

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**



Official Records

Agenda item 60

ANNEXES

THIRTEENTH SESSION

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Agenda item 60: Question of the peaceful use of outer space:*

- (a) The banning of the use of cosmic space for military purposes, the elimination of foreign military bases on the territories of other countries and international co-operation in the study of cosmic space;
- (b) Programme for international co-operation in the field of outer space

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DOCUMENT A/3818**

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: request for the inclusion of an item in the provisional agenda of the thirteenth session

*[Original text: Russian]
[17 March 1958]*

LETTER DATED 15 MARCH 1958 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I am instructed by the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to forward herewith the

*For the discussion of this item, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirteenth Session, First Committee*, 981st to 995th meetings; and *ibid.*, *Plenary Meetings*, 792nd meeting.

**Incorporating document A/3813/Corr.1.

text of the Soviet Government's proposal on the question:

"The banning of the use of cosmic space for military purposes, the elimination of foreign military bases on the territories of other countries and international co-operation in the study of cosmic space."

The USSR Government requests that the above-mentioned question be included in the provisional agenda of the thirteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly.

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure, I attach an explanatory memorandum.

(Signed) A. SOBOLEV
Permanent Representative of the
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
to the United Nations

Explanatory memorandum

The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has transmitted to the Secretary-General of the United Nations its proposal on the question of the banning of the use of cosmic space for military purposes, the elimination of foreign military bases on the territories of other countries and international co-operation in the study of cosmic space. This question is submitted by the Soviet Government for inclusion in the agenda of the General Assembly with a view to the preparation of a general international agreement on these matters in which all States could participate.

Proposal by the Soviet Government on the question of the banning of the use of cosmic space for military purposes, the elimination of foreign military bases on the territories of other countries, and international co-operation in the study of cosmic space

1. Today the attention of mankind is riveted to the question of what use is to be made of the tremendous new achievements of science and engineering that have put the energy contained in the nucleus of the atom at the service of mankind and that have opened up new prospects for the study of cosmic space through the launching of artificial earth satellites, which constitute an outstanding victory of human knowledge over the mighty forces of nature. The fate of mankind depends to a considerable extent on whether these achievements of science and engineering will serve peaceful aims ensuring the greater well-being of all people or whether they will be used for further intensifying the arms race which may plunge the world into a destructive war in which the latest weapons of mass extermination will be used.

2. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that today, when relations between States are characterized by suspicion and mistrust, when States have atomic and hydrogen weapons in their armaments and when new, even more destructive types of these weapons are being evolved, the danger of such a war will constantly hang over mankind unless agreement is reached on outlawing nuclear weapons and directing the latest achievements of science and engineering towards peaceful uses for the good of mankind.

3. Achievement of such an agreement would eliminate the menace of another world war in which nuclear weapons would be used and would open up unlimited opportunities for the joint study and harnessing of the still unexplored forces of nature, which would promote even greater scientific and technological progress in all fields, including the study and utilization of cosmic space. Such an agreement would pave the way for broad international co-operation in combating by joint efforts such natural calamities as floods, droughts and hurricanes, which cause great damage to all nations. It would make it possible to launch a common onslaught on the deserts and wrest them from nature for peaceful and creative endeavours, and would help to pool all efforts

for a resolute fight against the diseases which take a toll of millions of human lives.

4. Co-operation between scientists of various countries is already being effected in a number of branches of science and engineering. The joint studies that are being conducted by scientists throughout the world under the International Geophysical Year programme are a wonderful example of this co-operation. Within the framework of this programme, scientists are closely co-operating in the sphere of meteorology, in the study of the Antarctic, the oceans, terrestrial magnetism, the ionosphere, cosmic rays, and so forth.

5. There is no doubt, however, that this co-operation can be greatly expanded and extended to many other fields of human activity if agreement is reached on a radical solution of the disarmament problem, including a complete ban on the atomic and hydrogen weapons, the liquidation of military bases on foreign territories, and the like. This would in equal measure ensure the security of all States and would bring about a situation where all the peoples of the world could live in peace, without any fears for the morrow.

