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Chairman: Mr. Ismail FAHMY
(United Arab Republic).

AGENDA ITEM 32

International co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space: report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (A/6668, A/6804)

GENERAL DEBATE

1. The CHAIRMAN: It has been the normal practice of the Committee when dealing with this particular item to address an invitation to the representatives of the specialized agencies to attend the discussion and participate without the right of vote. If I hear no objection I shall take it that the Committee decides to follow that practice.

It was so decided.

2. The CHAIRMAN: At the beginning of our debate on item 32 it is fitting to note that the first decade of outer space exploration has shown in a most convincing manner that man has made remarkable progress in the conquest of outer space. In this connexion I should like to congratulate the Soviet Union and the United States of America, whose space programmes have moved further ahead during the last year; France, which has established itself as an independent space Power; and Italy, Japan, India and other countries which have undertaken activities in outer space commensurate with their economic abilities in the recent past. In particular, I should like to mention the two scientific space craft launched to the planet Venus by the two space Powers, which are getting closer to their targets even as we are meeting now.

3. Whilst we are legitimately proud of these achievements, each one of us is also full of hope that the great prospects opening up before mankind as a result of man's entry into outer space will serve the common interests of all nations and will be used for peaceful, constructive purposes only.

4. We must therefore endeavour in the next decade to strengthen this hope through extensive international co-operation, and we must make sure that we take in time

adequate steps to solve the numerous political and legal aspects of space exploration and to ensure that benefits derived from space exploration will be shared by peoples everywhere.

5. In this regard it is most gratifying that we have been able, within the framework of the United Nations, to conclude a Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies [*General Assembly resolution 2222 (XXI), annex*], which came into force last week. It is equally gratifying to note that a United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space will be held in Vienna in 1968 [*General Assembly resolutions 2221 (XXI) and 2250 (S-V)*]. It is most significant that this Conference should concern itself with the practical benefits of space exploration, with particular reference to the interests of the developing countries.

6. For many years a majority of countries watched with fascination but without involvement as the space Powers launched survey orbiting satellites, inter-planetary probes and man himself into outer space. Those countries listened with bemused interest to the multitude of scientific data recorded through outer space, while noting the major problems besetting their needs and the exploration of outer space, their participation was minimal and most of the time consisted of observation. However, recent developments and successes, particularly in the areas of meteorological satellite systems and communication satellite systems, have dramatized to the world the potential of the practical applications of space exploration to man's welfare on earth.

7. Therefore, it is most opportune that the United Nations has convened a conference where the non-space Powers—especially the developing countries—could determine the extent to which they might enjoy the benefits of those activities, and also take part in international co-operation in space activities. For every one of us is full of hope that if the first decade of space exploration is to be known for its great scientific achievements, then the second decade should be known for its great international co-operative efforts in this field. I have no doubt that those considerations will remain foremost in our minds in our deliberations here, and in our work we shall strive to translate those hopes into more practical terms.

8. Mr. FEDORENKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*): May I begin by expressing the gratitude of the Soviet delegation to the Chairman for his kind words and for the high opinion he has expressed of the Soviet Union's achievements as a space Power.

9. This year the General Assembly of the United Nations is dealing with matters relating to the peaceful uses and

exploration of outer space during the memorable days of the tenth anniversary of the space era, which started with the launching of the first artificial earth satellite. This space anniversary coincides with a time of special significance, the fiftieth anniversary of the great socialist October Revolution in Russia. Millions of men in all countries cannot fail to see the deep significance of and the relationship between those two events, for the first artificial satellite in the world was launched by the first socialist State in history—the Soviet Union.

10. Ten years is a very brief period of time, but by their significance the past ten years have become a special cosmodrome of time, from which mankind took off to make great discoveries in the limitless stretches of space. From the geography of the earth man has passed to the geography of the universe. The time has come when science, technology and the mind have become able to solve formidable problems of this kind. Men have made a great qualitative step forward in the conquest of the elemental forces of nature.

11. The people of the Soviet Union are naturally proud that important milestones on the road already travelled towards space exploration are the result of their peaceful and constructive achievements. It is well known that after the launching of the first artificial satellite by means of a Soviet space rocket the first photographs of the other side of the moon were obtained. The automatic station, Luna 10, became the first artificial moon satellite and the Soviet automatic station Venus 3 was the first to reach the surface of the planet Venus.

