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COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL  
USES OF OUTER SPACE

PROVISIONAL AGENDA, WITH ANNOTATIONS,  
FOR THE EIGHTEENTH SESSION

To be convened at United Nations Headquarters  
on Monday, 9 June 1975, at 3 p.m.

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Statement by the Chairman
3. General debate
4. Consideration of:
  - (a) Report of the Legal Sub-Committee (A/AC.105/147)
  - (b) Report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee (A/AC.105/150)
5. Other matters
6. Report of the Committee to the General Assembly

ANNOTATIONS

Item 2 Statement by the Chairman

The Chairman will also present, for adoption by the Committee, a provisional schedule concerning organization of work for the eighteenth session. (The provisional schedule will be distributed to members of the Committee prior to the eighteenth session as Conference Room Paper 1.)

Item 4 (a) Report of the Legal Sub-Committee (A/AC.105/147)

The Legal Sub-Committee at its fourteenth session considered the following items with the same high priority: (a) the draft treaty relating to the moon with a view to completing it as soon as possible; (b) the elaboration of principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting with a view to concluding an international agreement or agreements, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2916 (XXVII) of 9 November 1972; and (c) the legal implications of remote sensing of the earth from space, taking into account the various views of States expressed on the subject, including proposals for draft international instruments.

The Sub-Committee also considered matters relating to the definition and/or delimitation of outer space and outer space activities.

The substantive part of the Sub-Committee's report on these items is contained in paragraphs 19 to 38 as well as in annexes I to III:

(i) Draft treaty relating to the moon

The Sub-Committee re-established Working Group I on this item. The Working Group decided to give priority to the question of natural resources, regarded by many delegations as the problem whose solution would facilitate an agreement on the two other main outstanding issues, namely, the question related to the scope of the treaty and the information to be furnished on missions to the moon. Following discussions and informal consultations in the Working Group, the texts concerning natural resources were redrafted into articles X and X bis. However, owing to a lack of consensus, a number of words and sentences in the draft appeared in square brackets. For the same reason certain provisions were drafted in two versions; in those cases both texts were placed in square brackets. The texts of articles X and X bis thus drafted were reproduced in the report of the Chairman of the Working Group (annex I, appendix).

(ii) Elaboration of principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting

Working Group II, which was also re-established by the Sub-Committee and to which this item was assigned, dealt with all the principles reflected in the report

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of the Working Group on Direct Broadcast Satellites on the work of its fifth session (A/AC.105/127), including the five principles considered at the thirteenth session of the Legal Sub-Committee. The texts of principles as formulated by the Working Group (including words of sentences in square brackets, or alternative formulations on matters where consensus could not be reached), were reflected in the report of the Chairman of the Working Group (annex II).

(iii) Legal implications of remote sensing of the earth from space

The Sub-Committee established Working Group III to deal with this item. The Working Group noted that there were certain common elements to be found in the three draft international instruments which were before the Sub-Committee (A/AC.105/C.2/L.99, A/C.1/1047 and A/AC.105/C.2/L.103) and in the views expressed by many members in several areas; it also reported on main questions raised and considered during its discussion of the item. Noting that substantial progress had been achieved in the consideration of this item, the Working Group recommended that work thereon should be continued as a matter of high priority at the next session of the Sub-Committee, bearing in mind the views expressed by States including proposals for draft international instruments (annex III).

(iv) Matters relating to the definition and/or delimitation of outer space

The Sub-Committee considered this item at one meeting in the course of which the importance of the subject was stressed and the hope expressed that at its future sessions the Sub-Committee would be able to consider the item in greater detail (para. 38).

(v) Other matters

A. Work of the next session of the Sub-Committee

The Sub-Committee was of the opinion that at its next session it should continue to consider with the same high priority the issues covered by draft treaty relating to the moon, elaboration of principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting and legal implications of remote sensing of the earth from space (para. 15).

B. Schedule and venue for future sessions for the Sub-Committee

The Sub-Committee recommended that its fifteenth session be held from 3 to 28 May 1976. It was noted that, as previously decided by the Committee, the fifteenth session of the Legal Sub-Committee would be held in Geneva (para. 14).

The Sub-Committee believed that it might be useful if it were to propose to its parent Committee that future sessions of the Sub-Committee be scheduled for the month of May each year (para. 16).

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A number of arguments were advanced both in favour and against the holding of all future sessions of the Sub-Committee in Geneva. The views expressed by delegations on this question are to be found in the summary records of the 241st, 242nd and 244th meetings of the Legal Sub-Committee. Regretting that in those circumstances, it was not in a position to make an agreed recommendation on the question to the Committee, the Sub-Committee felt that the Committee itself would wish to give further consideration to the question (para. 17).

Item 4 (b) Report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee (A/AC.105/150)

At its twelfth session, the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee gave priority to the consideration of (1) questions relating to remote sensing of the earth by satellites; (2) consideration and review of the United Nations programme on space applications; (3) possible United Nations conference on space applications; (4) review of the future role and work of the Sub-Committee.

(i) Remote sensing of the earth from space

In examining this item, as reflected in paragraphs 15 to 29 of its report, the Sub-Committee considered both the current pre-operational/experimental phase as well as a possible future global international operational remote sensing system or systems giving stress, however, on the current pre-operational/experimental phase. The views of the Sub-Committee thereon were expressed in paragraphs 25 to 28 of its report.

