUOS should assign high priority to the question of ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes. In that field it should complement the work of other international forums, including the Conference on Disarmament. In that regard, his delegation unreservedly endorsed the position of the non-aligned countries, namely, that it was necessary to initiate substantive negotiations on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. It should also accord greater importance to the problem of space debris and consider the question of how to strengthen international co-operation in the development of spin-off benefits of space technology and in ensuring that all countries had access to those benefits. In co-operation with other countries and some United Nations agencies, Mongolia was developing a national programme for the application of space science and technology. The central element of that programme was to be the elaboration of a scientific and methodological basis for the application of remote sensing by satellite in various fields, including agriculture. The Soviet Union and INTERCOSMOS were co-operating with Mongolia in that regard.

7. The General Assembly should endorse the recommendation of COPUOS that 1992 should be designated international space year. Lastly, Mongolia believed that the developments in the international space field indicated the need to establish a world space organization, which would be instrumental in the world-wide mobilization of resources for space activities that would promote the progress of all mankind.

8. Mr. NOREEN (Sweden) said that the international community must take advantage of the improvement in international relations to promote co-operation in outer space, particularly in view of the fact that the General Assembly had just adopted, on the basis of a joint initiative from the United States of America and the Soviet Union, a resolution calling upon all States to intensify their practical efforts towards ensuring international peace and security in all its aspects through co-operative means.

9. His delegation regretted that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its two Sub-Committees had been unable to achieve more substantial results with regard to the safe use of nuclear power sources in outer space, a matter of highest priority that concerned all nations could only be considered in a multilateral context. He acknowledged that agreement had been reached on five principles pertaining to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space. Nevertheless, it must be recalled that considerable differences of opinion existed on a number of other principles. Accordingly, every effort must be made in 1990 to accelerate the work on that topic so that consideration of the item could be concluded within a year or so.

(Mr. Noreen, Sweden)

10. Progress had also been slow with regard to the implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, and his delegation, which had consistently called for more rapid implementation of those recommendations, looked forward to the report on that subject to be prepared for the next session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee by the Outer Space Affairs Division. In that connection, he recalled that one of the most important achievements of the Conference, namely the recommendation that the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, which was a central instrument for promoting the use of scientific and technological advances in that field, should be strengthened. As the Programme obviously could not be strengthened without a sound financial basis, he drew attention once again to the importance of voluntary contributions. Sweden intended to support Programme activities by hosting a training course in the field of remote sensing in 1990 for States members of the Economic Commission for Africa.

11. In recent years, the problem of space debris had been recognized as posing a threat to man's exploration and utilization of outer space. Although the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had been unable to reach an agreement at its most recent session on the proposal to consider that topic at the next session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, it had been agreed that the problem was one of interest to all mankind.

12. Mr. KHANI (Syrian Arab Republic) said that outer space and its exploration and use should be reserved for peaceful purposes. The United Nations and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had an important role to play in enabling all States, regardless of their level of development, to benefit equally from technological progress in the field of space research.

13. His delegation wished to reiterate that the developing countries required assistance, particularly in the areas of training and equipment, as well as information regarding space technology applications.

14. Mr. DIMITROV (Bulgaria) said that numerous changes had taken place during the past four decades since, after the horrors of the Second World War, an awareness of the common interest in security had emerged, making it possible to take steps to reduce the level of confrontation. The transition was a difficult one for all and required the discarding of obsolete dogmas and stereotypes.

15. Bulgaria attached particular importance to mechanisms to promote international co-operation and supported all initiatives aimed at averting an arms race in outer space and guaranteeing the use of space for peaceful purposes to the benefit of all mankind. The proposal by the Soviet Union to establish a world space organization opened up new opportunities in that respect, and its implementation would enable all States to use the results of space research for their own development. The Indian initiative to initiate a series of "PEACE" (Protection of Environment for Assuring Cleaner Earth) satellites could also help to solve pressing global environmental problems.

(Mr. Dimitrov, Bulgaria)

16. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space was the appropriate forum in which to consider such proposals and to exchange information on space research. The Committee could continue to play an important role by strengthening the legal framework governing the exploration and use of outer space in order to prevent the arms race, in keeping with the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

17. Bulgaria had been promoting co-operation activities in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes within the framework of the INTERCOSMOS programme. Two joint space flights had been carried out by Bulgaria and the Soviet Union, the second of which had marked the beginning of the implementation of the SHIPKA project. Experiments and studies had also been conducted with the help of nine systems made and developed in Bulgaria, and data in the field of space biology and medicine had been obtained. All that offered an example of the contribution a small country could make if it pooled its resources with the efforts of other States.

