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Held at Headquarters, New York,
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Chairman:

Mr. ORTIZ de ROZAS

(Argentina)

Rapporteur:

Mr. COSTA LOBO

(Portugal)

- International co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space:
report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space /32/ (continued)
- Preparation of an international convention on principles governing
the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television
broadcasting: report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer
Space /33/ (continued)

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AGENDA ITEMS 32 AND 33 (continued)

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE
PREPARATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE USE BY STATES OF ARTIFICIAL EARTH SATELLITES FOR DIRECT TELEVISION BROADCASTING: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (A/9620; A/C.1/1047; A/C.1/L.678, L.679 and L.680)

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): Before resuming the general debate and before calling on the first speaker for this morning's meeting, I should like to draw the attention of the Committee to the fact that a draft resolution entitled "International co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space" is now being circulated in document A/C.1/L.678 in some of the working languages and will soon be circulated in the others. The Committee also has before it under the same title a draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.679, which has been circulated in all the working languages. Finally, the Committee has before it a draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.680 that has been circulated in all the working languages and concerns the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.678.

Mr. HULINSKY (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian): The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic is among those States that systematically submit to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space information on the implementation of both its national and its co-operative space programmes, as mentioned in paragraph 46 of the Committee's report. Recently Czechoslovak scientists have achieved some success in the study of communications between the sun and the moon that have an impact on the human organism, in the study of the ionosphere, in the setting up of special radio equipment for signal transmission and in research in the area of geophysics and other fields. In so doing, they make full use of the possibilities put at their disposal by the international organization of socialist States, Intercosmos.

(Mr. Hulinsky, Czechoslovakia)

The data concerning the activities of Czechoslovak scientists in the field of outer space research over the past year are contained in document A/AC.105/123/Add.4, and, therefore, I should like to turn directly to a few comments on the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space prepared for the twenty-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The Czechoslovak delegation makes a positive assessment of the work carried out by the Committee. We could hardly find nowadays another Committee set up by the General Assembly which could demonstrate so many specific and successful results of its work. I am not attempting to analyse the reasons for such a situation; facts are facts. Texts of international instruments drawn up by the Legal Sub-Committee, such as the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space of 1966, the Treaty on the Rescue of Astronauts of 1967, the Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects of 1971 today provide the basis for what is known as space law.

The Czechoslovak delegation believes that it is precisely this characteristic of the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which has become a sort of centre for the development of principles in this new area of international law, that shows the correct course and line of conduct to which the Committee should adhere in the future also. Therefore, in our opinion, it is now a matter of creating for the Committee, or more precisely for its Legal Sub-Committee, the best possible conditions both from the standpoint of organization as well as from that of time, to permit it to concentrate its efforts wholly on carrying out the tasks before it. The Czechoslovak delegation would like to take this opportunity to state that it appreciates the work of the Legal Sub-Committee, which no doubt deserves the greatest credit for the achievement of positive results in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, as well as the activity of its Chairman, Ambassador Wyzner.

This year the work of the Committee has crystallized in a further draft international convention, the draft convention on the registration of objects launched into outer space. The Czechoslovak delegation supports the draft text submitted, as contained in annex III of document A/9620, and will vote in favour of its adoption by the General Assembly. This draft convention is a thoroughly well thought out and well formulated instrument.

(Mr. Hulinsky, Czechoslovakia)

The Czechoslovak delegation also supports the recommendations of the Committee, contained in paragraph 27 of the report (A/9620), on the priorities for the consideration of items on the agenda of the Legal Sub-Committee. My delegation believes that the Legal Sub-Committee should first consider the draft treaty relating to the Moon, so that this draft treaty can be adopted at the forthcoming thirtieth session of the United Nations General Assembly. We believe that this is an extremely urgent task because the draft treaty relating to the Moon can become the model for the international legal regulation of research regarding other celestial bodies. As regards the problems which now hamper agreement on such a significant treaty, we share the opinion that the problems of the status of natural resources on the Moon would be best solved in a separate legal document, particularly in view of what are at present insignificant technical possibilities for the practical use of such resources.

