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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 21st MEETING

Chairman: Mr. OUDOVENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic)

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

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

1. Mrs. ONYONI (Kenya) said that Kenya was a party to the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, to which it remained firmly committed, particularly to the principle that outer space should be used for the benefit of all peoples.
2. As an equatorial developing country, Kenya had been very active in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), which for the past 30 years had been striving to establish a legal régime for the peaceful use of outer space; it was regrettable that it had made such slow progress in its work. The Committee was concerned with two aspects in particular: the non-military use of outer space, and the benefit of all mankind.
3. The first aspect related to the "demilitarization" of outer space, a subject which some nations believed to fall within the exclusive competence of the First Committee and the Disarmament Commission. Her delegation thought that the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the COPUOS mandate were closely linked and it urged other delegations to acknowledge that fact.
4. Her delegation supported the proposal endorsed by COPUOS to establish a working group by 1991 to elaborate a set of legal principles with a view to institutionalizing international co-operation, in order to cater to the needs of the developing countries which had so far been unable to enjoy the benefits of space technology applications.
5. Many developing countries suffered frequent natural disasters which impeded their development activities and exposed them to famine, malnutrition and environmental degradation. The countries which possessed a remote-sensing capability could predict such disasters in good time and that vital information could be communicated by satellite to the relevant developing regions in order to activate early-warning systems before the disaster occurred.
6. The Kenyan delegation was glad that the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee had considered the topic of space technology as an instrument for combating environmental problems, especially among developing countries, and it also endorsed the items on spin-off benefits of space technology and 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.
7. Finally, her delegation expressed its concern about the unplanned re-entry of nuclear power sources into the territory of countries that lacked the capability to deal with radioactive contamination.

9. Mr. INFANTE (Cuba) noted the disproportion between the high expenditures on the militarization of outer space and the low level of assistance to developing countries, whose desire to have access to the benefits of the exploration of outer space was not always understood and taken into account.
9. His delegation thought it appropriate that 1992 should be declared as international space year and that the activities undertaken during the year should give full attention to the needs and interests of the developing countries, in order to prevent the transfer into outer space of the enormous gap between rich and poor nations.
10. Cuba reaffirmed the importance and urgency of the implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and it reiterated its support for the establishment in 1990 of a working group to study 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.
11. Although it had not made as much progress as might be desired, COPUOS had proved itself an appropriate and useful forum, and Cuba therefore re-emphasized the importance of strengthening COPUOS and its readiness to work to translate into action the political will expressed there.
12. Mr. MAIORSKIY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) recalled that it would soon be 30 years since the approval by the General Assembly of resolution 1472 (XIV), which had established the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The preamble of that resolution stressed that the use of outer space should be for the benefit of all mankind and of all States, irrespective of the stage of economic or scientific development, and that the United Nations should promote co-operation in that sphere. It also stated with great clarity the desire to avoid the extension of national rivalries into that new field of human activity.
13. That appeal for mutually beneficial co-operation rising above ideologies and for strengthening the United Nations was as timely as ever and wholly in keeping with the new thinking that was beginning to emerge in international relations and with the current concern about enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations as a centre for co-ordinating the activities of States.
14. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space was the organ in which United Nations activities in that sphere were concentrated. Together with its Legal and Scientific and Technical Sub-Committees, the Committee had achieved remarkable results in the years since its establishment, including the drafting of five agreements, various research operations, the holding of two major conferences and a Programme on Space Applications.
15. It must be recognized that the sterile politicization of positions in recent years had made the work of the Committee and its Sub-Committees more difficult, although that trend seemed to have been reversed and to have given way to a greater

(Mr. Maiorskiy, USSR)

desire for understanding and agreement, with one regrettable exception which could nevertheless easily be overcome.

16. At its most recent session the Committee had decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it approve the proclamation of 1992 as International Space Year. The inclusion of that proposal in the draft resolution on the Committee's report was to be welcomed. The theme of the international year, "Mission to Planet Earth", was a reminder of the needs and concerns that should govern space activities. Outer space was, in a broad sense, part of the Earth's environment, as well as an excellent vantage point from which to monitor drought or the state of the oceans or atmosphere. The problem of the growing pollution of outer space itself must also not be overlooked.