18. His delegation welcomed the successful work done by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space at its thirty-second session, work which was objectively reflected in document A/44/20. Also positive, though modest, were the results of the twenty-sixth session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, although he noted that the Legal Sub-Committee had encountered difficulties at its twenty-eighth session in its consideration of the legal aspects related to the application of the principle that the exploration and utilization of outer space should be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all States.

19. The concrete proposals made concerning the definition and delimitation of outer space and the character and utilization of the geostationary orbit could serve as a basis for future discussions and that the designation of 1992 as international space year would become a significant event in the development of space science and technology and international co-operation in that field.

20. Mr. TARAR (Pakistan) said that his country shared the international concern over the danger of the militarization of outer space, which must be preserved for peaceful purposes in order to promote the scientific, economic and social development of all nations equally.

21. Existing bilateral and multilateral legal instruments must be respected faithfully, particularly by the space Powers, and the 1967 outer space Treaty should be amplified to ensure that outer space was used exclusively for peaceful purposes, without any ambiguities or lacunae. In that context, special attention should be paid to banning anti-satellite weapons and anti-ballistic missile defence systems and to the dismantling of existing systems.

22. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had a legitimate interest in keeping outer space free from all types of weapons and ought therefore to continue to provide technical, scientific and legal advice to the Conference on Disarmament.

(Mr. Tarar, Pakistan)

23. It was unfortunate that, despite repeated appeals made in the Committee, the United Nations Programme on Space Applications continued to receive inadequate funding. Pakistan, which had been making regular contributions to the Programme, had contributed \$15,000 in 1989. The Programme should be accorded priority and be provided with adequate financial resources so that it could strengthen the transfer of technology and technical assistance to developing countries.

24. His delegation supported the proposal to celebrate international space year in 1992 and agreed that commemorative activities should focus on scientific and technical education and training with a view to demonstrating that space research was responsive to social and economic needs, particularly in the developing countries. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should develop a framework to ensure that knowledge and technology derived from space activities were shared equitably by all and should undertake an appraisal of accomplishments to date.

25. In 1989, the Government of Pakistan had collaborated with the Outer Space Affairs Division of the United Nations and, within the framework of Indian Ocean Marine Affairs Co-operation (IOMAC), had hosted a workshop on oceanographic and marine space information systems designed to promote co-operation in the evaluation and management of marine resources and environmental monitoring in the region.

26. The unchecked growth of debris in outer space was a matter of concern for the international community, being liable to create serious problems for space exploration and other space applications. The collision of debris with satellites carrying nuclear power sources would be extremely hazardous. The problem had to be solved through scientific and technological means, by removing satellites from the geostationary orbit on completion of their serviceable life. It was also necessary to achieve a set of principles regarding the use of nuclear power sources in outer space. In that context, his delegation had suggested in the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee that no nuclear-powered satellite should be launched in near-Earth orbit.

27. His delegation was concerned over the increased commercialization of remote-sensing activities and services by the developed countries, and regretted that not all remote-sensing-satellite-operating States made the data obtained by them available to the interested States. The United Nations should continue to work for ensuring free access to remote-sensing-data satellites. Continued international efforts were also needed to ensure the compatibility and complementarity of systems for remote sensing so that the ground facilities were saved from premature obsolescence or the need for costly modifications. Satellite-operating States should also take steps to bring about a substantial reduction in prices and access fees to make them affordable to the developing countries.

28. His delegation stressed the need for equitable and just access by all States to the geostationary orbit. Suitable orbital positions must be reserved for Member States which made a request, taking into account their needs, even when for the time being they lacked the resources to use them.

(Mr. Tarar, Pakistan)

29. In conclusion, his delegation supported the Government of Malaysia's application for membership in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. It was convinced that Malaysian participation would make a significant contribution to the work of the Committee.

