

set up everywhere for the purpose of studying those problems, both in their over-all dimensions and in their specific aspects. The generous proposal which the Italian Government had just renewed was a particularly noteworthy example of that trend. His delegation, which had taken a full share in the work of the

Ad Hoc Committee, would show equal zeal in striving for the success of the efforts to be made—in the present instance, by common agreement—under the terms of the resolution which the Committee was to adopt.

The meeting rose at 11.10 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



LIMITED

A/C.1/PV.1080
11 December 1959

ENGLISH

Fourteenth Session

FIRST COMMITTEE

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE THOUSAND AND EIGHTIETH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 11 December 1959, at 8.30 p.m.

Chairman:

Mr. MATSCH

(Austria)

Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Peaceful Uses
of Outer Space [25] (continued)

Note: The Official Record of this meeting, i.e. the summary record, will appear in mimeographed form under the symbol A/C.1/SR.1080. Delegations may submit corrections to the summary record for incorporation in the final version which will appear in a printed volume.

59-61725

AGENDA ITEM 25

REPORT OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (A/4141)

(continued)

Mr. MATSUDAIRA (Japan): My delegation believes that the report of the Ad Hoc Committee before us is a fair and an impartial one. With regard to the conclusions, the General Assembly has been left with complete freedom of action as to its own decision.

My delegation feels that the United Nations should play as distinguished a part in the peaceful uses of outer space as it has in the case of the peaceful uses of atomic energy. The report suggests:

"... certain general functions and tasks that might appropriately be undertaken within the framework of the United Nations at the present time." (A/4141 page 75)

The report of the Ad Hoc Committee points out the necessity of international co-operation in the conduct of space activities, and further states that:

"... there is an evident need for efforts of co-ordination and encouragement by the United Nations in some areas by way of support for international co-operation in this field."

The scientists of my country have a keen interest in the international co-operation of such joint projects as the "international use of launching ranges" and the "instrumentation of satellites and deep space probes" which are mentioned in the report.

Furthermore, they have an interest in the "simultaneous sounding rocket launchings". My country participated in the International Rocket Week in 1958, during the International Geophysical Year, by launching sounding rockets named "Kappa". Now they are exploring the feasibility of launching such rockets as those which would reach up to a height of 100 - 150 kilometres. It is expected that by such rockets, we will be able to observe the density of electrons and ions, the variation of geomagnetic field in the ionosphere, etc., as well as other phenomena.

(Mr. Matsudaira, Japan)

The report of the Ad Hoc Committee says that:

"... the Technical Committee has not considered it necessary to deliberate on the vehicles used for the exploration of outer space."

It seems that this field is a kind of a vacuous field in international co-operation for the peaceful uses of outer space. It is not necessary to say that international co-operation is desirable in as wide a range as possible in all the fields of the peaceful uses of outer space, including the ways and means to put forth the implementation of space activities; inasmuch as space activities must, to a large extent, be an effort of the Planet Earth as a whole.

My delegation strongly feels that, at least in the field of rocket engineering, the exchange of information will be implemented more effectively than that of the present time. We all know that the development of vehicles which made possible the scientific study of outer space has, to a large extent, been the outcome of military objectives, and therefore, problems of national security have prohibited the free exchange of information, as the report of the Ad Hoc Committee points out. However, it is our earnest desire that even at present countries concerned will make public the information in this field as long as it will not impede their national security and promote the exchange of such information.

My delegation is happy to co-sponsor the draft resolution before us. I wish to avail myself of this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to Mr. Lodge and Mr. Kuznetsov for their co-operative and patient efforts which led to the production of this draft resolution.

My delegation sincerely hopes that from 1960, the problem of the peaceful uses of outer space will be promoted on a global basis by the adoption of the draft resolution.

Mr. MICHALOWSKI (Poland): Before entering into the substance of the issue before us, permit me to express the satisfaction of my delegation over the agreement achieved between the two primarily interested space Powers, the Soviet Union and the United States, on one of the most controversial questions of the last two sessions. I am referring to the composition of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the draft resolution which we co-sponsor with full conviction and pleasure. We are particularly glad that this session of our General Assembly, which was marked at its beginning by the unprecedented unanimous agreement on the matter of general and complete disarmament, is closing with another accent of goodwill and co-operation. Our session has been held under particularly favourable conditions caused by a certain relaxation of international tension. This was promoted, to a large extent, by the historic visit of Mr. Khrushchev to the United States and by his conversations with President Eisenhower. The favourable atmosphere contributed, considerably in our opinion, also to the achievement of the above-mentioned compromise which finally found its expression in the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/L.247.

I do not intend to bring up again the whole, so far unfortunate, history of this issue. I would like to limit myself to a few brief remarks on principles which should, in our opinion, govern the work of the body which we are going to establish. First of all, I wish to stress the universal character of the tasks with which this body will be entrusted. The subject of outer space is a completely new one and rather unfamiliar, not only to our Organization, but also to mankind as a whole, which, for the first time in its entire long history, is faced with problems reaching beyond the limits of our planet. This new subject requests also a new approach.

Unfortunately, the space age finds mankind rather unprepared to meet the great tasks and complex problems which the new era of the conquest of cosmic space poses before us. The universal character of these tasks demands unity of efforts and international co-operation on an unprecedented scale. The results of the International Geophysical Year, in which Poland actively participated, present us with one of the best examples of such co-operation, and it is good, therefore, that the draft resolution provides for continuation on a permanent basis of outer space research carried on within the framework of the International Geophysical Year.

(Mr. Michalowski, Poland)

In the course of last year's discussion on this issue, a considerable number of representatives called for such an approach to outer space problems as to ensure effective international co-operation on the basis of full access of all States to outer space and with complete equality. We agree with this point of view and consider that the principle of sovereign equality of States, which is contained in the Charter of the United Nations, is binding on Member States in outer space as well as on our planet. It seems to us that the international scientific conference proposed in resolution B before us meets this demand in the best possible way.

While expressing our full satisfaction with the agreement achieved in drafting the resolution, I cannot but express my regret that an amendment has been presented by Belgium to the draft. It is astonishing that some of us, even when thinking in cosmic terms, cannot forget petty, earthly rivalries. It would be ridiculous if it were not so exasperating. The representative of Belgium, introducing his amendment, referred here to a United Nations formula. We are a political and not a legal Committee, and therefore I do not wish to start here a legal discussion. I feel, however, obliged simply to remind the representative of Belgium that this complex problem has been exhaustively discussed at this very session in the Sixth Committee with reference to the Conference on Diplomatic Intercourse and Immunities. In the course of this discussion many delegations have raised serious objections as to the existence of something like a United Nations formula in this respect.

We should not, therefore, base our documents on nebulous formulas which really do not exist. The problem is not a legal or formal one as it was presented by the representative of Belgium. The problem is a political one, and its point lies in an effort made by certain delegations to deprive a group of States of their right to participate in an international conference, a conference of universal character by its very nature.

It is strange that we are able to co-operate in matters of planets and stars, but some of us still try to discriminate against certain States which are not yet Members of the United Nations. All this does not sound very reasonable. Scientists have been able to explore the dark side of the moon, but there are still dark spots on this earth which seem to be more difficult to eradicate.

(Mr. Michalowski, Poland)

It shows only that scientific development is progressing much faster than the development of certain political trends. We certainly cannot accept this amendment and we shall vote against it.

The success of any programme of scientific co-operation in the exploration of outer space is closely related to another and in our opinion most important issue, namely, that of entirely peaceful uses of outer space. All mankind hailed the remarkable successes of the scientists of the Soviet Union, and then the United States, particularly when the first earth satellites were successfully put into orbit, when the first artificial planet was launched, when the first man-made rocket hit the moon, and when the first rocket orbited the moon, taking pictures on its dark side.

(Mr. Michalowski, Poland)

Immediately, however, justified anxiety followed the joy, an anxiety that these memorable triumphs of human ingenuity might be turned against the interest and security of mankind and extend the arms race into outer space. Therefore, when speaking about outer space, we should never lose the feeling of the ground under our feet but should stand firmly on our earth, keeping in mind the events going on here.

One of the most important tasks of the newly established Committee should be to avoid the extension of present earthly national rivalries and conflicts into outer space. We now have on our earth a divided Germany, a divided Korea, a divided Viet-Nam. We should avoid having in the future a divided moon or a divided Venus.

In view of the latest technical achievements, the question of the peaceful use of outer space is not merely an academic one. Outer space should become a common ground for a broad international peaceful co-operation in the interests of all. The achievements of science and technology should serve to lead us to a better understanding and remove the causes of international conflicts.

Therefore, we highly commend this draft resolution to the First Committee, and I hope that it will be adopted unanimously.