12. The era of space is the era of men, and, as we see, of Soviet men in space. The first astronaut was Yuri Gagarin. The first woman astronaut was Valentina Tereshkova. The first man to leave his space vehicle and walk in the interstellar space was Aleksei Leonov.

13. In opening one after another the first pages of the first chapter of the history of the conquest of space our country never wanted, and does not want, to have a monopoly. On the contrary, we consider it natural and we welcome the fact that, in addition to the Soviet Union and the United States, France has become a space Power and that the scientists of many "non-space" countries are engaged in important research on space and are working out questions of space technology connected with the practical uses of space exploration.

14. Space exploration concentrates in itself the latest achievements of scientific and technological thought, which have been made possible by the scientific and technical revolution of our day. It is extremely complex, requires much talent and boldness and tremendous material resources. And although we are at the very beginning of our journey, the scope of the effects of the conquest of space on our civilization is already becoming apparent, and the peoples of the earth are already beginning to reap the first fruits of their penetration of space.

15. Artificial earth satellites are used for transmission of long-distance communications and television programmes, for weather forecasting and for other practical purposes. Great advantages can be expected from the use of satellites

for maritime navigation and civil aviation, for the survey of useful minerals, for geodetic photography and for the observation of soil conditions and the sown surfaces of large expanses of territory. As a result of discoveries in space, revolutionary changes are taking place in many branches of science, from astronomy to biology and medicine. The by-products as it were of space exploration in the form of new findings and discoveries in electronics, in means of communication and in automatic control are being utilized more and more in the industry and national economy of various countries.

16. In the Soviet Union an experimental meteorological system is operating successfully, using two satellites simultaneously, Cosmos 144 and Cosmos 156, and a ground control apparatus receiving, processing and distributing information from space. Meteorological data obtained in this way have led to a very considerable improvement in weather forecasting and are used for the practical needs of agriculture, industry and sea and air transport.

17. Communications satellites of the Molniya-1 type re-transmit television programmes and are used for telephone and photo-telegraphic communications between Moscow and Vladivostok. Television programmes are transmitted by means of ground stations of the Orbit type with the use of such satellites over vast areas in remote provinces of our country in Siberia and the Far East.

18. Further advances in space exploration will lead to new discoveries, new knowledge and new material possibilities for raising economic and cultural levels and improving the standard of living of the people.

19. The day will come when the greatest enigma will be solved and we shall learn whether there is life elsewhere in space and, if so, what forms it takes. That will, of course, also have practical consequences for mankind.

20. The conquest of space is a common cause, of interest to all nations; and all of them, as far as they are able, can make their contribution, whether scientific, technological or material. Starting from that premise the Soviet Union has from the very beginning of space exploration been in favour of developing co-operation between States in the study and opening-up of outer space. We want the scientific and practical results of the study and conquest of space to become the common achievement of all States, including the young States which have recently begun their independent national development. We are far from certain ideas, which are being entertained in some quarters, of so-called scientific and technological colonialism—that is to say, the use of scientific and technical achievements connected with space activities for narrow interests, for gaining special material and political advantages over other States. The Soviet Union is pursuing a policy of the establishment and development of co-operation with other States, in space exploration as in other activities, on the basis of true equality and of respect for the interests of all parties and countries taking part in common efforts for the study and utilization of space.

21. Co-operation in space research has been successfully established among a large number of socialist countries. In April 1967 at a conference of representatives of Bulgaria,

Cuba, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, the People's Republic of Mongolia, Poland, Romania and the Soviet Union, specific agreements were worked out on various subjects, experiments and work projects in the field of space physics, space meteorology, space biology, and space medicine, and a programme of common launchings of satellites and rockets was worked out. At that conference it was thought advisable to set up an international system of satellite communications to provide for the transmission of television programmes, and telephone and other types of communication. The system is open to all countries that want to join it.

22. The agreement concluded between the Soviet Union and France for co-operation in the study and exploration of space provides for joint experiments and studies in the field of space physics and meteorology, further communications through artificial satellites and for exchanges by experts of scientific information. We are satisfied with the way this agreement is being carried out. Our scientists are also co-operating with scientists of a number of other States in space studies. Scientific organizations of the USSR are exchanging much information on space research with scientists of many countries through COSPAR, and the International Astronautical Federation. The Soviet Union takes an active part in the work of the World Meteorological Organization and the International Telecommunication Union to develop the use of satellites for meteorological and space communication purposes, and especially for the setting up of a world weather watch.