30. Mr. TETU (Canada) said that his country attached great importance to the question of the peaceful uses of outer space, which was one objective of the recently created Canadian Space Agency. In response to the challenges of its geography and environment, it had developed strong capabilities in remote sensing and space telecommunications; space technologies were now integrated into its infrastructure. Canada was proceeding with the development of Radarsat, its first remote-sensing satellite, to be launched in 1994 in co-operation with the United States. Radarsat would provide valuable information on ice conditions, crops, forests and geological formations, owing to its ability to collect data through darkness and cloud. It would also be used for global environmental monitoring and surveillance of natural disasters.

31. Canada remained committed to sharing its knowledge with other countries, and had worked both bilaterally and through the United Nations to strengthen the capabilities of developing countries to use space technologies in dealing with their own unique situations. In February 1989, Canada had organized a seminar for developing countries on the use of new technologies in remote sensing and geographical-information systems to complement consideration by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee of the special theme "Space technology as an instrument for combating environmental problems, particularly those of developing countries".

32. Canada considered that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space played an important role in creating an international legal framework to support the use of space for the benefit of mankind. It recognized as well the importance of international co-operation in space, and had signed a 10-year co-operative agreement with the European Space Agency. Canada was also co-operating with Japan in a space panel.

33. Canada shared the concerns of several delegations about the possible extension of an arms race into outer space. It believed that the proper forum for negotiations on that issue was the Conference on Disarmament.

34. His delegation supported the Committee's recommendation that the General Assembly should endorse the initiative of international space organizations and bodies to designate 1992 as an international space year. It also welcomed the consensus achieved in the Legal Sub-Committee on establishing a working group to consider the issue of outer-space benefits. It would work seriously with member countries to address that very important topic.

35. A topic of major importance to Canada was the use of nuclear power sources in space, on which some important progress had taken place with the participation of experts from many countries. In the discussions of the Legal Sub-Committee concerning the elaboration of draft principles relevant to the use of nuclear power

(Mr. Têtu, Canada)

sources in outer space, Canada was most concerned with principle 3, on guidelines and criteria for safe use. The elements of a consensus existed; what was now needed was the political will to pull the elements together.

36. That principle must be sufficiently flexible but not be too general. A general reference to accepted international radiation-protection guidelines was not sufficient; it must be coupled with specific limits.

37. The proposal submitted by Canada in working papers during the past year was not too technical, and achieved a balance between flexibility and effective safety criteria, allowing users of nuclear power sources to find their own effective measures to achieve defined levels of safety, and ensured that designers were not able to completely ignore the consequences of accidents. Finally, it precluded the disposal of nuclear power sources through uncontrolled re-entry. His delegation looked forward to working with other delegations to achieve consensus.

38. Many delegations had expressed concern over the growing problem of space debris. That explained why Canada, along with Australia, Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands, Nigeria and Sweden had proposed that that issue should be added to the agenda of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, with a view to further discussion next year.

39. Mr. VERCELES (Philippines) noted that progress had been made on a number of substantive issues on the agenda of both Sub-Committees. The new international atmosphere was leading to a deeper recognition that co-operation among peoples and nations was the only rational course in resolving the problems and challenges facing mankind. The Philippines had committed itself to the 1967 Treaty, principally because that instrument recognized the common interest of all mankind in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes, which should be carried out for the benefit of all peoples. The militarization of outer space was therefore unacceptable.

40. His delegation attached considerable importance to the speedy implementation of the decisions of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The United Nations Space Applications Programme had played a central role for developing countries and he recognized its excellent work despite its meagre budget.

41. Remote sensing had become a major planning tool in the Philippines. Given its economy, based mainly on natural resources, the Philippines applied remote-sensing technology in natural resources inventory and assessment, land-use planning, geological studies and environmental monitoring. However, it faced constraints in fully maximizing its operational potential in the matter of access to data and their commercialization, continuity and compatibility of data systems, data management and the diffusion of technology among users. Since access to data was highly dependent on the presence of a ground receiving station, such stations oriented towards a particular satellite should be transformed into a network of stations interconnected and interrelated through wire or radio relay linkage. That

(Mr. Verceles, Philippines)

could be done on a regional basis so that data reception could be properly co-ordinated among stations having a common area of coverage.

42. The commercialization of data had had a negative impact on developing countries, and the Philippines hoped to see its cost kept reasonable so as to ensure continuity in supply. Satellite owners should not charge a flat rate: fees must be based on the volume of data received.