Mr. JHA (India): Nearly two years ago, the first man-made satellites were placed in orbit. That was a striking event in human history. It was an explosion in the field of human knowledge, with incalculable consequences for the future. It is said that human civilization has not been really evolutionary, that it has progressed by jumps, by the particular points in history when man has gone forward suddenly to a new era, a further progress in his destiny toward his goal. The events that took place a couple of years ago certainly marked a point of inflection in man's progress toward his destiny.

It is a great tribute that immediately the United Nations realized the importance of the event, the challenge that it posed to man and to nations and to the United Nations. It is a tribute to the sensibility of nations, of the big Powers -- and here I should like to mention the Soviet Union and the United States, both of whom brought this question up two years ago, perhaps in an indirect form, before the United Nations. They realized the vastness of the challenge, the

(Mr. Jha, India)

importance of the advance that man had made in his field of knowledge, and they wanted the United Nations in some way to be seized of this matter.

The item we are discussing now is entitled "Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space". This item has come on the agenda consequent to resolution 1348 (XIII), which established an Ad Hoc Committee on the peaceful uses of outer space and requested that Committee to report to the General Assembly at its fourteenth session on various issues connected with outer space. My delegation does not wish to offer any comments on the report of the Ad Hoc Committee. My country was included in the membership of the Ad Hoc Committee by resolution 1348 (XIII) but, for reasons which I shall refer to later in my statement, we did not find it possible to participate in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee when it met in May and June of this year.

Although the question of the peaceful uses of outer space came up as a specific item on the agenda only at the thirteenth session of the General Assembly, the subject had come before the United Nations in the past, as I said earlier, as a part of the general problem of disarmament. Specific references to the banning of the use of outer space for military purposes had been made even in 1957. Following upon President Eisenhower's State of the Union message of 10 January 1957, in which he said, among other things, that the United States was willing to enter into an agreement to control outer space, missiles and satellite development, the United States proposed, during the discussions on disarmament in the First Committee at the eleventh session of the General Assembly, that the testing of outer space objects be brought under international inspection and control to assure their development exclusively for peaceful purposes. This was followed up during meetings of the Disarmament Commission in 1957 and, at the twelfth session of the General Assembly, a resolution was adopted -- resolution 1148 (XII) -- which, inter alia, called for a joint study of an inspection system designed to ensure that the sending of objects through outer space would be exclusively for peaceful and scientific purposes.

When the item came up at the thirteenth session of the General Assembly, it was confidently expected that substantial progress would be made toward achieving the objective repeated so often in the past, namely, that outer space would be used exclusively for peaceful and scientific purposes.

(Mr. Jha, India)

My delegation has consistently taken the position that agreement between the great Powers, and particularly between the United States and the Soviet Union, is essential for any progress in questions such as the one we are discussing now. It was in this spirit that we, along with Burma and the United Arab Republic, moved a draft resolution in the First Committee at the thirteenth session when the Committee had reached a deadlock -- a draft resolution which requested the United States of America and the Soviet Union to get together again and try to reach an agreed solution to the question of the membership of the proposed Ad Hoc Committee, which was the controversial issue at that stage. Unfortunately, these efforts were unsuccessful. An Ad Hoc Committee was established by resolution 1348 (XIII). The Committee met this year. Five out of the eighteen members of the Committee did not participate in the meetings. My own country was one of them. We decided not to participate for the reason that we were of the view that any machinery which did not include one or the other of the two countries most advanced in this field and which had not been agreed to by these countries would not subserve the purposes of resolution 1348 (XIII) and of other earlier resolutions concerned with this matter. My delegation is convinced that the results of the work done by the Ad Hoc Committee would have been far more satisfactory if the question of the membership of the Committee had been settled at the thirteenth session. I say this without trying to whittle down in any way the work that was done by the Committee and the results which were achieved and which are incorporated in the report of the Committee to the General Assembly.

(Mr. Jha, India)

While we are discussing this question, Mr. Chairman, I would crave your indulgence and that of the members of this Committee to digress for a moment, as the representatives of Sweden and Argentina have done, to refer to the developments during the past few weeks in a field which in many ways is similar to outer space. I refer to the problem of Antarctica. As most Members here are aware, my country had since many years expressed grave concern on the possibilities of Antarctica being used in any manner that would create or accentuate world tension. We were happy to read only a few days ago that twelve nations, including the United States and the Soviet Union, had signed a Treaty on Antarctica, the first article of which stated:

"Antarctica shall be used for peaceful purposes only. There shall be prohibited, inter alia, any measure of a military nature, such as the establishment of military bases and fortifications, the carrying out of military manoeuvres, as well as the testing of any type of weapons."

This is precisely the form of agreement which we sought to achieve when we suggested the inscription of this item in the agenda of the Assembly at the eleventh session, and we are extremely happy to note that the outcome of the Washington Conference has been entirely successful. The results of that Conference only confirmed the position that my country has always held, and to which I made reference earlier in my statement, that the essential element in matters such as the one we are discussing now is the agreement between the Powers directly concerned. It shows what marvellous results can be achieved if big Powers come together and come to an agreement. The Treaty on Antarctica signed in Washington on 1 December is the type of treaty that we wish to see in the field of outer space. While we realize that in the field of outer space there are several problems that do not apply to Antarctica, we are convinced that given the good will and co-operation which, I repeat, made the Treaty of Antarctica possible, it should be possible for the Powers directly concerned to settle their differences and reach a mutually acceptable agreement.

I referred a moment ago to the diverse aspects of the problem of outer space. There has been a good deal of discussion, for example, on the legal aspects of outer space, what constitutes outer space; and what are the rights of nations over outer space; that is to say, the space over and above the atmosphere. These are indeed important issues. But I should like to

(Mr. Jha, India)

reiterate what the Chairman of my delegation said during his intervention in the debate on this subject at the thirteenth session. Mr. Krishna Menon said then:

"...that it is not the medium of outer space that is likely to lead to man's destruction, but what comes through outer space ...it is what traverses that space, with all the speed and all the other technical facilities available for quick destruction, that menaces humanity."

(A/C.1/PV.994, page 27)

That has always to be borne in mind.

We think that the scope of the proposed committee as indicated in the terms of reference in paragraph 1 (a) of part A of the draft resolution before us (A/C.1/L.247) is wide enough. But whatever be the immediate objectives or possibilities or limitations of the committee proposed to be formed, the ultimate objective of any consideration of the problem of outer space must, in our opinion, be the prohibition of the use of outer space for any military purposes whatsoever, and the eventual conclusion of a convention aiming at the solely peaceful utilization of outer space for the benefit of man. Side by side with this, it is needless to underline that there should be progress towards disarmament and the outlawing of weapons such as nuclear missiles and other weapons, including those of chemical and bacteriological warfare. Progress in each field, we believe, will reinforce efforts in the other fields.

During the past few weeks there have been several hopeful developments. I have already referred to the Treaty on Antarctica. There have also been resolutions adopted by the General Assembly on the question of nuclear weapons tests, dissemination of nuclear weapons, etc. All these have been very satisfactory.

We have yet another achievement in this direction. The sincere efforts of the big Powers, notably the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, to both of whom we wish to pay warm tribute, have led to yet another milestone of progress. I am referring to the agreed resolution which is before this Committee. We hope that in the same spirit that motivated these encouraging developments, the Assembly will unanimously adopt this draft resolution. We have the honour co-sponsor this draft resolution along with other countries, and we believe that the draft resolution will lay the firm groundwork for international

(Mr. Jha, India)

co-operation aimed at the peaceful utilization of outer space. Thus we trust that the New Year will arrive on a note of hope and faith in peace, friendship and understanding among nations and constructive international co-operation for the benefit of all mankind. We hope that the draft resolution will receive the unanimous support of this Committee.

Mr. BRUCAN (Romania): The Romanian delegation wishes to join the delegations which previously expressed their satisfaction for the agreement reached on the draft resolution regarding international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space. We are particularly pleased to see this agreement concluded within the United Nations. This fact itself has a marked significance for our Organization, for this very session of the Assembly as well as for the future activities of the United Nations. It demonstrates in a conspicuous manner that if due regard is shown to the views and interests of all parties concerned, as prescribed in the Charter, then the United Nations can effectively act as the centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of its common ends.

For the time being, it seems that United Nations Members find it easier to apply this provision of the Charter in outer space. May all of us learn to apply it also in matters besetting our own planet.

International co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space has become imperative nowadays. The launching of the first Sputnik has opened a new and glorious page of history but, like the other great discovery of human genius, that is, the splitting of the atom, the exploration of outer space has raised the problem of the end to which this achievement will be used by man: for new and gigantic strides towards a better world or for its destruction. Although the choice would appear very simple, the contemporary world has become famous for its capacity to turn the simplest matters into the most complicated predicaments. The walls of this room have witnessed and withstood many performances of this kind. I hope that human reason will withstand these performances as well. After all, if there is some hope that the right choice will be made, it lies chiefly with man's peculiar ability of thinking. I see no reason why this ability, if used, should not take us to the only choice man could make. Man's attribute of thinking is indeed universal. Let us hope that nothing will hamper its equitable geographic distribution and representation.