The Czechoslovak delegation believes that it is also urgent to elaborate legal principles to govern the activities of States in the field of direct television broadcasting by artificial earth satellites. We believe that there is an indispensable need to achieve the regulation of direct broadcasting by artificial satellites in the interests of peaceful co-operation among peoples. The Czechoslovak delegation also welcomes the fact that the Legal Sub-Committee has included on its agenda the question of principles regulating the activities of States in the use of space technology for research into the natural resources of the earth. We understand the tremendous significance of defining such principles from the standpoint of the economic development of countries, and in this connexion we believe that the joint French-Soviet draft resolution in document A/AC.105/C.2/L.99 is a very good basis for the further negotiations in this area.

The fact that at the beginning of my statement I stressed that the success of the Legal Sub-Committee in the elaboration of principles constitutes in our opinion the main aspect of the work of the Outer Space Committee, does not mean that we do underestimate the significance and the results of the work achieved in the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and some of its Working Groups. The work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space at its last session has shown that it needs to make clearer its programme and the organization of its

(Mr. Hulinsky, Czechoslovakia)

work particularly in the technical field. In that sphere during the last few years the work, for example, of the Working Group on Direct Broadcast Satellites was uselessly duplicated and the results achieved did not correspond either to the effort deployed or to the expenditures involved in the convening and organization of the meetings of that Working Group. The Czechoslovak delegation therefore welcomes the fact that the Committee and its Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee decided to consider as one of their priority items the problem of the general reassessment of the tasks and future activities of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee.

On the basis of the foregoing, the Czechoslovak delegation decided to co-sponsor the draft resolution which the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session will be called upon to adopt concerning the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

Mr. JANKOWITSCH (Austria): Mr. Chairman, my expressions of congratulation to you can be brief, not only for procedural reasons but also because any expression of our satisfaction at seeing you preside over our work would necessarily be an understatement in view of the very general appreciation of the outstanding role you and your country have played in the United Nations for a very long time. If I may be permitted to add a brief personal note, I should like to say that seeing you, whose friendship I treasure, occupying the chair of this Committee is for me personally a source of satisfaction. This feeling is further enhanced in view of the fact that the delegation of Argentina is one that has made one of the most outstanding contributions to international co-operation in outer space. Finally, I wish to take this opportunity to thank you most cordially for the kind remarks you addressed to me at the beginning of our debate a few days ago.

The purpose of my comments today is two-fold. First of all, I wish to make some brief remarks on some of the most important aspects covered by the report before us. Secondly, I should like to introduce, on behalf of the co-sponsors, the two draft resolutions which have been circulated to members of the Committee in documents A/C.1/L.678 and A/C.1/L.679.

The position of my country on matters pertaining to international co-operation in outer space has been repeatedly expressed in the Outer Space Committee and its various subsidiary bodies. Therefore today I should like to limit myself to touching upon a small number of subjects which I feel are not only of special concern to the Outer Space Committee in a narrow and technical sense but of special interest to the membership of the United Nations as a whole and therefore deserve a high degree of attention and support from the international community.

Previous speakers in this debate have rightly pointed out that, at a time when problems of a global magnitude, such as problems of the supply of food and energy and problems of the preservation of the environment, are facing the international community with an urgency never known before, the interdependence of nations has been dramatically demonstrated, as well as the need for real international co-operation. All that brings sharply into

Mr. Jankowitsch, Austria)

focus the increasing importance, and indeed the duty, for mankind to avail itself to the greatest extent possible and feasible of the vast potential of space-related technology, and in particular remote sensing of the earth by satellites and direct television broadcasting via satellites, in order to confront these problems. The way in which that could best be done has now for a number of years been one of the major preoccupations of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

There was hardly ever any dispute among the members of the Committee that any potential application derived from space science and technology could yield tangible and, in consequence, beneficial results to mankind only if their inherent international character were recognized, no matter whether the approach should be made on a global or on a regional basis. What follows seems to be very clear: a supra-national challenge requires a supra-national response. The concept of the national sovereignty of States in a traditional and narrow sense will increasingly have to be re-evaluated in order to bring it into balance with a technology which, by its very nature, tends to ignore national boundaries. This fact, together with its far-reaching implications, lies, as is well known, very much at the heart of the existing divergencies in concepts and views within the Committee on Outer Space. The question before us is the following one. How can the international community come to grips with the desire for maximizing utilization and benefit, on the one hand, and the fear of infringement of national rights, values and resources, on the other hand? This dilemma is an understandable one, not only in view of the still experimental, though already highly advanced, stage of the technology of remote sensing and direct television broadcasting, and thus the resulting uncertainty over its final shape, but also in view of the different political, social and economic systems existing in today's multipolar world, which increasingly feel themselves confronted with the necessity of coping with potential abuse by States in putting the new possibilities of the space age to work.