43. The Philippines shared the concern of the international community over the hazards to mankind and the environment arising from the unplanned re-entry into Earth's atmosphere of malfunctioning space objects with nuclear power sources on board. Hence, his delegation was pleased with the progress in the deliberations on that topic, the consensus reached on two additional draft principles concerning nuclear power sources and the fact that the Committee had agreed that the issue of space debris was of concern to all nations and an appropriate topic for discussion in the Committee. As a "non-space-faring" nation, the Philippines considered the development of a legal framework allowing meaningful participation of developing countries in the uses of outer space very important. It was heartened by the adoption of the new item in the agenda of the Legal Sub-Committee for considering the legal aspects of the application of the principle that the exploration and utilization of outer space should be carried out for the benefit of all States, taking into account the particular needs of developing countries. The fact that a working group had been established to address that issue at the next session of the Legal Sub-Committee was a positive step.

44. Mr. SATOH (Japan) said that his delegation highly appreciated the achievements made over the past year by the Committee and its two Sub-Committees. In order to continue their important role, the working methods of those bodies must be reviewed in order to ensure that they were functioning as efficiently as possible. The work of the Committee should be revitalized to make its deliberations realistic and orderly, free of political or ideological polemics.

45. His delegation supported the designation of 1992 as international space year and hoped that the year would be celebrated with the co-operation of all Member States and relevant organizations and that a variety of projects focusing on space application programmes would be undertaken.

46. His delegation was very pleased that the working group of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee had been reconvened to consider the question of nuclear power sources in outer space. It also appreciated the intensive discussions conducted by the working group at the last session of the Legal Sub-Committee which had resulted in the adoption by consensus of the principles governing consultations and settlement of disputes. Japan shared the view that more international attention should be paid to space debris, because, if its volume continued to increase, it could have a serious impact on activities related to the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space. At the same time, there was not yet sufficient scientific information available for a thorough discussion of the issue. It was advisable for national institutions of Member States to continue their intensified research in order to accumulate more information.

(Mr. Satoh, Japan)

47. His delegation highly appreciated the efforts of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee to make its work more interesting to scientists and experts. It was grateful to those delegations and international organizations which had made presentations, at the very instructive and useful symposium organized by the Committee on Space Research (COSPAR) and the International Astronautical Federation (IAF) on space technology as an instrument for combating environmental problems, particularly those of developing countries.

48. With regard to practical applications of space technology, Japan's first remote-sensing satellite (MOS-1), launched in February 1987, had helped in obtaining useful data on agriculture, forestry, fisheries, topographical surveys, land use and marine and water resource development. Those data had been disseminated on an open and non-discriminatory basis and, in co-operation with the Association of South-East Asian Nations, Japan had conducted a research programme on data analysis technology, marine resources, and land-use development technologies.

49. In the communications field, over the past year Japan had conducted joint experiments with Australia using the Engineering Test Satellite - (ETS-V), launched in August 1987, the first satellite designated for maritime, aeronautical and land mobile communications. Moreover, Japan had developed the ETS-VI, to be launched in 1993, for advanced experiments in satellite communications. In September 1988, Japan, the States members of the European Space Agency, the United States and Canada had signed a space station co-operation agreement, and Japan had deposited its instrument of acceptance in September 1989.

50. The exploration of outer space and the development of new methods to put its discoveries to peaceful uses could benefit the world in ways as yet unimagined. Japan would therefore continue its space activities and participation in international efforts in that vitally important area.

51. Mr. PAWLAK (Poland) said that international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space had made substantial progress in the past few years. Evidence of that was to be found in the great variety of missions, experiments and research programmes and the co-ordination and promotion of co-operative projects within the United Nations system. The improved international political climate and new political attitudes had created favourable conditions for the development of common endeavours in outer space. His country supported the idea of establishing a world space organization which would benefit all States.

52. Poland had conducted space activities in collaboration with other countries, first of all under the INTERCOSMOS programme. Those activities had been centred on space communications, space physics, geodesy, biology, medicine, and satellite meteorology. The Remote Sensing Centre at Warsaw played a very important role in that field and was equipped with modern instrumentation for analog and digital image-processing. Foreign specialists, particularly from the developing countries of Africa and Asia, had benefited from the experience gained by the Centre and had received training and assistance in the establishment of centres or application of remote-sensing technology.