(Mr. Brucan, Romania)

The sponsorship of this draft resolution is a good omen to that effect; that is why it commands the unanimous vote of this Committee.

In this connexion it is a matter of deep disappointment to us that the delegation of Belgium is pressing for an amendment which in fact seeks to impose a policy of discrimination on the proposed scientific conference. The argument that this is a standard practice does not hold water -- the more so since, this conference being supposed to be scientific in character, no political strings should be attached if it is to be a success. In fact, the significance of the Belgian amendment amounts to maintaining that Member States hold the monopoly of knowledge on outer space. Pressed to its logical conclusion, this contention would imply that knowledge on outer space is one of the qualifications for membership in the United Nations -- and heaven knows how untrue this is. In short, this is a fallacy too great to be sanctioned in a United Nations resolution. Moreover, I cannot but say that such a policy of discrimination would affect adversely both the preparation of the conference and its deliberations.

Therefore, I shall vote against the amendment, and I hope that all those who wish to make this conference a success will do likewise.

Mr. BERARD (France) (interpretation from French): The question of outer space was brought up in the United Nations for the first time in 1957. In 1958 it was covered in a constructive debate, and this year we find it on the agenda of the Assembly for the second time.

Some have felt -- and my delegation cannot say that they are altogether wrong -- that the pace of our deliberations has not been commensurate with that of scientific and technical progress in this field and that the discoveries and achievements of the past few years are far ahead of our efforts towards international organization and co-ordination. This lag, while genuine, is in no way surprising or alarming. It would be grave only if the international community had turned away from the problem and had made no effort to become cognizant of the various possibilities implicit in it or to define the methods that would make it possible to put it to use in the interests of mankind as a whole. From this point of view, results that are by no means negligible have been secured.

(Mr. Bérard, France)

To begin with, at our thirteenth session it was acknowledged that the study of the peaceful uses of outer space should be undertaken without awaiting the conclusion of an agreement on the other aspects of the problem. Not that one should be resigned to deferring an agreement on general disarmament under effective international control to a later stage -- since the urgency of that agreement has been once again recognized unanimously in the course of the present session -- but because, as was the case with the decisions adopted concerning the peaceful uses of atomic energy, it would have been unwise to postpone for an indeterminate period the international decisions that are required at a moment when a new realm of endeavour -- outer space -- is being opened to human activity.

Once this first step was taken, the General Assembly, in resolution 1348 (XIV) deemed it necessary to collect as much information as possible on the numerous problems relating to the peaceful uses of outer space before recommending specific programmes of international co-operation in this field. To that end, a Committee was set up which met in May and June last and whose report was presented in document A/4141 on 14 July 1959. That document reviews existing activities and resources, the problems which have arisen, and the needs felt. This is a work which had never before been undertaken and which constitutes a valuable source of information such as will be always useful to refer to when we are obliged to take decisions concerning outer space. But it is a preliminary work whose authors did not claim to settle definitely any problem or to impose any solution. The spirit of friendly comprehension and the constructive preoccupations which guided the proceedings of that Committee are a good omen for the future of international co-operation in this field.

But a serious obstacle has arisen along this path. A great country, whose scientific achievements are recognized by the whole world, had not deemed it fit to participate in the proceedings of the Committee, of whose composition it did not approve. There is no need today to revert to this controversy which clouded our discussions last year and which, even before the present debate, thanks to the efforts of the delegations of the United States and the Soviet Union, was settled

(Mr. Bérard, France)

The composition of the new committee, the establishment of which has been proposed at this session, differs from the one which had been judged fair last year by the majority of the General Assembly, and, from that point of view it might be open to some criticism. For its part, the French delegation remains attached to the criteria of geographical representation and technical and juridical competence, which ought to guide us whenever an organ of this kind is to be established. In giving its approval to the new committee, the French delegation expresses the wish that the concession thus made to the cause of international co-operation shall not have been granted in vain and that, within that organ, the same atmosphere of fruitful and cordial co-operation will continue to prevail. Surely, thanks to the presence of the Soviet Union, the committee will be able to go beyond the stage of preliminary studies and to help the General Assembly in adopting constructive decisions.

Thanks to the agreement which has been achieved, it is now possible, therefore, to advance along the path opened up by the General Assembly at its preceding session. And what do we expect from the committee which we are about to set up?

In the opinion of my delegation, the committee will have the job of reviewing and, if necessary, supplementing or studying more deeply the questions with which the body which preceded it was entrusted. It will also have to study ways and means which will make it possible, at the appropriate time, to implement concrete programmes of international co-operation. I shall not dwell on this aspect of the committee; it will be for the experts to evaluate in each specific case what is immediately desirable and what might be premature.

In the juridical field, the committee may, in our opinion, even while continuing the documentation work already undertaken, present suggestions for the solution of the problems which arise. But it should refrain from fixing as of now over-precise rules which would not take sufficient account of the evolution of the technical factors but might even incur the risk of hampering the subsequent development of the work.

May I add that the French delegation joins with those that have welcomed with gratification the Soviet proposal for an international scientific conference

(Mr. Bérard, France)

in 1960-1961 on the peaceful uses of outer space. It will, of course, be up to the committee to carry out the necessary preparatory studies so as to determine the arrangements, the agenda, the place and the date of this conference.

(Mr. Bérard, France)

The considerations which I have just outlined have found their expression in draft resolution A/C.1/L.247, which France, together with eleven other countries, has co-sponsored. Similarly, my delegation shares the concern which has inspired the amendment submitted by the Belgian delegation in document A/C.1/L.248.

In conclusion, may I be permitted to express the wish that the text of the draft resolution thus amended will be adopted unanimously by our Committee.

Mr. SCHURMANN (Netherlands): In last year's session of the General Assembly the United Nations was for the first time seriously confronted with the problems of outer space. The speakers in the debate which was then held were unanimously of the opinion that the United Nations would have to endeavour to ensure that humanity's conquest of outer space would from the start be a peaceful one, and to avoid -- as happened in the case of atomic energy -- this new sphere of human activity falling prey to military rivalry between the big Powers. In conformity with this view resolution 1348 (XIII) recognized that "it is the common aim that outer space should be used for peaceful purposes only".

In my intervention at that time, I ventured to say that we could not be certain that this purpose would be attained with either speed or ease. It is to be expected that many complications -- and implications -- of a legal, scientific, organizational and political character will have to be faced, and it would therefore be naive to think that the exclusively peaceful use of outer space could be ensured within a short time.

In the view of my delegation, it is therefore necessary to apply ourselves for the time being to the no less real and important task of promoting international co-operation in the exploration and exploitation of outer space. On what is possible and desirable in this connexion the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, established last year, gives us a wealth of interesting information.

The Netherlands delegation wishes to express its appreciation for the serious study the Committee has devoted to various aspects of the matter, and is of the opinion that it is deserving of praise mainly for three reasons. First, because -- in spite of the absence of some of its members -- it has carried out

its task in a dispassionate, non-political and thorough manner; secondly, because it has borne in mind the exigencies and limitations of the real situation and has thereby made of its report a precise, instructive and useful document; and, thirdly, because it has placed before the General Assembly a number of recommendations which can serve as a guide for our future work.

The contents of the report show that the Committee's members have been well aware of the fact that only a first start has been made in the exploration of outer space and that we still lack many technical and scientific data. Hence the need to proceed with care in undertaking to establish rules and regulations or multilateral agreements on the use of outer space. Such rules and agreements might, as our knowledge of outer space increases, turn out to be too restrictive and prove more hampering than beneficial to international action. On the other hand, the Committee has fully realized the value of early international governmental co-operation and of stimulating and extending such co-operation.

It is, perhaps, in the legal part of its report that the Committee has given the clearest evidence of its sense of restraint. The recommendations and suggestions contained in that part have our approval. We are particularly in agreement with the indication of the legal problems which, in the Committee's opinion, should be given priority treatment, and with its view that a comprehensive codification of the law of outer space is neither practical nor desirable at this early stage.

Last year, I stated the Netherlands view that outer space is by nature indivisible and that the notion of State sovereignty cannot apply to it. We were therefore pleased to note that on pages 63, 64 and 65 of the report, the Committee takes the same view and mentions the

"recognition or establishment of a generally accepted rule to the effect that, in principle, outer space is, on conditions of equality, freely available for exploration and use by all in accordance with existing or future international law or agreements." (A/4141, page 64)

Apart from the legal objections to a contrary view, the delineation of spheres of sovereignty in outer space would also endanger the chances of establishing a truly international regime for it. We further believe that the Committee acted

rightly by classing the question of where air space ends and outer space begins with those that do not demand priority. In our opinion it is not yet possible to reach a clear-cut answer to that question on an international governmental level.