(Mr. Jankowitsch, Austria)

What follows seems, in our view, to be a logical conclusion. The United Nations, as the most advanced and most universal form of expression of humanity's interdependence and coherence known today, should constitute the organizational basis and framework for ensuring that the necessary world-wide application of technology is carried out in such a way as to minimize potential dangers of friction among nations.

In pursuing this concept, we should recognize the challenge it presents at the same time: to keep pace with a rapidly developing technology which, particularly in the field of remote sensing, finds itself already in a very advanced stage of perfection. We agree, as we have always agreed, with the viewpoint put forward by the delegation of Sweden that the complexity of the issues involved can be met adequately only if organizational solutions are sought. Similarly, the Austrian delegation has consistently expressed the view that solutions sought exclusively or predominantly by means of a regulatory legal approach cannot lead to any optimal -- and in fact badly needed -- international use of technology, be it remote sensing or direct television broadcasting.

Year after year we can witness many dramatic successes, especially those of the major space Powers, in space missions, space research and space applications. The impressive "Space-Lab" programme stands out at present as the most extensive international co-operative effort in this respect, and I am glad to be able to report that my country has decided to contribute within the limited means at its disposal, to this common endeavour in international space co-operation.

(Mr. Jankowitsch, Austria)

In my following remarks, on the report of the Committee itself, I will touch upon only a few aspects which we consider to be of particular importance and relevance.

The Committee, now having successfully completed its registration convention and having reached an already advanced stage with regard to the Outer Treaty, is now faced with another somewhat tough complex of issues which separates it from a further step in the completion of a vast body of international space law. The Legal Sub-Committee will, in the years to come, have to focus its primary attention on the elaboration of legal principles for direct television broadcasting and remote sensing of the earth from satellites.

As far as direct television broadcasting is concerned, we feel that the Working Group has done a remarkable and most useful job so far, and we therefore believe that it should be kept alive and at the disposal of the Committee, in order to continue to focus on the broad spectrum of the issue, thus complementing the exclusively legal considerations pursued in the Legal Sub-Committee on the subject. We, like many others, would have been in favour of another session of the Working Group next year, but no consensus could be reached in the Committee on that question. Looking back at this year's session of the Working Group, we were able to witness for the first time an almost dramatic change in attitudes and a genuine desire on the part of all delegations to narrow some of the still formidable differences of opinion on a wide variety of issues, the central and most difficult ones being well known by members of this Committee. As far as remote sensing of the earth by satellites is concerned, we have carefully taken note of the draft treaty jointly submitted by Brazil and Argentina; and while for the time being we wish to commend the remarkable contribution of these two delegations to our common effort, we wish to reserve our position and more detailed comments on the subject for the next session of the Legal Sub-Committee, which is going to take place in a few months from now.

(Mr. Jankowitsch, Austria)

In the scientific and technical fields two issues stand out: remote sensing and the programme on practical space applications proposed by the Expert. We are especially gratified to note the request of the Committee to the Secretary-General to undertake studies on the basis of which a determination of what organizational form finally to choose will be greatly facilitated.

As far as the programme of the Expert itself is concerned, the position of the Austrian delegation on this subject is well known. We feel that this Programme is of tremendous importance and, for the time being, the only tangible form of aid to developing countries by the United Nations in the area of space applications. The programme therefore should be continuously reviewed so as to adapt itself to changing needs and requirements of the developing countries, as well as expanded in order to widen the still relatively limited impact in creating the awareness of the potential of space technology. Since these seem to be purposes and goals which one would normally not expect to meet with any reservations, we fail to understand the reluctance on the part of some delegations to adequately increase the financial means for the Expert, at least to the level required by him, as a result of very careful and thorough assessments of all the factors involved.