17. It was widely known that the Soviet Union was in favour of organizing a global system of environmental monitoring from space, and it viewed with great interest India's proposal for a plan of co-operation in protecting the Earth's environment, which pursued the same aims as Soviet proposals for the establishment of an international space laboratory and an orbiting space station to monitor the Earth's environment which, as a first step, would use the specialized module Priroda which the Soviet Union planned to attach to the Mir orbiting space station.

18. After the return to Earth in April 1989 of the crew of the orbiting complex of the Mir space station, research had continued using automated procedures. In September, the Soyuz-TM-8 space vehicle had transported up a new crew, who would spend about six months at the space station, continuing the programme of research and experiments with the instruments installed in the space station and in the Cuant module. Astrophysical observations would be carried out using the Röntgen observatory built by specialists from various countries. There were plans to join up two more modules in addition to Priroda to the station. One of them, which would supplement the station's scientific instruments and auxiliary systems, would have a platform designed by Czechoslovak specialists to carry out astrophysical observations and research into the Earth's natural resources. The other module would be used to carry out experiments on semiconductors and medical preparations.

19. The Mir space station would soon be receiving a new crew made up of astronauts from several countries, and various international projects would be carried out over the next few years, such as the launching of an astrophysical laboratory as part of the Granat project, the launching of the Gamma observatory, the Interbol project which would make it possible to conduct research into the Sun and its influence on the Earth, and the Mars project. The failure of the PHOBOS automated space station in 1988 had been regrettable, although the apparatus that had continued to function had made it possible to collect very interesting data on Mars and its satellite.

20. Twenty years had passed since the launching of INTERCOSMOS I, a product of the joint efforts of the socialist countries. By current standards, the project had been quite a modest one. As the first instance of international co-operation in space, however, it had been a landmark in the history of space activities. The

(Mr. Maiorskiy, USSR)

countries participating in the project had succeeded in launching scientific research equipment into space, showing that States could solve the most complex problems of the conquest of space in a spirit of co-operation.

21. The topic of ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes was clearly timely. An attempt would have to be made to start a dialogue in which nothing was prejudged. One way of promoting such a dialogue would be to find a common denominator in the work being done by the Committee and by other international bodies concerned with space such as the Conference on Disarmament. What was needed was not to mechanically transfer the consideration of space problems to the Committee but rather to ensure a more rational and fruitful division of labour based on honest agreement between the various links in the international machinery in that sphere.

22. The Soviet Union had spared no effort to start talks in the Committee on ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes. It had proposed the establishment of a World Space Organization which would be responsible for co-ordinating global space activities and for verifying compliance with the provisions relating to the non-militarization of space. The proposal had met with very varied reactions and had even been dismissed as a propaganda trick. His delegation had no wish to impose its views on anyone and was ready to join in a debate governed by a spirit of friendship and creativity. The basic provisions of the Charter of the World Space Organization had already been put forward (A/AC.105/L.171), and the Soviet Union was ready to join in a debate on the issue again at any time.

23. There was a logical historical link between the task of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes and the new item on the agenda of the Legal Sub-Committee. One of the problems that would arise in that connection was that of enhancing international co-operation and the means needed to do so. One such means could be to rationalize the work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies. The topic would therefore have to be studied pragmatically and impartially, guided exclusively by common goals.

24. The Soviet Union was in favour of adopting principles to govern the use of nuclear power sources in outer space and believed that the Legal Sub-Committee already had the necessary information to adopt such principles. The Soviet Union was also in favour of adopting the recommendations drafted by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. Legal principles must not simply duplicate practical scientific criteria and the problem must be considered in a broader context.

25. Mrs. PELLICER (Mexico) said that the current favourable international climate offered a valuable opportunity for the United Nations to promote the adoption of effective measures both to prevent the extension of the arms race to outer space and to put an end to its growing militarization. Her delegation therefore believed that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space must make a constructive and honest study of the item entitled "Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes".