As to the scientific part of the report, we consider it a merit that it is based on the fundamental thesis that international co-operation in the use of outer space is desirable and sometimes even essential "in order to realize to the fullest the potential benefits of space activities". This co-operation is important not only for increasing our scientific knowledge, but also because the knowledge already acquired has made it possible -- and will increasingly continue to do so -- to achieve practical applications in several fields, such as meteorology, communications, television and broadcasting. This means that such international organizations as the World Health Organization, the International Telecommunication Union and the International Civil Aviation Organization will have their parts to play, which, I am sure, they will do with willingness and efficiency. With regard to this co-operation my delegation would like to draw attention to the necessity of promoting the best possible co-ordination of the activities of the various specialized agencies. In conformity with the opinion voiced by the Economic and Social Council, in the appendix to its resolution 743 (XXVIII), the co-ordination should, in the first instance, be directed by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination. We consider this point of great importance. Co-ordination should be assured at an early stage, when the activities of the agencies concerned are still in the initial phase and before each of them has started on a programme of its own. Past experience has taught us that once this development is under way it becomes much more difficult to keep it in hand.

(Mr. Schurmann, Netherlands)

Another requisite which my delegation wishes to emphasize is what is called in the report "the open and orderly conduct of space activities". The subject is dealt with in paragraphs 8 to 11, and 121 and 122, and it is our view that there must be a reasonable guarantee that the scientific material and technical talent available in the world should be used to the fullest possible extent and that a continuous exchange of information should take place. Only thus can wide knowledge about space activities everywhere be disseminated and all countries be given the opportunity to share in them in one way or another. In the Netherlands there is vivid interest in the legal and the scientific problems connected with the exploration and use of cosmic space. It is true that in the scientific field we are at present unable to organize actual flights of sounding rockets and satellites and space probes, but in many sectors, which on pages 43 and 44 of the report are mentioned under the heading of "supporting research", Netherlands scientists can make a useful contribution. The Royal Netherlands Academy of Sciences is at present studying what part could most efficiently be taken by Dutch scientists in the development of space science and space research.

The General Assembly will now have to decide on the manner in which international governmental co-operation for the peaceful use of outer space can best be organized. The Ad Hoc Committee has proposed the establishment of the tasks and functions mentioned in Part IV of the Report under paragraph 17. This proposal seems to us to be a sound one. We are therefore very happy that, at the eleventh hour, agreement has been reached among the Powers on the composition of this Committee on an agreement which ought to ensure the whole-hearted co-operation of all regions. As the composition is the result of a compromise, reached only after lengthy negotiations, my delegation will abstain from commenting on it.

On the suggestion, contained in paragraph 14 of Part IV of the report, that the Secretary-General might be requested to establish a technical unit for outer-space activities within the Secretariat, my delegation will have to reserve its judgement. We recognize that such a unit may, in the future, be able to do useful work, but this matter would seem to us to require further study in order that a better insight may be obtained into the character and the limits of the Secretariat's task in this respect. Perhaps the new Assembly Committee could undertake this study.

(Mr. Schurmann, Netherlands)

There is one further remark I should like to make on the organizational problems. As indicated in Part I of the report, there are various non-governmental organizations engaged in work connected with outer space, of which I would mention the international scientific unions, the International Council of Scientific Unions, and especially the Committee on Space Research (COSPAR), which is making significant pioneering efforts for the promotion of international research. In the beginning of next year an international space science symposium, organized by COSPAR, will be held in Nice. Scientists from all over the world will take part in this symposium, which is expected to lend great impetus to their studies. The reason why I have made special mention of these activities is that, in the opinion of my delegation, although Governments have their responsibilities in connexion with the exploration and use of outer space, much will have to be left to the scientists in their natural environment of international scientific unions and organizations of the kind of COSPAR, particularly in these first stages of tentative research. We should be careful, I think, not to usurp the place of these non-governmental organizations or to endeavour to take in hand operations that can be better undertaken by them. From this point of view too a cautious approach to international co-operation seems indicated in order that the relationship between the United Nations and the non-governmental international organizations engaged in space research may be given time and opportunity for harmonious development.

These considerations have also influenced our views on the proposal for the holding of a comprehensive international scientific conference on problems of outer space under the auspices of the United Nations. That proposal has our support, but I would point out that, if the conference is to achieve its aim, sufficient time should be allowed for its adequate and thorough preparation. That time could also be used to analyse, adapt and apply the knowledge gained by experience in the organization of the two international scientific conferences on atomic energy.

Finally, allow me to lay stress on the need for providing for participation in the preparation of the conference, by the international organizations engaged in space research. COSPAR and the International Astronautical Federation (IAF) are the first ones that come to mind in this connexion, but there are doubtless others that might also be interested. All of them have done meritorious work in this field and

(Mr. Schurmann, Netherlands)

my delegation considers it only natural that, in preparing the international conference, its organizers should make use of the knowledge and experience of these bodies.

In conclusion, may I say that my delegation will, of course, vote for the draft resolution A/C.1/L.247 and that it will also vote for the amendment contained in document A/C.1/L.248.

Mr. KURKA (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian): The problems of international co-operation in the field of peaceful uses of outer space have attracted the attention of all peoples throughout the world, especially during the past few years, thanks to the vast development of science and technology in the Soviet Union and a number of other countries. The present year, 1959, will go down in the annals of the history of interplanetary flight as the year in which the first artificial planet of the solar system was put in orbit, the year that saw the launching of the first rocket to reach the surface of the moon from the earth, the year when the first automatic, interplanetary laboratory circumnavigated the moon, making photographs of its previously unknown side and transmitting extremely useful data on cosmic space back to the earth. In the opinion of scientists, the data secured in this year's studies exceeded in abundance and value everything achieved in the relevant fields of science since their very beginnings.

Like all peoples throughout the world, we have welcomed the successes of Soviet science and technology in opening up to mankind new, highly practical ways for the study of the cosmos which represent a tremendous contribution in the development of world science. Today, with the development of science swiftly rushing ahead at a dizzy pace, the problems concerning the peaceful uses of outer space occupy the attention of all mankind. The peoples contemplate the future with mixed feelings of hope and apprehension. Will these great achievements of human genius be devoted to improving science, economy and culture? Or will the opposite be the result: will they become instruments of catastrophe and general extermination? We express our firm hope that the United Nations will make every effort to ensure that the benefits of science and technology will go entirely to the service of humanity.

(Mr. Kurka, Czechoslovakia)

Czechoslovakia, of course, cannot boast of such successes in the scientific study of outer space as can the Soviet Union and the United States. Nevertheless, the results achieved by our scientists, for example within the framework of the International Geophysical Year, represent a valuable contribution to the storehouse of world science. We have always supported and continue to support all measures designed to promote international co-operation in all fields of science because we are convinced that such co-operation constitutes a substantial element in translating into reality the principles of co-existence of all peoples.

(Mr. Kurka, Czechoslovakia)

It is universally known that the fields of science relating to questions of the study of outer space are among those which require the most effort and exertion. This very fact indicates that the traditions of international co-operation which have already gained their spurs in other fields of science should likewise find application in the field of the scientific study of outer space. We are convinced that the international scientific conference, the convening of which has been proposed by the Government of the Soviet Union, may constitute such a first step toward a broad exchange of opinions, scientific experience and data among scientists of all countries of the world. There is no doubt that such a conference will be the suitable forum for the consideration and adoption of effective and generally useful measures for the further development of international scientific co-operation in the field of the studies of cosmic space. Therefore, the proposal for convening a conference deserves full support on the part of all States Members of our Organization.

In this connexion, I deem it necessary to state that the Czechoslovak delegation objects to the amendment just submitted to document A/C.1/L.247, as the result of which participation in the conference would be confined to States Members of the United Nations or of the specialized agencies only. The Czechoslovak delegation considers that the possibility of taking part in the deliberations of that conference should be open without limitation to scholars and scientists from all of the world's countries. We shall therefore vote against that amendment.

The improvement of the climate of international relations and the appearance of a definite realistic approach to the problems of the study of outer space have contributed to the achievement of agreement this year between the countries most directly concerned on a number of questions, and we can only welcome this development. The Czechoslovak delegation has taken special note with gratification of the agreement achieved this year on the composition of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. We may only express regret that this achievement was not registered last year. The result was only that the year was lost, a year which might have been used for effective co-operation within the framework of the United Nations in questions relating to all aspects of the peaceful uses of outer space.