Finally, I should like to add a few words about the idea of organizing another major international space conference, dedicated to space applications, towards the end of this decade. We feel that this is an idea whose time has come and we should not delay the beginning of the necessary preparations for too long, especially in view of the necessity for a very thorough and careful preparation for such a conference. Its objectives could be twofold, in our view: first, to provide a most comprehensive assessment of the state of the art of space applications, and second, and more important, the elaboration of agreed specific recommendations for a global approach on these issues, and possibly also on the principle of establishing in the future an independent organizational structure within the United Nations to which all further efforts of the international community in space-related matters could be directed.

(Mr. Jankowitsch, Austria)

Mr. Chairman, permit me now, on behalf of more than 30 sponsors, to introduce the two draft resolutions which have been circulated this morning and whose symbols I have quoted. Both resolutions, and especially the one appearing in document A/C.1/L.678, are the results of long consultations amongst members of the Outer Space Committee, and although some provisions might not satisfy everyone, I am glad to say that the two drafts have now received the sponsorship of almost all members of the Committee.

Before commenting on the drafts themselves, I should like to express the sincere gratitude of my delegation to all those who have participated so diligently and so patiently in the drafting process and whose understanding and co-operation made the elaboration of these broadly-based texts possible.

With regard to the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.678, I should simply like to say that in taking up the draft resolution I need only point out some specific provisions, since the other provisions either are self-explanatory or similar to those already contained in resolution 3182 (XXVIII) of last year's Assembly session.

Among the paragraphs to which I should like to draw attention is the fifth preambular paragraph, which contains the view that an expansion of the programmes for the practical applications of space technology should figure as an important element in the consideration of making benefits of space exploration available to all States.

The first five operative paragraphs do not need any explanation.

Paragraph 6 reflects the level of priority to be given to the items on the agenda of the Legal Sub-Committee for its next session.

Paragraph 13 refers to the Outer Space Committee's request to the Secretary-General to undertake various studies, which should be available next year and will form an indispensable basis for further consideration of the issues related to remote sensing.

Paragraph 14 reflects a carefully worked out compromise within the Committee in the over-all approach to be followed in this regard.

(Mr. Jankowitsch, Austria)

Paragraph 16 points to the priority of remote sensing in the further work of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee.

Paragraphs 17 and 18 provide directions for the further development of the programme for space applications.

Paragraph 22 points to the questionnaire, which we hope receive the widest attention possible.

Paragraph 26 relates to the important point of proper co-ordination within the United Nations system in space-related matters.

There is very little I can say with regard to the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/L.679. What I should like to state with regard to that draft resolution, since it is self-explanatory and follows previous cases concerning the adoption of legal instruments, is simply the satisfaction of the Outer Space Committee in being able to put it before the First Committee.

In commending both drafts to this Committee, it is my hope that they will receive the unanimous support of members present.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I thank Ambassador Jankowitsch of Austria for his statement and introduction of the draft resolutions in documents A/C.1/L.678 and L.679, in the preparation of which and in the co-ordination of the consultations thereon he has participated so actively. I want particularly to thank him for the kind words addressed to me and my country, I do appreciate those references, because they come from a highly respected and distinguished colleague and also because I had occasion to work with the representative of Austria very closely during the three years when I had the privilege of being Ambassador of my country to Austria.

Sir LAURENCE McINTYRE (Australia): Mr. Chairman, let me begin my first statement in this Committee at this Assembly session by saluting you as our Chairman. I have worked long enough at this headquarters to be able to recognize beyond all question the consummate skill and distinction with which you have represented your country and graced the United Nations throughout your service here, and I know that this Committee could not be in more capable hands. Permit me also to congratulate our two Vice-Chairmen and our Rapporteur.

As in earlier years, I should like once more to thank our colleague, the Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Ambassador Jankowitsch of Austria, for his accurate and comprehensive account of the seventeenth session of the Committee, and also Ambassador Wyzner for his equally lucid account of the work of the Legal Sub-Committee. May I also extend a word of welcome in this Committee to the nine new members of the Outer Space Committee, especially to our close friend and neighbour, Indonesia.

The Outer Space Committee has registered a notable achievement this year in completing the drafting of a registration convention. Australia is pleased to sponsor, with the other members of the Outer Space Committee, the resolution that Ambassador Jankowitsch has just put forward commending the draft convention to the General Assembly. The registration convention marks another significant step forward in the development of outer space law. We also hope that the remaining obstacles to the conclusion of the Moon treaty will be overcome in 1975.