6. A number of statesmen in the United States of America and some other countries have recently made statements in which they raised the question of a ban on the use of cosmic space for military purposes. President Eisenhower, too, mentioned this question in his recent messages to N. A. Bulganin, Prime Minister of the Soviet Union. He suggested that the use of cosmic space for the testing of military rockets should be discontinued and that the manufacture of weapons envisaging the use of interplanetary space should be stopped. In making this proposal, President Eisenhower singled out from the general disarmament problem only one question—the question of intercontinental ballistic missiles, leaving aside the other highly important aspects of the problem. He proposes, in fact, to ban only intercontinental ballistic rockets.

7. It is well known however, that it is not the intercontinental ballistic rockets themselves that are a threat to mankind: it is the atomic and hydrogen bombs which can be installed in them as warheads. This, indeed, is obvious, for the factor determining the peaceful or military purpose of a rocket is not some engineering and technical peculiarities of its construction, but whether it carries a peaceful sputnik, instruments for the study of cosmic space, or a nuclear charge in the form of atomic or hydrogen bombs for the purpose of mass destruction.

8. The intercontinental ballistic missile is already an accomplished fact. Scientists and engineers now are thinking of launching even more powerful cosmic rockets into space as their next step. This march of scientific and technical thought, this process, cannot be arrested, and indeed, it is not in mankind's interest that it should be. The duty of statesmen is to direct scientific and technical progress in this field towards exclusively peaceful uses, so as to ensure that intercontinental or any other rockets are used for peaceful research, for conquering interplanetary space, and not for the destruction of human beings.

9. It is noteworthy, however, that, while proposing a ban on the intercontinental ballistic rocket, the United States bases all its military plans on the use of atomic and hydrogen bombs carried by the short- and medium-range rockets which it already possesses,

and is making feverish efforts to perfect the existing rockets and to develop new ones. Evidence of this is the growing atomic and rocket arms race which is proceeding in the United States on an unparalleled scale. Thousands upon thousands of millions of dollars have been allocated in the United States for the design and manufacture of rockets and atomic and hydrogen bombs.

10. These rockets equipped with nuclear warheads are to be supplied to numerous United States military bases on foreign territories. It is no secret, and it is being openly admitted by United States military leaders, that these bases and rockets are intended to deal a blow at the vital centres of the Soviet Union. The question therefore arises: is it not true that these military preparations carried out by the United States constitute a grave threat to the security of the Soviet Union and the peaceful States friendly to it? Why is it then that the United States proposals suggest the outlawing of intercontinental ballistic rockets which could be used, by way of retaliation and only by way of retaliation against targets in the territory of the United States, while evading the question of eliminating American military bases on foreign territories which are intended for the launching of rockets possessed by the United States armed forces and for the use of American bombers?

11. Can it be said that atomic and hydrogen bombs dropped from aircraft which take off from American military bases situated, for example, in Europe or North Africa, are less dangerous than bombs delivered by intercontinental rockets? Of course not. Atomic and hydrogen bombs are equally capable of dealing death and destruction whether they are delivered to their targets by intercontinental ballistic rocket or are dropped from military bases with the aid of bombers or other means of conveying atomic and hydrogen weapons.

12. One cannot fail to see that, in raising the question of banning the use of cosmic space for military purposes, the United States is making an attempt, through a ban of the intercontinental ballistic rocket, to ward off a retaliatory nuclear blow through cosmic space while maintaining its numerous military bases on foreign territories intended for attacking with nuclear weapons the Soviet Union and the peaceful States friendly to it. Before the appearance of the intercontinental rocket, many persons in the United States had counted on American territory being relatively safe, believing that the whole weight of the retaliatory blow in case of war would fall on the allies of the United States on whose territories American military bases are situated. The creation of the intercontinental ballistic rocket has radically altered the situation and has upset these calculations. This is the reason for the desire to remove this new factor—to ban the intercontinental rocket while preserving military bases advanced well beyond the frontiers of the United States and as near as possible to the frontiers of the USSR.

13. Needless to say, the Soviet Government cannot agree to such an approach to the problem which would take into account the security interests of some States while ignoring the security interests of others.

14. It is necessary to find such a solution of the problem as would ensure in equal measure the security

of the United States, the Soviet Union and all other States. This would be served by putting into effect such a measure as the banning of the use of cosmic space for military purposes with the simultaneous elimination of foreign military bases on the territories of other countries, first and foremost the countries of Europe, the Near and Middle East and North Africa.