(Mr. Kurka, Czechoslovakia)

It is desirable that the work of the new United Nations committee should be successful. We regard this as one of the means of strengthening broad international co-operation which can yield rich fruit to humanity.

The Government of the Czechoslovak Republic attaches exceptional significance to broad international co-operation in the field of scientific studies of outer space and its peaceful uses. For these reasons, the Czechoslovak delegation has become one of the co-sponsors of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/L.247, which determines the new membership of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and which recommends that an international scientific conference should be convened for the exchange of experience in the field of the peaceful uses of outer space.

The Czechoslovak delegation expresses the hope that this draft resolution will command the full support of all the States Members of the United Nations and that, as the result of this, a sound foundation will be created for further development of international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

Mr. NESBITT (Canada): To begin with, my delegation would like to express its gratification at the patience and spirit of co-operation and goodwill among the Powers concerned that have made agreement on this question possible and have produced the draft resolution now before us. It is a matter of particular satisfaction that this agreement provides for the creation of a United Nations committee in which the countries with the most to contribute in this field will be able to participate. It has from the beginning been the goal of the Canadian delegation to see agreement reached on the composition of an outer space body which would be broadly representative, both functionally and geographically, and in which the Powers with the greatest experience and expertise in outer space science and technology would co-operate.

We are convinced that every effort should be made to avoid, with respect to outer space, the difficulties which have arisen with respect to nuclear weapons through the failure to develop international agreements at an early enough stage. For the promotion of the over-riding interest of the community of nations in maintaining the freedom of space for peaceful, scientific and beneficial purposes, for the promotion of international scientific co-operation in the exploitation for the benefit of mankind of the potentialities of outer space, for the establishment

of the rule of law in outer space while there is still time, for the promotion of an international regime for outer space -- for all these purposes an indispensable first stage is the creation of a United Nations committee with a generally acceptable composition such as is proposed in the 12-Power draft resolution.

Canada, which is a member of the new committee, as it was of the old, will of course dedicate itself to the achievement of the objectives for which the committee is being created and will do its best, as it did in the Ad Hoc Committee, to make a contribution consistent with the knowledge and resources available to us.

While establishment of a permanent committee on outer space is a welcome and important event, we should at the same time not lose sight of the questions of substance which it involves, such as those covered in the Ad Hoc Committee's report, or of the terms of reference of the new body. The ultimate end in view must of course be to promote international co-operation in, and international regulation of, the peaceful uses of outer space.

In approaching the work of the new committee, we should bear in mind that in scientific activities the concept of international co-operation has come to cover a whole range of activities: the traditional informal exchanges between scientists of different nations; more formal exchanges arranged by non-governmental international scientific organizations; and arrangements through inter-governmental organizations such as the United Nations. My delegation considers it desirable to emphasize that the great preponderance of international scientific co-operation takes place through the traditional informal exchanges of the scientists themselves and, with a few significant exceptions, the objective of inter-governmental scientific activities should be to facilitate and supplement such exchanges, but not to displace them. In this way the proposed international scientific conference can and should play an important role in the exchange of experience in the peaceful uses of outer space.

It is, of course, true that space research raises special problems because of its significance for defence and because of its extension beyond national boundaries. However, even in this field it is, we think, true that the best form of international co-operation would be through informal exchanges of scientists. The greatest contribution that the United Nations could make to the promotion of the peaceful uses of outer space would be to ensure that scientists throughout the world may pursue research in outer space with that freedom to exchange ideas and information that is traditional to scientists.

In suggesting that informal exchanges among scientists constitute the ideal in international scientific co-operation, and that the success of any United Nations activity in this area should be measured partly against its usefulness in promoting fuller collaboration between scientists, I would not wish to imply that the United Nations has no more direct role to play.

(Mr. Nesbitt, Canada)

It is clear that there are large areas of activity in space research that must ultimately become the responsibility of the United Nations, if only because activities in space are outside national boundaries and therefore raise legal and regulatory problems that can be settled amicably only in an international organization. It seems to my delegation that the unique contribution to be made by the United Nations lies in these areas.

However, to suggest that there are certain regulatory functions which are appropriate for the United Nations is not by any means to suggest that the United Nations itself should have the overriding responsibility. It is clear that some of the specialized agencies in their respective fields have a role to play. In their relationships to one another in their work in the outer space field, it is desirable to avoid the competition which has posed difficulties for the United Nations in these other fields. There is a danger otherwise that much useful energy may be expended to little profit and we consider that the right basis for co-ordination must be established at an early stage. This is one of the questions which should be looked into at an appropriate stage in the discussions of the new committee.

In approaching its task, the Committee will have the benefit of the very useful preliminary work which was done by the Ad Hoc Committee, as outlined in its report in document A/4141. This report, which will be available to Members of the new Committee, provides a very useful, objective, and, we believe, comprehensive account of what the United Nations, related organizations and other international bodies have already accomplished in international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space. It also contains in the sections dealing with the work of its technical and legal sub-committees a broad indication of the problems of a scientific, technical, regulatory and legal nature which face mankind as it penetrates outer space, with some suggestions for possible approaches to the solution of these problems.

My delegation considers that this report, which was adopted unanimously, is a very useful document, and we fully endorse the observations and tentative conclusions contained in it. We think that all concerned with its preparation

(Mr. Nesbitt, Canada)

are to be commended. They include the scientists and legal advisers to delegations, members of the Secretariat and above all the Committee's distinguished Chairman, Ambassador Matsudaira of Japan as well as the other officers, Professor Ambrosini of Italy, who was the chairman of the Legal Sub-Committee, Doctor Rose, of my own country, who was chairman of the Technical Committee and Ambassador Nisot of Belgium, the Committee's rapporteur.

The pace of developments in the exploration of outer space has been so rapid that conclusions arrived at even as recently as six months ago, however tentatively they may have been expressed, may no longer be completely valid. Indeed this possibility finds recognition in one of the general conclusions set out on page 60 of document A/4141 where it is stated:

"Progress, plans and needs in connexion with the peaceful uses of outer space should be reviewed again by the United Nations in about one year."

If such an early review is required on the organizational side with respect to the scientific and technological aspects of the peaceful uses of outer space it is even more necessary, in the view of my delegation, in respect of legal problems. In the course of any review of the legal problems we consider that early consideration should be given to the whole range of problems relating to sovereignty in outer space. We are in complete agreement with the view expressed in paragraph 7 on page 63 of document A/4141 that a comprehensive codification of space law is not practicable or desirable at the present stage of knowledge and development. However, we are also in agreement with the recognition given by the Ad Hoc Committee to the need both to take timely constructive action and to make the law of space responsive to the facts of space.

In view of the physical penetration by man of the space beyond the earth's atmosphere and even beyond the earth's field of gravitation, my delegation considers that one of the questions which the new Committee should consider as a matter of priority is the formulation of a rule, and the means to gain universal acceptance of that rule, that no part of space or of any celestial body may be appropriated by or be subjected to the jurisdiction of any State.

(Mr. Nesbitt, Canada)

Perhaps this result could be achieved by the adoption, by the General Assembly on the advice of its Outer Space Committee, of a suitably phrased declaration establishing this principle. Failure to take some such measures now to prevent the acquisition of legal rights in outer space may very well prejudice the ability of the community of nations later to devise equitable and wise rules to reflect the common interests and rights of all mankind in the utilization of space.

Mr. TARABANOV (Bulgaria) (interpretation from French): It has very often been repeated by the qualified representatives of the great Powers that full co-operation between great and small nations would be of tremendous importance for the ultimate development, not only of our knowledge of outer space, but also for the development of techniques and for the creation of possibilities of even greater and more brilliant conquests in this field.

We cannot but be pleased at what has been achieved thus far, that is, to have come to an agreement on the measures to be taken in the organization of the exploration of outer space on an international level. We trust that this will permit us to do away with the obstacles that have thus far existed or any that may appear in the future in the path of all institutions, be they international or national, working in this specific field.

This naturally presupposes the fact that all countries, without any distinction whatever, will be able to participate in the work of the conferences that are organized, that they can share in all the efforts and enterprises made in the future. There cannot and there must not be any discriminations against any country, great or small, especially not in the case of countries that have certain and sure possibilities of co-operating not only in the work of studying outer space, but that may in one way or another assist in the future progress of these enterprises through the organization of peace and understanding, and thus strengthening international peace, leading ultimately to true and full co-operation among all peoples.

(Mr. Tarabanov, Bulgaria)

The difficulties that occurred last year in the organization of co-operation among all States in the study of outer space, because of the opposition by certain countries who refused to recognize the right of the majority of humanity in this work, made it impossible to come to an agreement at that time on this vital question. This obviously made it impossible to come to truly tangible results. It also hampered a fruitful co-operation, an increase in the work and knowledge achieved.