23. As far as co-operation between the Soviet Union and the United States of America in space exploration is concerned, that is to say, between the two States which have progressed furthest in space exploration, we must remember that very serious factors resulting from United States aggression in Viet-Nam and elsewhere in the world, combined with the greater distrust in the relations between States, all seriously limit the practical possibilities of any such American-Soviet co-operation.

24. The faster the science of space navigation develops and the further space exploration develops, the wider and more varied will be the practical uses of space technology and scientific discovery in increasing the cultural and material well-being of people, and the more will international and political questions arise in connexion with the activities of States in space.

25. The just and timely solution of problems of international law concerning the relations of States in the field of space is essential for the creation of more favourable conditions for the study and exploration of space. That is why, from the very inception of the space era, we have consistently advocated the preparation and application of rules of international law which would promote the development of co-operation among States in the peaceful uses of outer space. And we should like to express our satisfaction that these efforts have led to a Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies.

26. In this Treaty which has already been signed by eighty-eight States and came into force on 10 October

1967, there are many important provisions concerning various aspects of relations between States in connexion with outer space. The provision that States will not station any nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction in space and that they will use the moon and other celestial bodies exclusively for peaceful purposes, is particularly important.

27. The treaty creates good conditions for the development of international co-operation in space research and constitutes a basis for further steps to settle political problems which have arisen and arise in the practical activities of states in the exploration and peaceful use of outer space.

28. The United Nations is confronted with important tasks in promoting international co-operation in the exploration and conquest of outer space. Of course, that does not mean that forms of co-operation already existing among States, which have proved to be useful, should be replaced with the assistance of some organ or other of the United Nations. Such a policy would merely hamper the development of co-operation among States. The United Nations can play and is playing a useful role by fostering and co-ordinating as far as necessary the existing tendencies in, and forms of, international scientific and technical co-operation in space activities, and it helps to solve problems of international law governing the relations of States in space.

29. The last report of the United Nations Committee on Outer Space, which is now being examined by the First Committee, shows in our view that States Members of the United Nations are adopting a realistic attitude towards the utilization of the possibilities existing within the United Nations for promoting co-operation among States in the exploration and utilization of outer space. We think the report shows that the United Nations Committee on Outer Space and its Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and Legal Sub-Committee are moving in the right direction and that their work is producing tangible results.

30. We attach particular importance to the preparatory work for a United Nations conference on the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space. This conference, which is to meet in August 1968, will review the achievements of States in space exploration. It will be the first meeting of its kind in history for the exchange of space information between States and for a review of the results of the exploration of space and the practical significance of such exploration. The Soviet Union hopes that its participation in the conference will be interesting and useful for itself as well as for other States.

31. We also attach great importance to the work done in the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on two international agreements concerning specific aspects of space exploration: on the rescue of astronauts and on liability for damages caused by the launching of objects into space. The speedy completion of work on and the conclusion of an agreement on the co-operation of States in the rescue of astronauts in the event of accident would be of practical importance. This would be a humane expression of acknowledgement from the peoples of the world to the astronauts who are opening the way into the unknown and who, as is said in the Treaty

on Principles governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, are the "envoys of mankind in outer space".

32. This year, on the initiative of France, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its Sub-Committees had an exchange of views on the definition of the concept of outer space and its boundaries.

33. In view of rapid developments in the uses of satellites for international telephone and telegraph communications and television, some states favour solving the legal problems arising in this field of space utilization. A group of experts of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which has examined the question of the possible creation of an international system of navigation satellites, has come to the conclusion that the creation of such a system in the future will require the solution not only of scientific and technical problems but also of problems of international law. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space will have to deal, in one way or another, with all these matters and we wish it complete success in this task.

34. Man has much to do in space and many bold plans of what he wants to accomplish. They will grow in number and more countries will take part in them. The more lasting peace is on this earth, the more successful will be the united efforts of peace-loving States and peoples to avert the threat of war. The more resolute we are in repelling the forces of aggression, the more favourable will conditions be for us to move confidently together towards the conquest of the universe.