(Mr. Pawlak, Poland)

53. Space exploration and research could contribute, first of all, to the solution of various global problems for the benefit of all countries. For example, they could make possible the observation of Earth from space with a view to tackling environmental problems, protecting outer space against pollution by space debris, solving problems connected with satellite communications, using space technology for search-and-rescue operations on land and sea, and monitoring disasters. Those problems should be resolved mostly within the United Nations system. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space remained an invaluable body for furthering international co-operation and, after nearly 30 years, had confirmed its importance and usefulness at its recent session.

54. The recent session of the Legal Sub-Committee had also produced positive results. He supported the idea that the working group established to examine the last item on its agenda should develop a set of legal principles with a view to institutionalizing international co-operation. Attention should be drawn in particular to the interesting discussion on the draft principles relating to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space. From a formal point of view, progress had been made on the principles concerning consultations and peaceful settlement of disputes, but there was an urgent need to work out a set of principles establishing the strictest precautionary standards for launching and operating space objects with nuclear power sources on board. Another acute problem was the accumulation of debris in outer space, which could cause grave problems to cosmonauts and seriously damage the environment.

55. Unfortunately, no progress had been made in the definition and delimitation of outer space. The arguments in favour of establishing a clear boundary between air space and outer space, governed by two different legal systems, were well known. His Government supported the definition and delimitation of outer space and endorsed the proposal for a compromise solution. Many States supported the delimitation of outer space and were prepared to continue their efforts to reach an appropriate agreement with other countries, but they were not always able to monitor their own airspace effectively and, therefore, should be accorded legal safeguards of their sovereignty pursuant to article 1 of the Chicago Convention. Moreover, it was imperative that the geostationary orbit, regarded as an integral part of outer space, should not be the subject of appropriation by any country or of any preferential rights; on the contrary, it should be used efficiently, economically and equitably in the interest of all States.

56. His Government supported the establishment of a world space organization. The prevention of the arms race in outer space was an essential condition for promoting international co-operation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space could make a great contribution to that task.

57. Mr. WOLOSI (Afghanistan) said that in the past three decades remarkable developments had taken place in space exploration and that there was an absolute need to ensure the peaceful uses of outer space. International co-operation and the dialogue between the Soviet Union and the United States on that subject were essential factors.

(Mr. Wolosi, Afghanistan)

58. Afghanistan firmly believed that continuous co-operation between the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and other international organizations co-ordinated international co-operation and that the practical applications of space science and technology in the developing countries was an essential condition for such co-operation.

59. The Committee should continue its efforts to assist the developing countries by means of training courses, information services and technical assistance in remote-sensing applications. Attention should also be drawn to the importance of the efforts made by the Committee with regard to using space technology for purposes of agricultural production security, and to the usefulness of providing advisory services on satellite communications to developing countries.

60. With regard to remote sensing, due account must be taken of the specific needs of the developing countries. The strengthening of multilateral, regional and bilateral co-operative activities constituted an effective basis for ensuring the peaceful uses of outer space.

61. The people of Afghanistan were extremely grateful to the Soviet Union for launching the first Afghan-Soviet joint space flight, which had taken place from 29 August to 7 September 1988. It had been Afghanistan's first flight in space, making it the third Islamic nation to participate in space exploration. Afghan and Soviet cosmonauts had carried out experiments and topographical, seismological, hydrological and mineral resources mapping. They had also studied the natural resources of Afghanistan and made experiments relating to glaciers, pastures, desertification, rivers and lakes.

62. In conclusion, he said that his country supported the Stockholm Declaration, adopted in January 1988, which stressed the need to prevent outer space from being used for militarization and the arms race.

63. Mr. PINZON (Colombia) said that his delegation welcomed the spirit of understanding and the progress which had marked the deliberations of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its Sub-Committees on items of general interest and on the legal aspects related to the application of the principle that the exploration and utilization of outer space should be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all States, taking into particular account the needs of developing countries.

64. Communications and remote sensing provided services to a world which was increasingly interdependent and was prone to natural disasters. Consequently, it was necessary to promote the freer flow of information as well as the transfer of technology. Although the developing countries were under constant observation from space, they did not have the power to decide on the use and purposes of the information obtained. Rules were needed to cover that new dimension of State sovereignty.

(Mr. Pinzon, Colombia)

65. The delimitation of outer space was imperative, and different terms of reference must not be used inconsistently to serve individual interests. The establishment of an agreed limit would expedite the preparation of a régime for the utilization of outer space.