(Mr. Tarabanov, Bulgaria)

I am afraid that this spirit has not entirely disappeared. It still appears that although an agreement has been arrived at on the main issues and co-operation in this field has been assured, means are still being sought to keep from participation certain countries that geographically as well as scientifically might greatly assist in the fulfilment of the work that the nations of the world have undertaken in this study of outer space. We would prefer to believe and to trust that those who have endeavoured to contribute towards the agreement arrived at will not be left behind and that such countries which have assisted in the agreement will not support this amendment that seems to be intended to undermine the agreements already arrived at. This would obviously jeopardize the fruitful co-operation that we can envisage for the future.

This amendment goes against the spirit and the letter of the draft resolution that has been submitted to this Committee because the third paragraph of the draft resolution states:

"Desiring to avoid the extension of present national rivalries into this new field," (A/C.1/L.247)

Therefore, there is an effort made here to avoid the creation of new national rivalries as well. Consequently this amendment excludes countries that, independent of their will and of their rights, are not as yet Members of our Organization from this entire enterprise that is being undertaken. These countries also may not as yet be members of the specialized agencies. Therefore, not only are we depriving ourselves of the assistance they may give, but we are also creating new and artificial obstacles in the road to international co-operation and assistance, especially in the specific field that we are discussing. This also applies to possible co-operation in the road towards general disarmament. That is why when, at this moment, we are about to come to an agreement between all countries to ensure understanding and co-operation such an amendment cannot be supported.

We are on the verge of settling this matter of co-operation between all nations in the subject of the peaceful uses of outer space. This being the case, we hope and trust that this solution and the co-operation that will follow upon its heels will contribute to a settlement of the other aspect of the problem, the military aspect, which has been mentioned repeatedly in the course of the

(Mr. Tarabanov, Bulgaria)

discussions on disarmament that took place in this Committee and during this session of the General Assembly. Obviously this aspect could be completely settled and the dangers of the uses of outer space for military and bellicose purposes could be obviated if nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction, as well as other installations intended to carry and deliver these weapons, were to be eliminated.

Having come to an agreement on the basic principles of co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space, we would like to express the hope that this will lead us to come to an agreement on the military aspect of the problem.

The delegation of the People's Republic of Bulgaria expresses the wish that the document (A/C.1/L.247) presented by Brazil, the Soviet Union, the United States and other countries will be adopted by the Committee because this will create the right atmosphere conducive to an agreement, as well as ensure a co-operation that will ever grow and become ever stronger in the future. However, we cannot vote in favour of the amendment submitted by the delegation of Belgium, which is intended to set up immediate obstacles in the path of the co-operation that we can envisage and to make it difficult for those who are really eager to come to a fruitful agreement as much on this specific aspect as in full co-operation between peoples. These countries are really eager to ensure peace in the world, and therefore we will vote against the Belgian amendment.

Mr. LOUTFI (United Arab Republic) (interpretation from French): It is with great satisfaction that my delegation co-sponsors the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.247) which is the fruit of co-operation and agreement arrived at between the great Powers. This document was brilliantly submitted to the Committee this afternoon by the delegations of the United States and the Soviet Union. It has been explained by a number of speakers who have taken the floor before me, and therefore I do not believe that it is necessary for me to repeat the explanations at this late hour.

We cannot but congratulate the great Powers for the tremendous efforts they have made in order to come to an agreement on this document, which will, as we hope, allow the Committee to bring to a fruitful result the co-operation of all peace-loving nations and Members of the United Nations in the peaceful uses of outer space.

(Mr. Loutfi, United Arab Republic)

We are also extremely happy at the results that have been achieved this year in this field by the Soviet Union and the United States, of which mention was made today by the representatives of these two great countries. Their scientists have, by their research, contributed to this progress and we are sure that the results of their work will be of great use in the peaceful uses of outer space.

I am convinced that this year the Committee will be confronted by political and legal problems of great importance. We feel that if we can continue towards our aim, which is the peaceful uses of outer space, we will achieve great progress in this field, progress which will be redound to the great benefit of all humanity. We have an example before us -- the agreement that has just been signed regarding Antarctica. The representative of Sweden mentioned this today, and we believe it is an important precedent in the field of international co-operation. We feel that very few poor countries can progress alone and carry out the experiments necessary because of the expenditure involved. Therefore, international co-operation is imperative. Furthermore, co-ordination in tracking also requires co-operation between States.

We cannot pass over in silence the work carried out in the International Geophysical Year, work with which we were associated, and we have noted with satisfaction that the draft resolution has also noted the work and taken it at its true value. We feel that the convoking of an international conference for the exchange of experience in the peaceful uses of outer space will also be of great assistance towards this end.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to congratulate the great Powers that have come to an agreement on the basis of international co-operation and we trust that this co-operation will redound to the benefit of all humanity. We, on our part, will do all in our power to contribute our modest abilities to that end.

Mr. ORTONA (Italy): At the end of a very busy session of this General Assembly, we are convening here to discuss the question of the peaceful uses of outer space.

It is a refreshing feeling to realize that space is not yet cluttered by the many political, racial, territorial and economic problems imposing their burden on all our activities, and it is at the same time a great responsibility on all of us to keep it this way. It is an encouraging feature of the present situation that many of the difficulties in the way of true international co-operation in this field are over.

One year ago the General Assembly, fully aware of this responsibility, gave an Ad Hoc Committee the mandate of studying the problem of the peaceful uses of outer space, under resolution 1348 (XIII), asking it, among other things, to explore:

"The area of international co-operation and programmes in the peaceful uses of outer space which could appropriately be undertaken under United Nations auspices ... " (Resolution 1348 (XIII))

The Ad Hoc Committee had to perform its work with what I should like to call an incomplete composition but, nonetheless, under the brilliant chairmanship of the representative of Japan and through the rewarding efforts of its two sub-committees, technical and legal, was able to present to the General Assembly a report of considerable importance and interest.

May I recall at this point what, after due consideration given to many statements from various sources, I stated on 18 June at the final meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee:

"The work done by the two committees, as shown in the reports, indicates that the most important step left before us is the decision on how to ensure that this work be not left in a vacuum but be continued through future instrumentalities: I think that we would fail in our duty and that it would be most deceiving if we did not try to give a satisfactory response to the expectations that the Assembly has expressed vis-à-vis our Committee for what concerns the continuation of international co-operation in this field."

(Mr. Udovichenko, Ukrainian SSR)

was due in particular to the large dimensions of the sputniks and of their carrier rockets, to skilfully selected planes of inclination of their orbits in relation to the plane of the earth's equator, and to the power of the radio transmitters which they carried. We likewise understand the initiative of the Soviet Union on the grounds that the spirit of co-operation is inherent in the science and technology of the Soviet Union, and this in turn, to a considerable degree, accounts for the great successes registered by the Soviet land in the field and the study of the exploration of the cosmos.

In close co-operation with their colleagues from the entire Soviet Union, the Ukrainian scientists, engineers, workers and construction workers have contributed to the exploration of cosmic space. The Ukrainian people is justifiably proud of the fact that a share of its toil is to be found in the Soviet sputniks and rockets, and likewise it takes pride in the fact that the results of large-scale astronomic investigations and observations carried out in the Ukraine have been put to use in preparing the launching of these cosmic craft.

Such large scientific institutions as the main Astronomic Observatory of the Academy of Sciences of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic in Kiev, the Poltava Gravimetric Observatory in the Crimea, and likewise, the State Universities in Kiev, Lvov, Odessa and Kharkov have engaged in the study of cosmic space in the Ukrainian SSR. There exists in the Ukraine seven permanent tracking stations for artificial satellites and cosmic rockets. Valuable results from observations of artificial sputniks in particular have been obtained in Kiev and Uzhgorod. Fifty observatories, stations and observation points have engaged in the Ukrainian SSR in studies in connexion with the programme of the International Geophysical Year.

We trust that the participation of scientists in the conference now proposed will strengthen and expand scientific bonds between all countries, including the scientific bonds of the Ukraine. In this connexion, I should like to recall the success scored by similar scientific conferences previously convened under United Nations auspices; that is, the two Geneva Conferences on the peaceful uses of atomic energy. Moreover, our delegation cannot fail to express its

(Mr. Udovichenko, Ukrainian SSR)

gratification at the fact that at the current session agreement has been reached on the establishment, within the framework of the United Nations, of a Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space composed of Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Czechoslovakia, France, Hungary, India, Iran, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Poland, Romania, Sweden, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Arab Republic, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, whose members are to perform their functions through the years 1960 and 1961.