(Mrs. Pellicer, Mexico)

26. The United Nations Programme on Space Applications and the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE 82) offered a frame of reference for international co-operation in space matters which was of crucial importance if developing countries were to have access to the benefits deriving from space technology. However, financial constraints had prevented the Programme from fulfilling the expectations created by UNISPACE 82. It was particularly important therefore that States, especially the major space Powers, should contribute greater financial resources and give indications of their political will to strengthen and intensify multilateral co-operation in that area. Her delegation also considered it necessary to implement the recommendations of the Working Group of the Whole of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, in which all States were requested to submit annual reports to the Secretary-General on those space activities which might be the subject of increased international co-operation.

27. The work done by the Legal Sub-Committee provided the basis for the progressive development of international space law. It was regrettable therefore that some countries were seeking to shorten the Sub-Committee's sessions as a way of diminishing the importance of its work. Her delegation insisted that sessions of the Legal Sub-Committee must continue to last for three weeks. The new item included in the Sub-Committee's agenda offered a further opportunity to strengthen international co-operation in the conquest of space, so that the results of scientific and technological progress could be shared equitably and contribute to speeding up the economic development of all countries. As a member of the Group of 77, Mexico attached the highest priority to that item.

28. It was becoming a matter of increasing urgency to revitalize the work of the Committee and its Sub-Committees so that members could perform their function of promoting international co-operation in space matters. To that end, it was essential that all members of the Committee, particularly those countries with the greatest space resources, should respond constructively and honestly to the need to put an end to the growing militarization of outer space, and that they make an in-depth study of the legal, scientific and technological means that might contribute to the strengthening of genuine international co-operation.

29. With the valuable co-operation of France, Mexico was making the necessary preparations for the manufacture of a small artificial communications satellite, which would be put into elliptical orbit by an Ariane rocket. That co-operation project could serve as an example for similar activities in countries whose level of development was comparable to that of Mexico. All in all, the scientific and technological progress of the past forty years should have been sufficient to satisfy mankind's most elementary needs and to permit progress in building a truly civilized world. Because of unjust international economic structures, however, much of the world's population was approaching the end of the century in conditions of extreme poverty. The exploration and peaceful uses of outer space offered a valuable opportunity to foster and accelerate the economic and social development of peoples. An effort must therefore be made to ensure that the United Nations could make a greater contribution to creating the conditions in which that opportunity could be seized.

30. Mr. HOANG VINH THANH (Viet Nam) said that international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space had become one of the most important areas of common interest of mankind and had gained particular momentum with the improvement in the international political climate and the universal recognition of the growing interdependence among countries. The numerous successes in the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space in the past year had also increased confidence in man's ability to make further advances in that field. The search for ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes should focus on two aspects: the adoption of effective measures to prevent an extension of the arms race into outer space, and the intensification of international co-operation in that field.

31. Thanks to the good will and constructive attitude of Member States, the most recent sessions of the Committee and its Sub-Committees had concluded with some encouraging results, including the decision to recommend that the General Assembly designate 1992 as International Space Year. His delegation supported that decision and hoped that International Space Year would provide an opportunity to promote international co-operation in that area for the benefit of all nations, particularly the developing countries.

32. His delegation attached great importance to the United Nations Programme on Space Applications because of the opportunities it offered to all countries, particularly the developing countries, to benefit from scientific and technical achievements in that field. He therefore urged all States to make greater contributions to the Programme.

33. It was encouraging that, at the twenty-eighth session of the Legal Sub-Committee, two more principles relating to the use of nuclear power sources in space had been adopted. His delegation hoped that all Member States would show good will and responsibility so that the Committee and its Sub-Committees could make further progress in formulating principles on that issue.

34. His delegation supported the proposal that a working group should be established at the twenty-ninth session of the Legal Sub-Committee to consider the new item on the Sub-Committee's agenda so as to secure a more productive outcome of the discussion thereon. Turning to the definition and delimitation of outer space, a clear distinction should be made between the legal régime applicable to air space, which came under national jurisdiction, and that applicable to outer space, which was subject to international space law; the proposals so far submitted to the Legal Sub-Committee on that item constituted a good basis for further discussion. Lastly, his country took the view that the geostationary orbit was a limited natural resource and an integral part of outer space to which every State should have access.