(Sir Laurence McIntyre, Australia)

Australia is also pleased to be sponsors of the second draft resolution -- the "omnibus" resolution -- dealing with international co-operation in the realm of outer space. The resolution deals comprehensively with the various fields of activity in which the Outer Space Committee and its subsidiary bodies have been engaged over the past year, and lays down guidelines for future work which should be able to command support from us all.

Although considerable progress has been made over the past year, the Outer Space Committee must not allow its effort to slacken nor should it lose sight of our common over-all objectives. Without wishing to underrate in any way the achievements of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies over the past year, I might perhaps take this opportunity to express an Australian viewpoint on a few of the areas in which some difficulties are being met with in arriving at a consensus.

My delegation is conscious that the Committee represents a wide diversity of interests as well as a broad spectrum of expertise in the outer space field. Its membership ranges from countries with highly developed space segments; through countries, like my own, less developed in the space segment area, but with a relatively high level of sophistication and experience in ground facilities; to countries whose participation in outer space technology is still at a relatively early stage. What we all share, as the omnibus resolution states, is the common belief that the benefits deriving from space exploration should be accessible to States at all stages of economic and scientific development, that there should be the maximum international co-operation in this field, and that international programmes for the practical application of space technology to development should be expanded as much as possible. The urgency of this task seems to my delegation to be self-evident, particularly in view of the world's increasing preoccupation with the acute problems of food, resources and energy and of the important, possibly essential, role that earth-oriented space technology can play in the solution of those problems.

Let me begin with the subject of remote sensing. My delegation was a little disappointed that the Committee did not see fit this year

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to renew the mandate of the Working Group on Remote Sensing. However, we note that provision has been made for an additional week of meetings in the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee next year, should this prove necessary, in order to provide time for an adequate discussion on the subject. This discussion will be based on the results of the four studies of the organizational and financial aspects of remote sensing which the Committee has authorized to be carried out this year. My delegation hopes that the discussion of those studies will be comprehensive, and will give rise to practical recommendations for future work.

We would not wish to overlook the useful work that the Legal Sub-Committee has initiated on the legal implications of remote sensing. We welcome the efforts of France and the Soviet Union in submitting a joint working paper containing draft principles to govern remote sensing, and the latest initiative of Argentina and Brazil in submitting basic articles of a draft treaty on remote sensing. My Government will give careful study to both those documents, with the aim of making an effective contribution when the subject is again considered at the next session of the Legal Sub-Committee. We are glad to note that remote sensing will be an item of priority at that session.

Some difference of emphasis still seems to exist concerning the way in which the study of the organizational and financial aspects of remote sensing should be co-ordinated with that of the legal aspects. My delegation fully supports the view expressed in the draft resolution that further studies of organizational and financial questions should progress together with consideration of the legal aspects, as a matter of priority. Our goal should be the formulation of concrete proposals for the setting up as soon as possible, under United Nations auspices, of an international remote sensing centre, with its product to be accessible to all countries. We should also like to look into the possibility of setting up regional remote sensing centres.

There was a useful discussion in the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee this year on the scope of the space applications programme. Australia endorses the view of the Sub-Committee that the programme should be thoroughly reviewed in 1975. We support the continuing development and

(Sir Laurence McIntyre, Australia)

adaptation of the programme, taking especially into account the needs of the developing countries. We look at this in terms of value for money spent, rather than in terms of the arbitrary setting of a budgetary ceiling. We are confident that the Expert responsible for the programme, Mr. Murthy, will continue to conduct it effectively. Australia will continue to play whatever part it can in the progressive development of the programme, in particular in the area of education, training and participation in seminars and workshops. We look forward to taking part in a forthcoming seminar on cartography in Brazil, and in a regional seminar on remote sensing in the ESCAP region -- which we used to call the ECAFE region -- to be held in Indonesia next year.

The questionnaire on the needs of the developing countries in space applications technology will be a useful means of eliciting information that can be used in the Committee's future work.