66. With regard to the geostationary orbit, he drew attention to paragraph 96 of document A/44/20 concerning a "working non-paper" submitted by the Group of 77. He also drew attention to paragraph 95 of that report, which referred to a convergence of views on the question of activities in the utilization of the geostationary orbit. In paragraph 99 of that document, the Committee recommended that the Legal Sub-Committee should continue consideration of the item at its next session. His delegation called upon States to proceed accordingly, and shared the opinion of the representative of Romania that it was possible to continue progress on the item.

67. With regard to the activities of the Legal Sub-Committee, Colombia hoped to be able to participate actively in the study of the new item, since the consideration of all the legal aspects of the issue was an important means of promoting co-operation in outer space.

68. The debate and negotiations in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which was the political, multilateral and global body for meeting the challenges of the next century with regard to co-operation in space, had been marked by consensus. His delegation recognized the importance of the contributions of other bodies in that area, but emphasized that the work of the Committee was based on political decisions which had already been taken by the Committee and which would be strengthened through debate and the substantive contributions of all member States. If there were differences of opinion on each item, the basic concerns of the developing countries must be taken into account in order to ensure, through substantive debates, the political will to apply the principles which should govern international co-operation in the coming century.

69. Mr. ZACHMANN (German Democratic Republic) said that, in order to achieve further progress in the effective exploration and peaceful uses of outer space, there was a need for international co-operation which would benefit all States. To that end, the establishment of a world space organization would be appropriate and timely. The German Democratic Republic reaffirmed its support for the working paper submitted by the USSR, entitled "Basic provisions of the Charter of a world space organization" (A/AC.105/L.171).

70. Outer space must remain a province explored and utilized exclusively for peaceful purposes. A primary task of the community of States was to prevent an arms race in outer space. It was therefore important that the item entitled "Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes" should also be considered next year as a matter of priority.

71. The United Nations Programme on Space Applications was an essential element in implementing the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The German Democratic Republic had

(Mr. Zachmann, German Democratic Republic)

granted three one-year scholarships to study the remote sensing of the Earth and to conduct outer-space research. The Second United Nations Training Course on Remote-Sensing Applications to Geological Sciences, hosted by the German Democratic Republic, had been successfully concluded in October 1988. The German Democratic Republic remained ready to provide lecturers for future events organized under the Programme on Space Applications.

72. His delegation had taken an active part in the debate on the elaboration of draft principles relevant to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space, and believed that the working paper submitted by Canada (A/AC.105/C.2/L.154/Rev.5) should serve as a starting-point for further deliberations.

73. The definition of outer space and the use of the geostationary orbit were issues which needed to be settled in terms of law, and the debate on that item should therefore be continued. With regard to the new item considered in accordance with General Assembly resolution 43/56, he said that the legal norms existing in that field should be analysed and systematized in order to ensure their implementation.

74. The delegations of Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic had jointly submitted a working paper (A/AC.105/L.181) which contained ideas regarding the future work of the Committee, and they would be interested to hear the views of other delegations on that issue.

75. His delegation fully supported the recommendation to designate 1992 as international space year, which could make a valuable contribution to the solution of a number of global problems.

76. Mr. KOUPRIYAN (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the Ukrainian SSR had carried out many activities related to the study and exploration of outer space, which had been co-ordinated by the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences in co-operation with other States. Those activities had included the remote-sensing study of natural resources, the creation of a regional geo-information system, the establishment of remote-sensing methods to study climatological phenomena, such as hurricanes and typhoons, the study of bio-medical applications to problems arising from the extended use of manned space stations and, in the field of space biology, the study of the behaviour of plant cells in outer space and the means of adaptation to that environment.

77. The Academy of Sciences and other institutions had carried out studies to build and repair large-scale space-related construction units. Electric-power-supply systems had been designed and models of electronic welding had been prepared. In addition, the Scientific Council of the Academy of Sciences was studying natural resources through participation in an experiment using satellites, spacecraft and photography, in which the characteristics of geodynamic processes were analysed.

(Mr. Koupriyan, Ukrainian SSR)

78. The Ukrainian SSR had participated in meetings of specialists from Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Poland and the USSR in order to determine the satellite equipment and methodology to be used in the study of ocean regions.