35. During the general debate in the plenary at the current session of the General Assembly, it had been widely agreed that environmental protection was one of the most pressing contemporary global issues. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space could make a significant contribution to combating environmental deterioration. The General Assembly had decided to establish the Committee thirty years previously and, in Viet Nam's view, the best way to commemorate that

(Mr. Hoang Vinh Thanh, Viet Nam)

important anniversary would be to further international co-operation in the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space and to find constructive solutions to the problems that remained unsolved in that field.

36. Mr. SNOOK (United States of America) said that in an address delivered by President Bush earlier that year to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Apollo Moon landing, the President had proposed a programme of manned space exploration of the solar system. The proposal envisaged the establishment of the space station Freedom, a project in which the United States National Aeronautics and Space Administration, members of the European Space Agency, Japan and Canada were participating. The activities envisaged for the next century included a return to the Moon and, thereafter, a manned mission to Mars. In that regard, President Bush had asked for recommendations on the feasibility of international co-operation.

37. One month after President Bush's address, the Voyager spacecraft had arrived at the planet Neptune and provided startling new images and information about the outer reaches of the solar system. In 1989, the Galileo spacecraft would follow in Voyager's path and in 1995 would reach Jupiter, whence it would transmit data on the atmosphere of that planet. The Magellan mission to Venus, launched in April 1989, would obtain radar images of 70 to 90 per cent of the planet in 1990.

38. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had for the first time initiated an important new discussion of developments in spin-offs from outer space programmes, and it was to be hoped that the discussion would continue in 1990. His delegation welcomed the Committee's recommendation that 1992 should be designated as International Space Year. The Committee had further recommended that, during International Space Year, the training capabilities of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications should be utilized, through voluntary contributions and without any impact on the regular budget; both recommendations were reflected in the draft resolution introduced by Austria. The United States had already come forward with a detailed offer of voluntary assistance for such activities.

39. Concerning space debris, the United States fully supported the view of the Committee. Unfortunately it had not been possible to reach a consensus on arrangements for the next session of the Legal Sub-Committee. The three-week duration and schedule of work of the Legal Sub-Committee did not provide a suitable basis for its next session and it would be advisable to adopt the approach suggested in document A/AC.105/C.2/L.174 which, in addition, would achieve savings in conference services. The Legal Sub-Committee had a poor record in using conference services, according to the report of the Committee on Conferences (A/AC.172/88/Add.7). The average utilization of conference services by the Sub-Committee in the period 1981-1988 had been only 58 per cent.

40. On the question of holding the next session of the Legal Sub-Committee in Geneva, he shared the view of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, which had recommended that the session should be held in New York. The results of the Fifth Committee's deliberations on both issues were not yet known. However, it could be noted that some members of the Group of 77 had

(Mr. Snook, United States)

made constructive statements which indicated a willingness to begin a dialogue concerning appropriate arrangements for future sessions of the Legal Sub-Committee. The recommendation regarding conference resources for that Sub-Committee made by the representative of Austria should also be mentioned.

41. In conclusion, his delegation reiterated the willingness of the United States to make the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its two Sub-Committees function as efficiently as possible so that it could fulfil its mandate. That mandate clearly did not include questions related to disarmament, which fell within the competence of other United Nations bodies.

42. Mr. AYALA LASSO (Ecuador) said that the work of updating international space law could not be delayed, as it was necessary to eliminate existing legal lacunae that instituted possible sources of conflict between nations. Space law provided the necessary framework for the promotion of international co-operation on a global scale, encompassing economic and social concerns. Ecuador therefore welcomed the inclusion of the Legal Sub-Committee's new item, which took particular account of the needs of the developing countries and was consistent with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 43/56. It also supported the prompt initiation of deliberations on that item and the speedy establishment of the working group of the Legal Sub-Committee which would take up the item as well as the compilation of legal texts on international co-operation in that area.