35. Mr. FOUNTAIN (United States): The issues which will come before the First Committee during this year's session of the General Assembly involve some of the most critical matters of our time. Our agenda includes questions of arms control which, as time and technology move ahead, have become more and more critical to the security of all. Present on our agenda as well is man's newest environment—outer space.

36. I shall not take the time of this Committee to recount my country's numerous accomplishments in the conquest of space.

37. Also, I reject any and all charges of United States aggression in Viet-Nam. If the Soviet representative wishes to pursue this, he should do so in the proper forum, at which time we will answer him. I prefer today to discuss the future of space.

38. In the ten years since the space age began, we have watched man move with almost unbelievable speed to break the bonds which hold him to the earth. The great achievements at which we have marvelled have been, for the most part, the products of science and technology. However, only last week one of the most notable accomplishments in the field of outer space took place—and took place not as a result of advances in science or technology, but as a result of progress in international law and co-operation. I refer, of course, to the Treaty on Outer Space. This Treaty entered into force in the capitals of the United Kingdom,

the Soviet Union and the United States on 10 October 1967, after having been signed by more than eighty nations.

39. The United Nations cannot, however, rest on this success of the past year. Now that the Treaty on Outer Space has become part of the law of nations, it is up to us to see that its provisions are implemented. There is much to be done. Today I should like to address myself to some of the topics which, in my Government's view, will merit special attention in the coming year. These topics are covered both in the Treaty on outer space and in the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

40. The nations which have signed the Treaty on outer space have pledged to the world that weapons of mass destruction will not be stationed in outer space. In addition, they have pledged themselves to international co-operation in the exploration of outer space and to the use of outer space for the benefit of all mankind. President Johnson has spoken in emphatic terms of my country's willingness to co-operate in the peaceful use and exploration of outer space. He has reiterated the United States offer to co-operate fully with any nation that may wish to join forces in this last—and greatest—journey of human exploration. The President urged co-operation "in exploring the planets, or any portion of the solar system; in the use of tracking facilities, so that our brave astronauts and cosmonauts may fly with much greater safety; in mapping the earth; in exchanging bio-scientific information; and in international satellite communications". My Government today renews that offer.

41. I think the record shows that the United States has taken seriously the obligation to co-operate in the peaceful exploration of outer space. We have tried to make the exploration of this newest frontier an adventure in which all men will share. We have carried out our outer space programmes in the open, in the full light of world publicity.

42. One of the provisions of the Treaty on Outer Space, article XI, calls for States to inform the Secretary-General of the United Nations, as well as the public and the international scientific community, of the nature, conduct, locations and results of activities conducted in outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies. As the latest token of the seriousness with which we regard article XI, we are sending to the Secretary-General a report just released on the preliminary scientific results from Surveyor 5, a spacecraft which has added a new dimension to our knowledge of the lunar surface. We welcome the obligation to make such information broadly available.

43. For countries which wish to take advantage of the practical benefits of space science, there are many sources of information. My Government circulates widely documents which not only report on its space activities but also indicate the opportunities available to scientists from other nations to participate in our programmes for the investigation of space.

44. The Secretariat of the Committee on Outer Space also makes available information on the results of space experiments and publishes a list of the many training opportunities which exist in the field of aeronautical science.

