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Chairman: Mr. Franz MATSCH (Austria).

AGENDA ITEM 25

Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (A/4141, A/C.1/L.247, A/C.1/L.248) (concluded)

GENERAL DEBATE AND CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/C.1/L.247) (concluded)

1. Mr. BUDO (Albania) noted that scientists everywhere and world public opinion had greeted with enthusiasm and awe the victory won by Soviet scientists in October 1957, when they had launched the first artificial earth satellite, thus inaugurating a new era: the era of interplanetary travel and the exploration of outer space. Since that event, there had been tremendous scientific progress as a result of the efforts of Soviet and United States scientists.

2. While scientists were making great strides in helping man to master nature, and were creating opportunities for him to live a prosperous life, the man in the street was wondering how it was that statesmen were not yet capable of effecting a peaceful settlement of current international problems. Nevertheless, the first signs of a relaxation of tension were visible in international relations as a result of the efforts of the peace-loving States and political leaders who wanted peace: there had been gradual progress towards the peaceful settlement of international problems and the establishment of the conditions necessary for mutual confidence, coexistence and co-operation, and towards peaceful competition between States with different social systems. Consequently, there was reason to hope that, by their interaction, politics and science would work together for the well-being of all peoples.

3. The agreement reached outside the First Committee on the composition of the new committee on the peaceful uses of outer space represented a very important step forward towards international co-operation in that new field. Since the conquest of outer space was of concern to all mankind, it was essential for the various States to enjoy equitable representation in the committee so that they might contribute to the common undertaking. The Albanian delegation therefore supported the twelve-Power draft

resolution (A/C.1/L.247), which was the product of a compromise. On the other hand, it would not be able to vote for the Belgian amendment (A/C.1/L.248); since outer space was to be explored and used collectively for the benefit of all peoples and of future generations, the door should be left open for the broadest possible world co-operation.

4. Mr. WALDHEIM (Austria) was glad that the Soviet Union and the United States had agreed on the establishment of a committee on the peaceful uses of outer space as provided in the draft resolution. Austria was to serve as a member of the new committee and appreciated that token of confidence in it. Although it was a small country, it was none the less perfectly capable of contributing to the committee's work in the scientific as well as in the legal field. An Austrian study group had been dealing with astronautics for some time.

5. International co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space was indispensable because it would be disastrous for the Powers possessing space vehicles to be divided on that vital issue. As further progress was made, it became increasingly urgent to regulate the technical and legal aspects of the use of outer space for peaceful purposes. The establishment of the new committee therefore assumed special importance and it was to be hoped that it would pave the way for the conclusion of a treaty on the question. Moreover, the proposed international scientific conference would lead to a better understanding of the various aspects of the question and, like the United Nations International Conferences on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy, would be an important step towards more fruitful international co-operation in the field of science.

6. The draft resolution laid the foundation for closer co-operation between the two Powers that had contributed most to the exploration of space and enabled other countries to make their contribution. Accordingly, the Austrian delegation would unreservedly support it.

7. Mr. RODRIGUEZ FABREGAT (Uruguay) said that man, impelled by his creative genius, having examined and explored the earth, was thrusting into another world. Consequently, the United Nations was planning to study means for the peaceful uses of outer space so that the impetus of science might serve the higher interests of mankind.

8. The main object of the twelve-Power draft resolution was to establish a committee composed of twenty-four members. If it was voted on in parts, the Uruguayan delegation would be unable to vote in favour of all the countries designated in paragraph 1 of part A. In particular, owing to prevailing circumstances, it could not support the inclusion of Hungary because that inclusion would be somewhat premature, to say the least. Subject to that reservation, the Uruguayan delegation would vote in favour of the

draft resolution; the draft was in conformity with the purposes of the United Nations Charter in that it sought international co-operation in an extremely important field.

9. The SECRETARY-GENERAL noted that the draft resolution contained no provision concerning financial implications, which were naturally difficult to forecast especially since a conference was likely to be held in 1960. Consequently, after the committee on the peaceful uses of outer space had adopted substantive decisions regarding its own work and the possibility of a conference, the Secretary-General, in accordance with the normal procedure, would make the necessary financial arrangements in consultation with the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

10. Needless to say, the Secretary-General would be particularly pleased to provide the assistance requested of him under the draft resolution in view of the constructive and encouraging undertaking which was being launched. In the consultations he was to have with the committee to work out plans for the conference, he would avail himself of the expert knowledge which could be found in existing United Nations bodies or in the Secretariat so as to assist the committee as effectively as possible.

11. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the amendment submitted by Belgium (A/C.1/L.248) to the twelve-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.247).

A vote was taken by roll-call.

Canada, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Canada, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Federation of Malaya, France, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Laos, Lebanon, Liberia, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Spain, Thailand, Turkey, Union of South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Burma.

Against: Czechoslovakia, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Poland, Romania, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Republic, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Albania, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic.

^{1/} The representative of Morocco informed the Secretariat that, if he had been present during the voting, he would have abstained on the amendment and voted in favour of the draft resolution as amended.

Abstaining: Ceylon, Cuba, Ethiopia, Finland, Ghana, Jordan, Libya, Nepal, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Sweden, Tunisia, Yemen, Cambodia.

The amendment was adopted by 44 votes to 16, with 15 abstentions.^{1/}

12. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the draft resolution submitted by Brazil, Czechoslovakia, France, India, Japan, Poland, Romania, Sweden, the USSR, the United Arab Republic, the United Kingdom and the United States (A/C.1/L.247).

The draft resolution was adopted by 74 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

13. Mr. WEI (China) said that he had voted in favour of the draft resolution as a whole. If there had been a separate vote on the composition of the committee, the Chinese delegation would have abstained.

Completion of the Committee's work

14. The CHAIRMAN, summarizing the results of the Committee's work at the current session, noted with satisfaction that the great Powers, and the other countries, appeared to be determined to co-operate in the field of disarmament and in that of the peaceful uses of outer space. He wished to thank the members of the Committee for their valuable help and especially the Vice-Chairman and the Rapporteur, the Secretary-General, the Under-Secretary for Political and Security Council Affairs, the Secretary of the Committee and all the members of the Secretariat staff.

15. Mr. CHRISTIANSEN (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the Scandinavian countries, Mr. DE FREITAS-VALLE (Brazil), speaking on behalf of the Latin-American delegations, Mr. PLIMSOLL (Australia), speaking on behalf of the Commonwealth delegations, Mr. WEI (China), Mr. LODGE (United States of America), Mr. DE LEQUERICA (Spain), speaking for his own delegation and the delegation of Portugal, Mr. SCHURMANN (Netherlands), speaking on behalf of his own delegation and those of Belgium, Luxembourg, France, Italy, Greece and Turkey, U THANT (Burma), speaking on behalf of the delegations of the African and Asian countries, Mr. KUZNETSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) and Mr. MICHALOWSKI (Poland), speaking on behalf of the delegations from Eastern Europe, congratulated the Chairman upon his conduct of the Committee's work, paid a tribute to the Vice-Chairman, the Rapporteur and the Committee Secretary, and thanked the Secretariat for the work it had done.

16. The CHAIRMAN thanked the members of the Committee for the tribute paid him.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.