43. With regard to the nature and utilization of the geostationary orbit, Ecuador reiterated the need to establish a legal system that would regulate its use, and considered that the measures proposed by some member countries of the Group of 77 in their informal paper were constructive.

44. His delegation also supported the elaboration of a complete set of principles governing the use of sources of energy in outer space and reiterated the need to increase safety measures in connection with the launching and operation of nuclear-powered space objects.

45. In conclusion, Ecuador reaffirmed its support for the work of the Outer Space Affairs Division and the contribution of the Programme on Space Applications which, notwithstanding its financial limitations, was performing important work, particularly in connection with the training of technical staff, above all in the developing countries.

46. Mr. IONESCU (Romania) said that every effort must be made to keep outer space free from the arms race, as it was the common heritage of mankind for present and future generations. His delegation believed that, through genuine co-operation, space research and technology could benefit all countries, on condition that they were exclusively used for peaceful purposes.

47. Twenty years earlier the first landing on the moon had taken place, giving rise to expectations that the world would become a better place, more just and more rational. Twenty years had elapsed and substantial advances had been made, but the steps taken towards peace on Earth and in space had been slow.

(Mr. Ionescu, Romania)

48. Space had made a notable contribution to the progress of all nations but improved space technologies had potential applications for military purposes which had put civilian uses in the shade. Shortly after the launching of the first satellite, the General Assembly, in a resolution devoted to disarmament problems, had expressed concern over the particularly dangerous consequences entailed by the extension of the military competition into space. The most urgent task of the international community was therefore to take appropriate action to halt the utilization of outer space for military purposes and work out the necessary international regulations for its peaceful use by all countries. To that end, Romania supported a multilateral treaty which would govern the activities of States in the exploration and use of outer space solely for peaceful purposes. Likewise, it would be highly important to establish a special United Nations body which, on the one hand, would ensure free access by all countries to space technology and, on the other hand, would monitor activities in space which were being undertaken mostly by the so-called space Powers.

49. Document A/44/20 clearly indicated that considerable progress had been achieved in examining the various issues assigned to the Committee. His delegation expressed its satisfaction with the results obtained and also with the recommendations regarding the future work of the Committee and its Sub-Committees. Romania attached particular importance to the items relating to the safe use of nuclear power sources in outer space, the definition and delimitation of outer space, the use of the geostationary orbit and 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 of all States. On the last point, special mention should be made of the proposal contained in draft resolution A/SPC/44/L.18 for the elaboration of a set of legal norms and regulations with a view to strengthening international co-operation, taking into account the particular needs of the developing countries.

50. Mr. MIRAGAIA FERRI (Brazil) said that the deliberations of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee had been substantive and fruitful. The Legal Sub-Committee had achieved even greater progress. In the consideration of the principles relevant to the use of nuclear power sources in outer space, the Sub-Committee was close to reaching an agreed text. Some progress had also been made in the consideration of the utilization of the geostationary orbit and a paper had been drafted which would serve as a basis for the Sub-Committee to continue discussion of a special legal régime for that orbit. That exercise stemmed naturally from the mandate of the Legal Sub-Committee, which could not and must not be confused with the more technical role of the International Telecommunications Union.

51. From the point of view of the developing countries, the main achievement of the current session of the Legal Sub-Committee had been the establishment of a working schedule for dealing with the Sub-Committee's new item. Under that item, his delegation envisaged the possibility that the Legal Sub-Committee might define a comprehensive new set of principles on international co-operation in the exploration and utilization of outer space.

(Mr. Miragaia Perri, Brazil)

52. The Legal Sub-Committee had been responsible for the elaboration of five space treaties. In its 1990 and 1991 sessions the Sub-Committee would analyse the legal consequences of the principles laid down in article 1 of the Outer Space Treaty, which were that the exploration and use of outer space should be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all countries and that States should facilitate and encourage international co-operation in such investigation. However, the great majority of countries had been unable to achieve those objectives, inasmuch as there were great differences between the scientific and technological knowledge of the developed and the developing countries. As his delegation conceived it, the main task of the Committee on Outer Space was to promote co-operation so that universal needs could be met and discrepancies in technology and development reduced.