45. My country is proud of its programmes of space research. We are also pleased with the work of the United Nations in promoting international co-operation in space activity.
46. The United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, to be held in Vienna in August 1968, will focus particular attention on the practical benefits of space activity, and for this reason it should be of particular benefit to the developing nations. Indeed, often the developing countries have the most to gain from the technology of space.
47. My Government has embarked on a substantial programme to develop presentations for this Conference which will be meaningful and valuable to all participants, and we urge all countries to make whatever contribution they can. Above all, we urge every Member state to send delegates to the Conference. These need not be scientists. Indeed, there should be strong non-scientific representation, because the critical decisions upon which the practical use of space technology and information depend are a function of the political as well as the scientific branches of government.
48. The practical benefits of space technology can be found in many fields including communication, education, weather forecasting, navigation, surveys of natural resources and mapping of the earth. The use of satellites in most of these fields is still quite new, but we believe there is a clear peaceful benefit for all. We also believe that many of the practical benefits of this technology can be readily obtained by the developing countries at their present stage of technical and economic development.
49. For example, space technology can now be used by countries at all stages of economic development to improve weather forecasts. In fact, we have invited weather observers throughout the world to equip themselves with the automatic picture transmission sets developed to receive pictures of cloud cover transmitted by the United States weather satellites. These inexpensive and easily assembled sets have been acquired by over thirty countries.
50. Earlier this year the World Meteorological Organization approved the first phase of the World Weather Watch, in which meteorological satellites and automatic picture transmission sets will be used in a world-wide weather forecasting network¹.
51. The improved weather forecasts made possible by space technology should be of immense value to all countries, developed or undeveloped. Because of the importance of agriculture to their economies, this use of new satellite technology should be particularly valuable to the developing countries, and advance warning of natural disasters will also help mankind.
52. The United States also believes that satellites can help developing countries to make education available to all of their peoples. Where educational progress is being held back by shortage of teachers and materials, it may be possible to relay educational programmes to village receiving stations from a central broadcasting point. Our delegation has noted
- with great interest the report of the Government of India² on its current experiment using a United States launched communications satellite to disseminate information to its people on improved methods in agriculture and other allied fields.
53. Obtaining the practical benefits of space technology does not require all nations to invest in the expensive technology required to develop satellites, but world-wide use of space technology will require trained people in every country to determine what information their countries need and then to put this information to use. For example, after pictures of cloud cover are received from a satellite, a meteorologist must translate the picture into a forecast. Technicians must determine the effects of the weather outlook on water supplies, on construction projects, and perhaps on the timing of the local harvest. The men and women who do this work need not be highly trained scientists, but they will need practical training and background in their fields and they will need, above all, the support and understanding of the leaders of government and education in their countries. Consequently, the Space Conference should define the practical benefits of space technology and what nations must do themselves to obtain those benefits.
54. Since the beginning of the space era, the United Nations has been concerned with the legal questions raised by the exploration of outer space. In 1958, only one year after the first satellite was launched into orbit, the General Assembly established an *Ad Hoc* Committee [resolution 1348 (XIII)] which had among its responsibilities the study of the legal problems which might arise from man's space activities. Among the subjects which the Committee identified at that time as requiring future study were legal questions involved in freedom of space, liability for damages and the exploration of celestial bodies.
55. The space Treaty incorporates certain basic principles relating to liability for damages caused by the launching of space vehicles and the assistance to and return of astronauts and space vehicles. However, we believe it is important that the Legal Sub-Committee should continue its efforts to draw up detailed agreements concerning those subjects. Indeed, the patient effort and businesslike spirit which marked much of the sixth session of the Legal Sub-Committee this summer resulted in substantial progress in drafting a convention on liability. Unfortunately, the Legal Sub-Committee did not make similar progress in its efforts to draft an agreement covering assistance to and return of astronauts and space vehicles.
56. Many difficult problems lie ahead. Much important groundwork has already been accomplished, but much remains to be done. At the same time, we look to the future with optimism.
57. I have not reviewed all the recommendations of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The United States lent its full support to those recommendations in that Committee, and we will be in touch with other members of the present Committee with a view to preparing a resolution which will carry those recommendations forward.

¹ See document A/AC.105/L.38.

² See document A/AC.105/L.36.

58. Mr. WALDHEIM (Austria), Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space: In our quest for the exploration and use of outer space the past year, although marred by the tragic loss of pioneers of space exploration in both the Soviet Union and the United States of America, will be recorded as another year of progress and of further scientific and technical achievements. The space programmes of the leading space Power have further advanced. An ever-increasing number of nations are joining in the research, technology and peaceful use of outer space, and the practical applications of space technology are becoming a part of everyday life.

59. It is against this background that the General Assembly of the United Nations receives the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space [A/6804], which reflects the progress achieved and the work accomplished by the Committee and its Sub-Committees since the end of last year. I wish to take this opportunity to pay a tribute to the efforts of the two Sub-Committees and their able Chairmen.

60. In response to General Assembly resolution 2222 (XXI), the Committee has continued its work in the elaboration of further legal instruments to develop the rule of law in outer space and, in particular, the elaboration of an agreement on assistance to and return of astronauts and space vehicles and another agreement on liability for damages caused by the launching of objects into outer space. Last year the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space was able to achieve impressive results in preparing the Treaty Principles Governing the Activities of State in Outer Space, to which the Assembly was then able to give formal approval in General Assembly resolution 2222 (XXI). In the meantime the Treaty has been signed by the great majority of Member States, including my own country, Austria, and it has given us particular satisfaction that last week it entered into force upon the deposit of instruments of ratification by the required number of governments.