The institution of this organ will surely be an important step toward fruitful and genuine international co-operation in the field of the peaceful uses of outer space. It may thus be considered that both the activity of the Committee and the convening of the scientific conference on the question of exchange of experience in the peaceful uses of outer space will contribute to mutually desirable co-operation between the States on a footing of equality.

The delegation of the Ukrainian SSR would like to emphasize that no one State should be excluded from such co-operation. That is why we can in no way accept the amendment (A/C.1/L.248) submitted by Belgium to the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.247) sponsored by the twelve countries.

(Mr. Udovichenko, Ukrainian SSR)

This amendment would specify that only Members of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies are to participate in the proposed international conference. It is our profound conviction that the scientists of countries that are Members of the United Nations and those which are not Members of the United Nations should take part in this conference, as well as members and non-members of the specialized agencies. Proceeding from these considerations, the delegation of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic will vote in favour of the draft resolution presented by the delegations of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United States of America and other delegations, and will vote against the amendment moved by the delegation of Belgium.

Mr. WEI (China) Artificial satellites and space probes have awakened the world to the arrival of the space age. Messages in human voice have been sent to and broadcast from an artificial satellite. The hidden side of the moon has been photographed and transmitted to earth. Monkeys have travelled into space and returned in good health. A number of selected men are ready to take off as astronauts as soon as technology warrants the trip into space. Thus, with ingenuity, imagination and courage, man pushes forward with surprising speed his exploration into space, though the road ahead is both long and difficult.

Since our last session the General Assembly has been seized of the problem of outer space. In the field of peaceful uses of outer space there are for the United Nations four possible areas of activities, namely, promotion of international co-operation, encouragement and co-ordination of national programmes, co-ordination of programmes of related agencies, and the progressive development of international law.

For the world in general, and for the United Nations in particular, the problems of outer space are similar to those of atomic energy. Both have great potentialities for the benefit of mankind, but both are already serious threats to human destruction. This is the reason why the General Assembly has adopted similar approaches in both cases. Our common aim is that outer space, as well as atomic energy, should be used for peaceful purposes only.

(Mr. Wei, China)

In this connexion I wish to commend the Ad Hoc Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space for its excellent report, which is now under our consideration. The Ad Hoc Committee has admirably discharged its tasks under the mandate of General Assembly resolution 1348 (XIII). In spite of the spectacular popular impact of artificial satellites and space probes, our Ad Hoc Committee has recommended a modest programme for the United Nations for the time being. My delegation supports this approach.

There are three lines of argument in support of this conclusion. In the first place, though the exploration of outer space is of paramount scientific importance, the prospect for any practical application furthering human welfare is yet remote. It is too early in the space age to envisage all or even the ultimately important applications of space research. Possible applications of space technology are evident in meteorology, radio-communication, geodesy and navigation, but they are all still in the earliest stage of development. Our Ad Hoc Committee tells us in its report: "How and when these applications will mature will depend on many factors which cannot now be predicted." The scientific and technical problems of true manned space exploration are substantial. The report predicts that the period required for full perfection of the necessary vehicles, equipment, instrumentation and techniques for such explorations will be measured in terms of decades rather than years.

In the second place, our Ad Hoc Committee considers that a comprehensive code on outer space is not practicable or desirable at the present stage of knowledge and development. The report says that relatively little is so far known about the actual and prospective uses of outer space in all their possible varieties of technical significance, political context and economic utility. However, we consider it quite appropriate for the Committee to have taken the initiative in selecting and defining the legal problems that have arisen, or are likely to arise in the near future, in the carrying out of space programmes. My delegation is in general agreement with the sections entitled "General observations" and "Legal problems susceptible of priority treatment" in Part III of the report.

For the orderly development of outer space it is desirable that a set of general principles be adopted. Among them may be included the following:

(Mr. Wei, China)

(1) Outer space should be used for peaceful purposes only; (2) the principle of sovereign equality of all Member States, as provided in our Charter, should be upheld; (3) the Charter of the United Nations and the statute of the International Court of Justice are not limited in their operation to the confines of the earth and should be applicable to human activities in space; (4) in principle, outer space should be, on conditions of equality, freely available for exploration and use by all in accordance with existing or future international law or agreements.

In the third place, many international organizations, both non-governmental and inter-governmental, are already active in the field of outer space. Part I of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee deals with the activities and resources of the United Nations, of its specialized agencies and of other international bodies related to the peaceful use of outer space. This section of the report is based on a comprehensive and valuable report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, contained in document A/AC.98/4.

The present status of international co-operation in the conduct of space activities may be summarized as follows. Where the objective is scientific, most needs are cared for successfully by the international scientific unions. (The reference is paragraph 104 of the report). There exists a machinery for close co-operation between UNESCO and ICSU. As far as foreseeable applications in the field of outer space are concerned, such inter-governmental scientific and technical agencies as World Meteorological Organizations, International Telecommunication Union, International Civil Aviation Organizations, and others are the important channels for international co-operation. (The reference here is paragraphs 118 to 120 of the report).

(Mr. Wei, China)

In the United Nations, one of the principal organs -- that is, the Economic and Social Council -- has the responsibility for the promotion and co-ordination of international and inter-agency co-operation and, at the Secretariat level, there is the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination.

From this analysis of the situation, it is clear that there is no need at present for any extensive organizational arrangement in the United Nations for the promotion of peaceful uses of outer space. The draft resolution before us is in line with the conclusion of our Ad Hoc Committee.

The primary objective of the United Nations in outer space is its open and orderly development for peaceful purposes only and for the benefit of mankind. Priority in the work of this new Committee should therefore be given to the legal aspects of space activities. Since there are already a number of legal problems susceptible to priority treatment, they should be given early consideration. In general, the Committee should keep under review the legal problems that have arisen or are going to arise in the near future and, as soon as appropriate, make recommendations for action by the General Assembly.

On the scientific and technical side, the Committee should not duplicate the work of the related agencies of the United Nations or other international organizations. It should rather co-ordinate and strengthen their activities in their respective fields. An important contribution of the Committee should be the working out of concrete methods of international co-operation in order to avoid duplication of effort and to ensure the effective use of scientific and technical personnel. From the experience of the International Geophysical Year and the Special Committee on Space Research, I am sure that many Governments and many talented scientists will take a more active part in space research if there is international encouragement and assistance.

On the advisability of calling an international conference on outer space under the auspices of the United Nations, my delegation has some reservations. Space science and technology are not as highly developed as those of atomic energy when the first United Nations Atomic Energy Conference was called. Moreover, radio-isotopes have practical applications in many fields and may be used to advantage in any country, but there is no such wide application or popular appeal in the proposed conference. I welcome the suggestion of the representative of the United States to extend the scope of the conference.

(Mr. Wei, China)

As to the participants in the proposed conference, my delegation supports the Belgian proposal. The proposal is logical because the conference is going to be under the auspices of the United Nations. It is practical because it has been the standard practice of all United Nations conferences.

Mr. GRYAZNOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): Over the past year, scientific discoveries have been achieved before our eyes which can rightly be called historic. What science is doing at the present time far transcends all preceding scientific discoveries. What the best minds of mankind could only dream of before has now become reality and is entering into everyday life. The day is approaching when the flight of space craft will become as customary as the flight of aircraft today. But, no matter how much time may elapse, there will remain for ever in the memory of mankind the fact that the first leap into the cosmos, on 4 October 1957, was achieved by the Soviet Union. On 2 January 1959, there was launched into outer space in the USSR a rocket weighing 1,472 kilogrammes, which sailed past the moon and entered into an independent orbit around the sun and became its sputnik, the first artificial planet of the solar system. On 12 September 1959, the second cosmic rocket, called Lunik II, was launched, and within one and a half days, as had been foretold by computations, it reached the surface of the moon and delivered the Soviet pennant to the moon. On 4 October 1959, the third cosmic rocket was launched. This rocket placed in orbit an automatic interplanetary station, which photographed the side of the moon invisible from the earth. The taking and the transmission to earth of these photographs was an outstanding scientific and technical success of Soviet science. As Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev so aptly put it, Soviet scientists have forced the moon to remove her veil.

Cosmic rockets, like their three predecessors, the artificial earth satellites, are a token of man's unlimited capacity to solve problems connected with the mastery of nature, and they hold out to all peoples the prospect of eternal peace, happiness and well-being.

(Mr. Gryaznov, Byelorussian SSR)

Great successes in the harnessing of outer space have also been achieved by the United States, and we, the Byelorussian people, sincerely congratulate American scientists on their launching of sputniks and cosmic rockets.

The organization of genuine co-operation by scientists from all over the world can only expedite their scientific discoveries. This accounts precisely for the great attention given to problems of outer space in the statements made by representatives of many countries in the general debate at this session and in our Committee in particular. We stand at the threshold of new discoveries and achievements in the harnessing of outer space. Mankind faces the opening of astounding prospects of bold deeds and creative achievements.