53. His delegation welcomed the establishment of a working group to deal with the new item on the Legal Sub-Committee's agenda. It also welcomed the fact that the draft resolution submitted to the Committee recognized the importance of the problem of protection and preservation of the outer space environment, and called for special attention to be paid to those outer space activities which might affect the Earth's environment. It should be pointed out also that the draft resolution stressed the need to enhance the effectiveness of the Programme on Space Applications through voluntary contributions.

54. Mr. ZAWELS (Argentina) said that the improvement in the relations between the two super-Powers opened the possibility of progress in the peaceful use of outer space and thus strengthened the validity of paragraph 24 of draft resolution A/SPC/44/L.18.

55. His Government had consistently supported the principle that outer space should be used only for peaceful purposes and for the benefit of all mankind. He considered that without a legal régime which would reflect the interests of all States, and particularly the developing countries, the paradoxical situation might arise that, in the medium term, countries which were acquiring the technology to reach outer space would find themselves physically unable to enjoy the peaceful use of their resources. For that reason, his delegation would continue to give special attention to the work of the Legal Sub-Committee.

56. His delegation was glad that it had been agreed that the working group which would deal with the item entitled "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, taking into particular account the needs of developing countries" would be established in 1990 and would meet in 1991. The beginning of the group's work would help give the work on the item a more substantive aspect. Argentina would participate actively in the Legal Sub-Committee in 1990 and, beginning in 1991, in the working group, where it would try to ensure that due importance was given to the item.

(Mr. Zawels, Argentina)

57. Argentina unreservedly supported the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space of 1982, which expressed the will of the majority of the international community, and emphasized that the Committee should make progress in their substantive implementation, as it would be unfortunate if in 1992, the tenth anniversary of the Conference, which would coincide with International Space Year, most of those recommendations remained a dead letter. Argentina would continue to work towards transforming those recommendations into specific programmes of action and once again pledged itself to co-operate within the framework of the United Nations to make that noble ideal a tangible reality.

58. Mr. HALA (Czechoslovakia) said that the press reported every day new advances in the exploration of space which were making an every day reality of what yesterday had happened only in science fiction. However, it also reported attempts to use outer space for other than peaceful purposes. The international community realized that space should only be used in the interest of social and economic development. Achievements such as the Mir orbital station and the Voyager II and Galileo probes were examples of that.

59. Czechoslovakia was applying space technology in many areas, including remote sensing, meteorology, and communications, and took an active part in the development of new technologies and scientific research, for example, in the framework of the Intercosmos programme. It had just launched a second Magion 2 satellite as part of the Aktivny project designed to study low-frequency waves in the Earth's magnetosphere. In the 1990s several new Magion 2 satellites would be launched as part of the Apex and Interbol projects intended to study ecological processes.

60. His delegation supported the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the Division of Outer Space Affairs, which had made great progress; that was in harmony with the interest in an effective United Nations role in international co-operation in that area. As a further step in that direction, the General Assembly should proclaim 1992 International Space Year. For its part, the Committee should not dodge certain issues because they were being discussed by other bodies.

61. His delegation applauded the balanced and increasingly professional nature of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee's work and was glad that greater attention was being given to environmental protection in its programme of work. It welcomed the agreement reached in the Legal Sub-Committee concerning consideration of the new item on its agenda, which opened the possibility that it could deal with one of the questions of highest interest to the international community. It also welcomed the progress achieved on the question of use of nuclear-power sources in space, although it would again emphasize that the principles worked out should be compatible with the instruments approved in 1986, in the framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

(Mr. Hala, Czechoslovakia)

62. Concerning the definition and delimitation of outer space, his delegation wished to point out that progress continued to be barred not by legal or technical reasons but by the reluctance of some States to accept compromise solutions. The proposals submitted were a good starting point for further discussion of the issue.

63. There was no question that the work of the Committee and its Sub-Committees must be further improved. In that connection, he drew attention to working paper A/AC.105/L.181, which had been submitted jointly by Czechoslovakia and the German Democratic Republic.