15. In order to ensure the security interests of all States to the maximum degree, and also in the interests of developing international co-operation in cosmic-space research for peaceful purposes, the Soviet Government proposes the conclusion of a broad international agreement which would include the following basic provisions:

(1) A ban on the use of cosmic space for military purposes and an undertaking by States to launch rockets into cosmic space only under an agreed international programme;

(2) The elimination of foreign military bases on the territories of other States, primarily in Europe, the Near and Middle East, and North Africa;

(3) The establishment within the framework of the United Nations of appropriate international control over the implementation of the obligations set forth in paragraphs (1) and (2) above.

(4) The establishment of a United Nations agency for international co-operation in the study of cosmic space which could have the following functions:

(a) To work out an agreed international programme for launching intercontinental and space rockets with the aim of studying cosmic space, and to supervise the implementation of this programme;

(b) To continue on a permanent basis the cosmic-space research now being carried on within the framework of the International Geophysical Year;

(c) To serve as a world centre for the collection, mutual exchange and dissemination of information on cosmic-space research;

(d) To co-ordinate national research programmes for the study of cosmic space and to render all possible assistance and help towards their realization.

16. The Soviet Government proposes that this problem should be discussed at a conference with the participation of Heads of Government in order that agreement should be reached on it, at least in principle.

17. With a view to the working out of a general international agreement in which all States could take part, the Soviet Government has simultaneously submitted this question for consideration at the thirteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly.

18. The United Nations can and should make its contribution to the solution of problems of such exceptional importance for the strengthening of international peace as a ban on the use of cosmic space for military purposes and the elimination of foreign military bases on the territories of other countries. The application of these measures would break the disarmament deadlock and would to a considerable degree promote an easing of international tension, the establishment of confidence among States and the development of broad international co-operation in many spheres of human activity.

19. The adoption of this proposal of the Soviet Government would greatly reduce the danger of war in which nuclear weapons would be used; it would constitute a major step toward the complete and unconditional prohibition of atomic and nuclear weapons

with their elimination from armaments; and it would promote the development of broad and effective co-operation among States in cosmic research for peaceful purposes.

DOCUMENT A/3902

United States of America: request for the inclusion of an additional item in the agenda of the thirteenth session

*[Original text: English]
[2 September 1958]*

LETTER DATED 2 SEPTEMBER 1958 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to request the inclusion on the agenda of the thirteenth General Assembly of an item of an important and urgent character entitled:

"Programme for international co-operation in the field of outer space".

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure an explanatory memorandum is attached.

(Signed) Henry Cabot LODGE
Permanent Representative of the
United States of America
to the United Nations

Explanatory memorandum

1. Perhaps no event in history has caught the imagination of all mankind more than the development of the new universal frontier through the launching of earth satellites by the Soviet Union and the United States as part of the programme for the International Geophysical Year. The United States is pleased that these first steps to project man's life and knowledge into outer space have been taken under the auspices of this co-operative scientific programme.

2. Outer-space developments are a matter of international concern, because the exploration and eventual exploitation of outer space will affect the life of every human being. Moreover, the nature and immensity of the challenge facing us and the interest it holds for scientists make it clear that activities in outer space can and must be carried out with the appropriate international co-operation and co-ordination within the framework of the United Nations.

3. It is clear that the potentialities for good or evil that will arise from the exploration of outer space are enormous. The potential uses of outer space for destructive purposes are only too apparent. On the other hand, the potential uses of outer space for peaceful purposes in science and engineering, in medicine, in meteorology, in communications, in transportation, etc., can enrich the lives of all men. Urgent steps are therefore needed to lay a solid basis for international co-operation in development of the peaceful uses of outer space. Such steps can be taken while parallel efforts are being made to conclude meaningful agreements on the disarmament aspects of outer space.

4. The General Assembly, as the body most representative of the interests of mankind, should begin to make the necessary steps to further those interests by declaring itself on the separability of the question of the peaceful uses of outer space from that of disarmament; by giving its support to the principle of the peaceful utilization of outer space; by expressing itself in principle to be in favour of the establishment of appropriate international machinery; and by preparing for further careful consideration of this vital but complex matter through the establishment of a representative ad hoc committee to make the necessary detailed studies and recommendations as to what specific steps the Assembly might take to further man's progress in this field and to assure that outer space will be used solely for the benefit of all mankind.