Against this background the necessity of instituting fruitful co-operation among States in the peaceful uses and harnessing of outer space becomes particularly urgent. The combining of the efforts of all countries in the study of outer space is dictated by the fact that, in studying and exploring outer space, we do not deal with the exploration of individual regions of our planet in which individual States or groups of States may be interested, but we deal rather with limitless space, which, since it has no boundaries, touches upon the interests of all countries, of all mankind. The combining of the efforts of all countries and of the scientists of all countries, especially the United States and the Soviet Union, would lead to swift progress in the study of cosmic space. This would make it possible to carry out projects bigger and bolder than those that are being carried out now by each country individually. In this lofty task of harnessing the cosmos, the United Nations must play a positive role. The spirit of mutual understanding and friendly co-operation that was established during the carrying out of the programme of the International Geophysical Year constitutes a model to be followed in carrying out scientific work in the study of outer space. We can only welcome the increasing co-operation of scientists in the exploration of outer space and particularly of the scientists of the USSR and the United States.

(Mr. Gryaznov, Byelorussian SSR)

As you know, the Soviet delegation at the beginning of 1958 proposed to the United Nations for its consideration a broad programme of international co-operation in the exploration of outer space and in the peaceful uses of outer space. This provided for the establishment of a United Nations organ for international co-operation in the study of outer space, this organ to be entrusted with the following functions: the elaboration of a co-ordinated international programme of the launching of intercontinental and cosmic rockets for purposes of exploring outer space and overseeing the implementation of this programme; the continuing on a permanent basis of those outer space investigations which were being carried out at that time in the framework of the International Geophysical Year; to serve as a world centre for the collection, exchange and dissemination of information on space exploration; the co-ordination of national scientific and research plans in the field of the study of outer space and the extension of broad assistance and help in their implementation.

The United Nations, however, has yet to utilize its possibilities in organizing international co-operation in this realm. At that time the main obstacle was constituted by the fact that a certain group of countries prevented the election at the past session of the General Assembly of an international body on outer space, the composition of which would ensure that the task of instituting broad international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space would be carried out.

We note with gratification that an understanding has now been achieved on the composition of the Committee on outer space. At the current session of the General Assembly, the USSR sponsored an important proposal for the convening under United Nations auspices of an international scientific conference for the exchange of information and experience in the study of outer space. The Soviet proposal evoked a wide response and commanded broad support among the vast majority of the countries. We note with satisfaction that this proposal of the Soviet Union is incorporated in the joint draft resolution which is now before this Committee.

(Mr. Gryaznov, Byelorussian SSR)

The draft resolution submitted to this Committee for its consideration on international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space has been the outcome of co-operation demonstrated by the parties and their negotiations on this question. The delegation of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic expresses its conviction that in the event of its adoption, this draft resolution will contribute to the institution of broad international co-operation in the field of the peaceful utilization of outer space for the benefit of peace and in the interests of all mankind.

As regards the Belgian amendment to the draft resolution, the delegation of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic would like to point out that this amendment is at variance with the task of the establishment of broad international co-operation in the field of the exploration of outer space and its peaceful uses. The adoption of this amendment would mean that participation in the international scientific conference for the exchange of experiences of peaceful uses of outer space would be open only to scientists from countries Members of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies. We consider that participation in this conference should be open both to countries that are Members of the United Nations and those that are not.

For these reasons the delegation of the Byelorussian SSR will vote against the Belgian amendment although it will vote in favour of the draft resolution as a whole.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call upon the representative of Belgium who wishes to exercise his right of reply.

Mr. NISOT (Belgium) (interpretation from French): I should like to make a statement, but it has nothing to do with the criticisms that have been levelled against my amendment.

The Belgian delegation shares the feeling of relief and of pleasure that has been expressed at the relaxation of tension here. It is remarkable that an agreement can have been arrived at on as important a subject between those who hold different opinions represented in the United Nations. My delegation is pleased to consider this situation as the best way of arriving at a successful conclusion.

(Mr. Nisot, Belgium)

The machinery and the organ provided for in the document before us is one that can obviously bring about international co-operation without which there would be no adequate solution to the tremendous problems that confront us. These problems are of all kinds: scientific, political and juridical. They obviously concern States to a great extent. Everywhere centres and institutions are being set up that are called upon to settle these problems either completely or partially in their different aspects. Mention has been made of these here.

The generous proposal that has just been renewed by the Italian delegation is a particularly worthy suggestion that could be stressed. The Belgian delegation, which has fully participated in the activities of the Ad Hoc Committee set up at the thirteen session, will, with equal enthusiasm endeavour to contribute to the successful efforts that are to be carried out in common now and in fulfilment and implementation of the draft resolution that we are to adopt.

The CHAIRMAN: Does any other member of the Committee wish to speak now? Tomorrow morning, at 10.30, the Committee will hear the remaining speakers in the debate and proceed to the vote. If any member wishes to explain his vote, he should be prepared to do so at the next meeting either before or after the vote.

The meeting rose at 11.10 p.m.

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

FOURTEENTH SESSION
Official Records



**FIRST COMMITTEE, 1079th
MEETING**

Friday, 11 December 1959,
at 3.40 p.m.

NEW YORK

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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)

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

1. Mr. LODGE (United States of America) said that there were a number of reasons why man's activities in outer space should be conducted on the basis of international co-operation through the United Nations. First of all, since outer space was the concern of all nations, all should share equitably in both the benefits and the burdens involved. The principles of partnership in outer space and of the openness and availability of outer space had won wide acceptance in the United Nations in recent years, and the United Nations was the appropriate instrument for putting those principles into practice. Secondly, international co-operation was essential to the success of various desirable undertakings in outer space; without such co-operation, for example, space communications might be impeded by overcrowding of the radio spectrum. Thirdly, the experience gained in international co-operation in the regulation of space activities might prove valuable in efforts towards disarmament.

2. His delegation fully endorsed the constructive report submitted by the Ad Hoc Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (A/4141). It concurred, in particular, in the view expressed in paragraph 22 of part IV of the Ad Hoc Committee's report that the United Nations specialized agencies should carry on such activities in connexion with outer space as lay within their competence, and should report thereon to the United Nations. The General Assembly might at times wish to call upon one or more of the specialized agencies to undertake specific projects in the field of outer space. Whereas some members of the Ad Hoc Committee had declined to participate in the latter's deliberations because of disagreement over its membership, agreement had now been reached between his delegation and the Soviet delegation on a formula for the composition of the new committee which should command general support. Consequently his delegation, together with a number of other delegations, had submitted a draft resolution (A/C.1/L.247) calling for the establishment of a committee to study practical means for giving effect to programmes in

the peaceful uses of outer space which could appropriately be undertaken under United Nations auspices and to study the nature of legal problems which might arise from the exploration of outer space.

3. The holding of an international conference under United Nations auspices to review and exchange the experience gained in current outer-space activities, as proposed by the Soviet Union (823rd plenary meeting), would be an appropriate initial step in international scientific and technical co-operation in the field of outer space; his delegation welcomed the Soviet Union's proposal as an indication of that country's willingness to share the data obtained as a result of its activities in outer space. The proposed conference could supplement international scientific exchanges of the kind already carried on by the Committee on Space Research (COSPAR) of the International Council of Scientific Unions; it should go beyond the purely scientific exchanges previously undertaken and should deal with the engineering, technological and similar aspects of the problem of exploring outer space. The new committee should give early attention to arrangements for convening such a conference. His delegation supported the Belgian amendment just circulated (A/C.1/L.248), which specified that the conference should be attended by "interested Members of the United Nations and members of the specialized agencies" and hoped that the Committee would adopt it by a decisive majority.

4. Expansion of the number and scope of the world data centres originally set up during the International Geophysical Year, which was recommended in paragraph 90 of part II of the Ad Hoc Committee's report, was another type of international scientific co-operation which could profitably be explored by the new committee; it was to be hoped that the participating countries would agree to the prompt and automatic transmission to the world data centres of all scientific information obtained by space craft and of essential related data. The committee should also consider the possibilities of co-operative endeavour in the instrumentation of scientific payloads carried by space vehicles; his Government would be receptive to the idea of making equipment and facilities available for that purpose. Among the practical applications of space science which should be studied by the Committee were improved weather-forecasting, the creation of additional and more effective channels for world-wide communications, and the development of navigational satellites.

5. His delegation supported the view expressed in paragraph 9 of part III of the Ad Hoc Committee's report that it was becoming a generally accepted principle that outer space was freely available for exploration and use by all, on an equal basis, in accordance with existing or future international law or agreements. As the report stated in paragraph 7 of that part, however, a comprehensive code of space law was not yet practicable or necessary. At the same