64. Mr. SUTRESNA (Indonesia) said that, in its three decades of existence, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had proved to be an agent of progress and change. A legal framework now existed for co-operation in the exploration of outer space. One of the Committee's main tasks was to bridge the scientific and technological gap between countries that had space exploration programmes and those that did not, which was why the great majority of developing countries viewed freedom of exploitation, which benefited only the developed countries, as unacceptable.

65. Despite the recommendations of UNISPACE 82 intended to strengthen the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, the Programme continued to lack sound financial support. His delegation proposed that existing funds should be allocated to programmes that benefited developing countries, reiterated its call for all States to make increased voluntary contributions to the Programme and hoped that such assistance would be in conformity with it. In view of the gap between the targets set by UNISPACE 82 and actual achievements, his delegation endorsed the proposal to reconvene the Working Group of the Whole in order to consider further ways of ensuring equitable distribution of the benefits of space science and technology.

66. In dealing with the question of the definition and delimitation of outer space, consideration should be given to ensuring the rational and equitable use of the geostationary orbit. That would require negotiations on the establishment of a sui generis legal régime based on equity, economy and effectiveness. Consideration of the technical aspects of the orbit by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) should be without prejudice to the Committee's consideration of the legal and political aspects, which should address the interests of all States, particularly equatorial countries. The Secretariat could also make a study of the physical nature and the technical attributes of the orbit.

67. With regard to remote sensing by satellite, the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all States, and particularly the interests of developing countries, should be respected at all times. Continuity, compatibility and complementarity of remote sensing systems must also be ensured. His delegation was concerned at the increasing commercialization of remote sensing activities. The benefits deriving from space transportation systems and satellite technology should be available to all States, especially the spin-off benefits in the areas of energy, agriculture and environmental protection.

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

68. Turning to nuclear power sources, consideration should be given primarily to safety measures, emergency assistance in the event of radiation accidents and international liability. States which had not yet done so should ratify the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency.

69. His delegation believed that the working group entrusted with considering the new item on the agenda of the Legal Sub-Committee should be established at the Sub-Committee's twenty-ninth session.

70. Mr. HUSSEN (Iraq) said that science and technology had opened up hitherto unsuspected horizons but that man's advent in space had not put an end to the problems that must be faced on Earth, including the arms race which had extended to outer space. Outer space belonged to the whole of mankind and must be protected, and that could be done only through international co-operation. In that connection and in the interests of co-ordination, his delegation believed that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should follow closely the progress made at the Conference on Disarmament on questions related to the extension of the arms race to outer space.

71. The Committee must be given support commensurate with its mandate, especially now that it was beginning to discuss new topics such as environmental protection. His delegation supported the proposal that the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee should consider the question of space debris at its next session, as well as the proposal to set up a working group to consider the possibility of holding a joint session of the Committee and its Sub-Committees in 1992.

72. The developing countries should be in a position to take advantage of the benefits of space exploration and must be given a chance to develop their potential in that area. His delegation therefore shared the view that remote sensing should be less costly so that developing countries could afford it.

73. The use of nuclear power sources in outer space was a very serious problem which required the adoption of rules to prevent major risks in the future. His delegation supported proposals to prohibit the use of nuclear power sources on board satellites in Earth orbit and to limit their use to interplanetary missions.

74. Lastly, his delegation believed that agreement must be reached on the delimitation of outer space.

75. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to consider draft resolution A/SPC/44/L.18 submitted by Austria.

76. It was so decided.

77. The CHAIRMAN said he took it that the Committee wished to take a decision on the draft resolution.

78. It was so decided.

79. The CHAIRMAN said he took it that the Committee wished to adopt the draft resolution without a vote.

80. Draft resolution A/SPC/44/L.18 was adopted without a vote.

81. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Committee had concluded its consideration of agenda item 75. In accordance with the recommendation of the Working Group of the Whole presented at the previous meeting by the representative of Austria, he would hold consultations with the Department of Conference Services and report to the Committee on the outcome.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.