In paragraph 29, the Sub-Committee recommended that:

(a) The United Nations Secretariat be requested to prepare, well ahead of the thirteenth session of the Sub-Committee:

- (1) An analytical report on actual and predicted costs and benefits involved in the practical application of remote sensing. A report of this nature would be based on material mentioned in document A/AC.105/139 and Add.1 and any further information available.
- (2) A feasibility study, using resources at its disposal, on a possible co-ordinating function for the United Nations regarding future operational remote sensing activities. Such a function could possibly be combined with any future operational global (international) centre for data storage, analysis and dissemination under the auspices of the United Nations. Such a study would have to be conducted in close contact with those specialized agencies which have already involved themselves in international/global remote sensing programmes, taking into account the considerations mentioned in paragraph 27, subparagraph (xii) of the report of the Sub-Committee.

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(3) An information paper on existing or planned national or regional ground stations including those for direct reception of remote sensing data from NASA's LANDSAT programme and centres for data processing, storage and dissemination. Such a paper, which would have to be compiled in close contact with the Governments and agencies concerned, might include information on technical characteristics, management and ownership, staffing, costs, national and international (regional) user contacts and policies, priority applications, benefits, volume of data handled or envisaged, etc.

(4) A preliminary study on the organizational and financial requirements of a future operational space segment for global coverage to be internationally operated, owned and financed. This study would include both a brief outline of possible technical configurations and a presentation of organizational and financial alternatives for an international co-operative venture. In the first instance, special emphasis should be given to a definition and an evaluation of certain assumptions regarding user requirements and priorities and regarding technical constraints on the system.

(b) The Secretary-General be requested to undertake the following practical steps:

- (1) In co-operation with the appropriate specialized agencies, to explore the feasibility of utilizing existing facilities and expertise to establish on an experimental basis an international centre which could train and assist persons from developing countries to make the most effective use of remote sensing information. If the study demonstrated that such an experiment could be implemented without additional financial implications, the Sub-Committee was of the view that it should be carried out and a full report on the results should be submitted to the Sub-Committee at its next session.
- (2) To undertake an appropriate users survey, utilizing the services of UNDP, the regional economic commissions and other United Nations bodies as appropriate for obtaining a clearer understanding of the real needs of the users and their stage of preparedness in this area of activity.

(ii) Review of the United Nations programme on space applications

The Sub-Committee reviewed the United Nations programme on space applications in paragraphs 30-47 of its report. In regard to the proposed space applications programme for 1976, the Sub-Committee agreed to the programme as proposed by the United Nations Expert (para. 48). While several delegations expressed the view that the United Nations space applications programme should be expanded as regards both its content and its scope and that it should receive greater financial support, other delegations did not agree to this view and stressed that the most appropriate way to improve the programme further would be to increase its

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effectiveness. At the same time there was agreement in the Sub-Committee that everything should be done to ensure the most effective use of all means placed at the disposal of the Expert (para. 48).

In considering the United Nations programme on space applications in the long run, the Sub-Committee reiterated its view that the programme should be reviewed annually, taking into account particularly the needs of the developing countries (paras. 48-50).

Reviewing the need to ensure effective co-ordination of the activities of the United Nations and the specialized agencies in the area of space applications, the Sub-Committee noted in particular the proposal made (during the Ad Hoc Interagency Meeting on Space Applications) for the establishment of a standing body of the ACC to deal with matters relating to space applications. The Sub-Committee expressed the hope that a report on co-ordination among the specialized agencies and the United Nations space applications programme with any suggestions or recommendations the Secretary-General might wish to make would be submitted to the current session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (para. 51).

(iii) Possible United Nations conference on space

The Sub-Committee agreed to the view expressed by the Secretary-General that it would be difficult to make a comprehensive assessment regarding the convening of a conference on the basis of the small number of replies received so far and recommended that Member States which have not yet done so should submit their views as soon as possible (paras. 52-53).

On the possibility of space applications being included in the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology proposed for the late 1970s, the Sub-Committee requested the Secretary-General to provide the current session of the Committee with all possible information (para. 54).

(iv) Review of the future role and work of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee

The Sub-Committee recommended that for its thirteenth session, to be held from 22 March to 9 April 1976, priority be given to the following items:

1. Questions relating to remote sensing of the earth by satellites;
2. Consideration and review of the United Nations programme on space applications;
3. Consideration of the options relating to a possible United Nations conference on outer space matters.

It was agreed that the future work of the Sub-Committee should also be included in the provisional agenda (paras. 55-57).

(v) Other matters

A. Exchange of information

In paragraphs 58-71, the Sub-Committee took note of and expressed its appreciation and satisfaction for the reports on national and co-operative international space activities submitted by Member States, as well as the reports of the specialized agencies and their co-operation.

Noting with appreciation the participation of COSPAR and IAF, the Sub-Committee requested that each consider the possibility of preparing for the Sub-Committee on an annual basis a report which could cover such items as the state of the art of scientific and technological developments in the exploration and practical uses of outer space, a forecast of future scientific and technological trends and developments, and an assessment of areas where national space efforts could undertake such activities within an international framework (paras. 72-73).

B. International rocket launching facilities

The Sub-Committee noted with satisfaction the work of the Thumba Equatorial Rocket Launching Station of the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre in India and the CELPA Mar del Plata Rocket Launching Station in Argentina, and recommended that the United Nations continue to grant sponsorship to these ranges (paras. 74-75).

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