Direct broadcasting from satellites is the other major aspect of earth-oriented space technology that commands the interest of Australia. We recognize that there is a delicate complex of interrelated political, economic, legal and technical questions to be resolved here if the benefits of this technology are to be fully realized in practice. Traditional concepts of national sovereignty will have to be reconciled with the equally essential principle of freedom of information. Meanwhile, technology advances relentlessly, in this field as in so many others, and raises complications along with the benefits it brings to the world as a whole. Solutions to all these problems will not be easy, but we are confident that they can and will be found.

(Sir Laurence McIntyre, Australia)

Australia is studying with interest the various draft documents that have been submitted by countries in this field, most recently by Argentina, and we are taking part in the work of the Legal Sub-Committee in drafting principles to govern direct broadcasting. We share the view expressed by several delegations here that care should be taken not to be too hasty in setting up legal arrangements or institutions that might be so restrictive as to hamper future technical development. While we note with some regret that the Working Group on Direct Broadcast Satellites will not meet again in 1974-1975, we are pleased to see that the question of its reconvening in 1975-1976 will be considered at next year's session of the Outer Space Committee. We feel there is a case for reconvening this useful interdisciplinary Working Group.

Allow me to conclude on a note of caution. There is no doubt that the Outer Space Committee and its subsidiary bodies have made significant and even substantial progress in a number of important areas over the past year. At the same time, there have been some disquieting indications during the year of a degree of polarization of attitudes, and of a disinclination to reach a consensus on the basis of compromise. The Committee and its subsidiary bodies have always operated, and it is important that they should continue to operate, on the basis of consensus. The Committee may not be able to carry out effectively the heavy workload placed on it if there are to be time-consuming difficulties in arriving at consensus on many of the issues with which it must deal. There will be a need for maximum flexibility among all members of the Committee, particularly on some of the more contentious issues before it, if its work is to go forward with the least possible delay. The Australian delegation, for its part, will continue to seek the path of compromise in the Committee and to support positions which in our view most accurately reflect the needs of the world community as a whole.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I thank the representative of Australia for the cordial congratulations he was kind enough to address to the officers of the Committee.

Mr. YOKOTA (Japan): Since this is the first time my delegation has spoken at this session, I should like first of all to extend my delegation's most sincere congratulations to you, Sir, on your well-deserved election to the high office of Chairman of the First Committee. My congratulations go also to the other officers of the Committee.

I am thoroughly convinced, Mr. Chairman, that your outstanding leadership, coupled with your long experience and profound knowledge of United Nations activities, will enable us to achieve truly meaningful results with respect to all of the problems to be considered by this Committee. For our part, I shall merely say that the delegation of Japan will spare no effort in extending its fullest co-operation as you discharge your weighty responsibilities.

Turning to the items now before us, my delegation wishes at the outset to express its deep appreciation to the Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Ambassador Jankowitsch of Austria, for his lucid statement last Friday, in which he introduced the report of the Committee and gave us a brilliant summary of its activities during the past year.

As a member of the Outer Space Committee, my delegation had the pleasure of participating fully in the work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies during the past year. Looking back on the 13 long weeks of intensive discussions and negotiations, both in New York and in Geneva, my delegation wishes to state with great satisfaction that the past year was a truly fruitful one for the Outer Space Committee.

It may be recalled that at the third session of the Working Group on Remote Sensing of the Earth by Satellites, held last February, the nine new members appointed by the Secretary-General participated for the first time in the work of the Outer Space Committee. We were extremely pleased to observe that the increasingly valuable contributions made by these new members to the subsequent work of the Committee fully confirmed the wisdom of the decision taken by the General Assembly in resolution 3192 (XXVIII). Although we had ample opportunity to work closely with these new members during the first half of this year, we believe it is none the less fitting to take this opportunity to extend formally our warm welcome to the new members of the Outer Space Committee, and to congratulate them on their valuable contributions.

(Mr. Yokota, Japan)

The completion of the draft convention on registration of objects launched into outer space is another memorable event in the history of the Outer Space Committee. The brilliant statement made last Friday by the Chairman of the Legal Sub-Committee, Ambassador Wyzner of Poland, in introducing the draft registration convention, provided the Committee with a detailed explanation of the many years of difficult negotiations and delicate compromises which culminated in the Outer Space Committee's adoption of the draft. My delegation wishes to pay a special tribute to Ambassador Wyzner for his truly selfless devotion, which contributed greatly to the successful completion of this historic document.