5. To this end the United States requests that the item "Programme for international co-operation in the field of outer space" be placed upon the agenda of the thirteenth session of the General Assembly as an important and urgent matter and will submit a draft resolution to the General Assembly for its consideration.

DOCUMENT A/C.1/L.219

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: draft resolution

*[Original text: Russian]
[7 November 1958]*

The General Assembly,

Moved by the desire to promote by every possible means the strengthening of universal peace and security,

Desiring to place the achievements of science and engineering at the service of mankind's peaceful needs and to ensure conditions for the development of co-

operation among all States in the study of cosmic space for peaceful purposes only,

Considering that, in solving the problem of banning the use of cosmic space for military purposes, the legitimate security interests of all States should be taken into account in equal measure,

Recognizes the necessity for concluding for these ends an agreement to prohibit the launching of rockets

into cosmic space for military purposes and to eliminate all foreign military bases on the territories of other countries, such agreement to be based on the following principles:

1. A ban on the use of cosmic space for military purposes and an undertaking by States to launch rockets into cosmic space only under an agreed international programme;

2. The elimination of foreign military bases on the territories of other States, primarily in Europe, the Near and Middle East, and North Africa;

3. The establishment within the framework of the United Nations of appropriate international control over the implementation of the obligations set forth above;

4. The establishment of a United Nations agency for international co-operation in the study of cosmic space which could have the following functions:

(a) To work out an agreed international programme for launching intercontinental and space rockets with the aim of studying cosmic space, and to supervise the implementation of this programme;

(b) To continue on a permanent basis the cosmic-space research now being carried on within the framework of the International Geophysical Year;

(c) To serve as a world centre for the collection, mutual exchange and dissemination of information on cosmic-space research;

(d) To co-ordinate national research programmes for the study of cosmic space and to render all possible assistance and help towards their realization.

DOCUMENT A/C.1/L.219/REV.1

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: revised draft resolution

*[Original text: Russian]
[18 November 1958]*

The General Assembly,

Recognizing the great importance of international co-operation in the study and exploitation of cosmic space for peaceful purposes,

Considering that such co-operation will promote mutual understanding and the strengthening of friendly relations among peoples,

Recalling in this connexion the successful beginning of such co-operation within the framework of the International Geophysical Year,

1. Recommends the establishment within the framework of the United Nations of an international committee for co-operation in the study of cosmic space for peaceful purposes;

2. Recommends the establishment of a preparatory group consisting of Argentina, Czechoslovakia, France, India, Poland, Romania, Sweden, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Arab Republic, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, to draft the programme and rules of the proposed committee;

3. Recommends that the preparatory group, in its work of preparing the programme and rules, should proceed on the basis that the committee should have the following functions:

(a) To continue on a permanent basis the cosmic-space research now being carried on within the framework of the International Geophysical Year;

(b) To organize the mutual exchange and dissemination of information on cosmic-space research;

(c) To co-ordinate national research programmes for the study of cosmic space and to render all possible assistance and help in their realization;

4. Requests the preparatory group to report on the results of its work to the General Assembly at its fourteenth session;

5. Recommends that the committee, after it has been established, should decide on an appropriate form of agreement providing for a close relationship with the United Nations.

DOCUMENT A/C.1/L.220

Australia, Belgium, Bolivia, Canada, Denmark, France, Guatemala, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Turkey, Union of South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela: draft resolution

*[Original text: English]
[13 November 1958]*

The General Assembly,

Recognizing the common interest of mankind in outer space and that it is the common aim that outer space should be used for peaceful purposes only,

Bearing in mind the provision of Article 2, paragraph 1 of the Charter of the United Nations, which states that "the Organization is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members",

Wishing to avoid the extension of present national rivalries into this new field,

Desiring to promote energetically the fullest exploration and exploitation of outer space for the benefit of mankind,

Conscious that recent developments in respect of outer space have added a new dimension to man's existence and opened new possibilities for the in-

A/4201
(1958)