79. He supported the main conclusions and recommendations in document A/44/20. Mr. Gorbachev, in his statement to the United Nations in December 1988, had stressed the importance of the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space. The idea of setting up a world space organization was worth special attention, since it could be an effective instrument for co-operation in the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space. Such an organization could prepare an international system for monitoring observance of agreements to prevent an extension of the arms race into outer space. The system could also be used to monitor the implementation of other arms-limitation agreements.

80. The Ukrainian SSR considered that the United Nations should increase its efforts to monitor the environment and solve ecological problems. The existing systems could all join in preparing a "super-system" for exchange of information. The United Nations must also take an active part in planning the international space year and organize a conference on the subject. The Ukrainian SSR joined with the delegations which supported the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the draft resolution now before the Special Political Committee.

81. Mr. TANG Chengyuan (China) said that international activities and co-operation in outer space had registered encouraging achievements in recent years. Chinese-made launching and delivery vehicles were steadily entering world markets. Earlier in the year, China, in collaboration with the United Nations, had sponsored a training course on remote-sensing technology, and in 1990 and 1991 it intended to sponsor, jointly with the United Nations, international seminars on the application of remote sensing to oceanography and on space technology in combating natural disasters.

82. His delegation noted with satisfaction the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its decision to keep the subject of ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes as a priority item - reflecting the common concern lest the peaceful uses of outer space be undermined by an arms race in outer space.

83. The Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee was dealing effectively with a matter of great concern, namely, the use of nuclear power sources in outer space. It had also considered matters relating to remote sensing of the Earth by satellite, which should remain on its agenda in the context of the wider applications of technology and of the international space year, which should give a strong impetus to space technology and international co-operation in that sphere. China attached great importance to the international space year and had set up a preparatory committee for organizing appropriate activities.

(Mr. Tang Chengyuan, China)

84. The Legal Sub-Committee had made encouraging progress at its latest session, in particular its consensus on principles 6 and 10 of the draft principles relevant to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space. However, with the rapid changes in outer-space activities, some of the provisions governing nuclear power sources might no longer be appropriate to new realities, and the international community should give serious consideration to revising them or drafting new articles. The Legal Sub-Committee should also study the question of the benefits of space technology.

85. Mr. ADESIDA (Nigeria) said that international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space had continued to attract the interest of all nations, among other reasons because it was the common heritage of mankind. Nigeria had noted the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subsidiary bodies. Of particular interest was the progress made in the elaboration of draft principles relevant to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space and the definition and delimitation of outer space and the character and utilization of the geostationary orbit. Nigeria had consistently advocated the safeguarding of outer space for peaceful activities and considered that such initiatives should be supported. It also believed that bilateral and multilateral initiatives to that end should be complementary, as should the work of the First Committee and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

86. It was not enough to prevent an arms race in outer space: peaceful outer-space exploration and utilization must be regulated by a firm legal régime, to prevent injustice, abuse or accidents. To that end, two important issues would have to be tackled: the use of nuclear power sources in outer space and space debris, both of which could have a variety of dangerous consequences, such as radioactive contamination of space, the atmosphere and the Earth itself. That would be particularly serious for the developing countries, which lacked the means to eliminate contamination. Nigeria would therefore continue to support initiatives aimed at ensuring the safer use of outer space.

87. The report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee dealt with the United Nations Programme on Space Applications and implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, whose aims and objectives had regrettably not been realized, through lack of funding. His delegation called for adequate financing of the Programme.

88. He welcomed the importance that the Outer Space Committee attached to the item on spin-off benefits of space technology and the review of its current status, since developments in many industrialized countries indicated that space technology yielded substantial benefits in various socio-economic fields. International co-operation must be greatly stimulated so that those benefits also reached the developing countries.

89. Nigeria regarded as appropriate the theme proposed for the 1990 session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, "The use of space technology in terrestrial search and rescue and in disaster relief activities". It also supported the

(Mr. Adesida, Nigeria)

proposed designation of 1992 as international space year, which would attest to the increasing importance of the Outer Space Committee.

90. His delegation commended the Outer Space Affairs Division for its efforts and achievements in spite of the meagre resources at its disposal and hoped that the international community would increase its support for the United Nations and the relevant bodies to enhance co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

91. Lastly, his delegation hoped that the necessary impetus would be given to enable the Legal Sub-Committee to consider the legal aspects related to the application of the principle of the exploration and utilization of outer space for the benefit and interest of all States.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.