I sincerely hope that the Committee will approve unanimously the draft registration convention, which in our view marks another milestone in the progressive development of outer space law. For our part, I am pleased to inform the Committee that the Government of Japan, in view of the completion of the draft registration convention, is seriously studying the possibility of becoming a party to it, as well as to the liability convention and the rescue agreement, having due regard for the possible legislative measures that might be required for their implementation.

My delegation considers that the international community may draw an important lesson from a careful analysis of the long and difficult negotiations which led this year to the successful completion of the draft registration convention. It may be recalled that until the negotiations reached an advanced stage, some countries strongly favoured the establishment of a system of mandatory marking of objects launched into outer space, while others repeatedly called attention to insurmountable technical difficulties in setting up such a system, at least in the present state of the art. We are extremely pleased to recall that this apparent impasse was finally broken by the strenuous efforts of the delegation of Canada, aided by the excellent spirit of compromise manifested by the delegation of France.

My delegation appreciates the desirability of establishing a clear legal link between a launching State and an object launched into outer space, with a view to facilitating the identification of the responsible State. However, we appreciate also the serious technological and financial constraints inevitably required by a system of mandatory marking, which might well hamper further exploration of outer space.

(Mr. Yokota, Japan)

When we consider the enormous difficulty of finding a reasonable balance between legal desiderata and technological or financial constraints, the agreed formula, based on a combination of optional marking and mandatory notification and coupled with the possibility of review, as set forth in articles V and X, respectively, of the draft registration convention, represents, in our view, the most realistic compromise possible at the present stage.

The draft registration convention is by no means an isolated example of the realistic compromises that are needed to find a way out of the apparent conflict between legal desiderata and technological or financial constraints. This, in fact, is an inherent problem which must be overcome at almost every step of the long road to the progressive development of outer space law. Space technology is advancing with enormous speed. Today's impossible dream may well become the commonly accepted reality of tomorrow. This is indeed a unique field which calls for imagination as strongly as a legal mind. In order to maintain a well-balanced perspective on both the present constraints and the future possibilities in this field, it is highly important for the international community to keep the technological aspects of space activities under constant review. It is precisely because of these considerations that my delegation has stressed, time and time again, the importance of a multi-disciplinary approach in dealing with the diverse legal and political problems created by the advancement of space technology.

The elaboration of principles governing direct television broadcasting by satellites is certainly one of the fields in which such a multi-disciplinary approach will continue to be most desirable, for there are a number of important problems in this field which have to be solved on the basis of a delicate balance between legal desiderata and present and future technological constraints. Although the Legal Sub-Committee, at its thirteenth session last May, started drafting principles with respect to the five areas which were considered to be relatively non-controversial, the number of square brackets remaining in these texts would be a sufficient indication of the

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extent of the problems still to be solved. When the Sub-Committee proceeds to the more controversial areas, such as spill-over and prior consent, the limitations of an exclusively legal approach will become even more obvious, for there are a number of delegations, including my own, which believe that some of the present legal problems, at least, may become less serious, if they cannot be disregarded, as a result of technological advances in the near future. It is therefore the well-considered view of my delegation that the Legal Sub-Committee, in proceeding with the elaboration of principles in the field of direct broadcast satellites should always bear in mind the possibility of requesting necessary information on the latest state of the art from the Working Group on Direct Broadcast Satellites.

Furthermore, it is particularly important, in our view, that the Working Group on Direct Broadcast Satellites hold its session at an appropriate stage in the near future to study the technical aspect of direct broadcast satellites in consideration *inter alia* of the results of the ATS-6 experiment now under way, so that its findings can be fully reflected in the Legal Sub-Committee's elaboration of principles in the field of direct broadcast satellites.

Another area in which an equitable balance between legal and technological considerations is strongly called for is remote sensing of the earth by satellites. This year the Legal Sub-Committee, virtually for the first time, entered upon a substantive discussion of the legal implications of remote sensing by satellites. The Sub-Committee had before it several documents containing draft treaty provisions and principles on remote sensing submitted by various delegations. The day before yesterday we received a new set of proposals, submitted jointly by the delegations of Argentina and Brazil.

My delegation will certainly study these proposals with the utmost care, and will state its reaction at an appropriate time.

However, I wish to express once again the repeatedly stated misgivings of my delegation over the possibility that the over-hasty establishment of a rigid legal framework might well hamper the bright future of this new technology. Although we appreciate the concern felt by some countries about the possible abuse of this technology, to the detriment of their interests,

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we should never underestimate the enormous benefits which the optimum utilization of this technology may bring to the entire international community. The successful utilization of remotely sensed data to combat desert encroachment in the Sahelian region of Central Africa is an excellent example which testifies to the bright future of remote sensing technology.

At the present experimental stage of this new technology, therefore, it would be more appropriate for the international community to explore the possibility of alleviating the concern felt by some countries about its abuse by making provisions for the establishment of optimum organizational arrangements. In accordance with this belief, my delegation fully endorses the recommendation, contained in paragraph 30 of the report of the Outer Space Committee, that the Secretary-General be requested to carry out studies on the organizational and financial aspects of remote sensing by satellites.

With regard to the draft Moon treaty, the Legal Sub-Committee again failed to resolve a few remaining issues, despite the highest priority accorded to this subject at its thirteenth session. My delegation has no difficulty in endorsing the Outer Space Committee's view that the Legal Sub-Committee once again give high priority at its next session to the finalization of the draft Moon treaty. But, in our view, something more than a mechanical priority is needed, particularly as regards a solution of the problems related to the natural resources of the Moon. With all due respect for the different views held on this matter by various delegations, I submit in all candour that we shall achieve very little if we go on discussing the desirability, or undesirability, of bringing into the treaty an abstract concept of the common heritage of all mankind, without specifically defining its attributes.

The basic position of my delegation with regard to the United Nations Programme on Space Applications is already well known. We fully share the

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view that both the content and the scope of the United Nations programme should be expanded. The importance of space applications has increased phenomenally in the past few years with the rapid advance in space technology and the ever-expanding opportunities for its application to national development. As the representative of Sweden, Ambassador Rydbeck, rightly pointed out the day before yesterday, a single development -- the tremendous potential of remote sensing technology for solving economic and environmental problems -- clearly testifies to the growing need for the expansion of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications.

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My delegation is well aware that there are delegations which place their emphasis on the need to increase the effectiveness of the Programme, rather than on the need to expand its scope and budgetary appropriations. In our view, however, these two needs are perfectly compatible and equally deserve our urgent attention. My delegation therefore attaches great importance to the questionnaire mentioned in paragraph 43 of the Outer Space Committee's report. At the same time, my delegation sincerely hopes that the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee will give serious consideration to the possibility of holding a greater number of seminars, panels and symposia in the future. For our part, we are prepared, as in the past, to give favourable consideration to the possibility of being hosts to such meetings, should we receive a request from the United Nations regarding a specific programme and should the majority of the Member States so desire.

With regard to the suggestion to convene a United Nations conference, the Government of Japan has informed the Secretary-General that it favours a conference. We see merit in holding it around 1978, at the earliest, by which time space technology -- which is at present still in an experimental stage -- will have become fully operational in a number of fields. For our part, we are deeply interested in participating in the conference, if it is held, and are prepared to provide the fullest possible contribution to make it a success. My delegation is also of the view that the question of the site of the conference should be considered by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee at its next session, on the basis of the views submitted by Member States in accordance with paragraph 44 of the Outer Space Committee's report.

The Committee has before it two draft resolutions in documents A/C.1/L.678 and L.679, which were so eloquently introduced by Ambassador Jankowitsch of Austria this morning. In our view, the draft resolutions not only reflect the consensus reached in the Outer Space Committee on many questions but also meet with the views of my delegation in a number of ways. I wish to express the deep appreciation of my delegation to the

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delegation of Austria for all the trouble it has taken in preparing the two draft resolutions. My delegation is happy to state that it has sponsored the two draft resolutions and sincerely hopes that they will be adopted unanimously by the General Assembly.

Last but not least, my delegation wishes to express its sincere appreciation to Mr. Robinson, Mr. Rybakov and other members of their divisions in the Secretariat, as well as to the Expert, Mr. Murthy, for the excellent work they have done during the past year.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I thank Ambassador Yokota of Japan for the kind words he addressed to me and the other officers of the Committee.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.