61. Seen in this perspective, the progress achieved over the past year in the legal field might perhaps seem modest and somewhat disappointing. The elaboration of the two draft agreements on assistance and liability has now been on the agenda of the Committee for several years and my delegation for one had hoped that work on the two conventions would proceed considerably faster than has proved possible. After all, the subjects do not lack a certain amount of urgency. The loss of pioneers of space exploration by both the Soviet Union and the United States earlier this year demonstrated with painful impact that astronauts might indeed be in distress and in need of assistance. Similarly, the steadily growing number of launching experiments has increased in proportion and will further increase in the future the possibility of damage being caused by objects launched into outer space.

62. My delegation therefore noted with satisfaction that at the sixth session of the Legal Sub-Committee it was possible to reach agreement on a number of points in the drafts of the two agreements, and that some rapprochement seems to have been achieved on other aspects during the discussions. In particular, we see some encouragement in statements made during the tenth session of the Committee

on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in September 1967 with regard to possible progress in the elaboration of the agreement on assistance and return. We sincerely hope that our optimism in this respect will be justified.

63. The Austrian delegation believes, therefore, that the Assembly should request the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to continue its work on the elaboration of the two agreements and report on progress to the next session of the General Assembly.

64. Last year the General Assembly, in its resolution 2222 (XXI), also requested the Committee on Outer Space to begin the study of questions relative to the definition of outer space. From the documents before us we note that the Committee encountered considerable difficulties in this respect. The Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee concluded, in fact, that it appears to be very difficult if not impossible to identify scientific or technical criteria which would permit a precise and lasting definition of outer space.³ It is our sincere hope that in spite of these obvious difficulties the Committee will proceed with its work on this matter.

65. I recalled earlier the entry into force of the Treaty on principles governing the activities of States in outer space which has been hailed rightly as a major achievement in bringing the rule of law to outer space. To my delegation it appears logical that we should now agree also on a definition of outer space, the area in which this treaty will apply. The fact that it may not be feasible to establish this definition on compelling scientific and technical grounds need not impede a solution of this problem, in our opinion. In the absence of scientific and technical criteria it will perhaps be possible to arrive at a definition of outer space by agreement.

66. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, in response to General Assembly resolution 2223 (XXI), has also proceeded with its work concerning the scientific and technical aspects of international co-operation in outer space, particularly with reference to the exchange of information, the encouragement of international programmes, international sounding rocket launching facilities and education and training. We note with pleasure the continuing successful operations at the Thumba sounding rocket stations under United Nations sponsorship, and we have also noted with interest that the Government of Argentina has requested United Nations sponsorship of launching facilities in Argentina. The report of the Committee on Outer Space contains a number of recommendations on these subjects, and my delegation believes that the Assembly should endorse those recommendations.

67. We have also seen with pleasure that in accordance with operative paragraph 4 of resolution 2223 (XXI) the Committee on the peaceful Uses of Outer Space established a Working Group to consider the need for and the feasibility and possibilities of implementation of a navigation services satellite system, and that that Group held a session in July 1967 at United Nations Headquarters. From the Working Group's report⁴ it appears to us that the

³ See document A/6804, annex II.

⁴ *Ibid.*, annex IV.

meeting provided a valuable opportunity for experts in this field to meet and exchange views, especially with representatives of the International Civil Aviation Organization and the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization which, after all, would be the potential users of such a system. We believe that the Working Group is correct in stating that these problems will require further studies, and that those studies could be undertaken by the organizations directly concerned.

68. We should like to take this opportunity also to express our appreciation of the reports submitted by the specialized agencies on their activities in the field of outer space. In this respect we have studied with particular interest the report of the World Meteorological Organization on the planning and implementation of a global weather forecasting system, commonly known as World Weather Watch. This project has grown out of General Assembly resolution 1721 (XVI) and has benefited from the spectacular advances in space technology and notably the successful launching of meteorological satellites. It is now moving from the planning to the implementation stage. The information provided by the World Meteorological Organization seems to justify our hope that the project will be largely implemented within the next few years and will bring significant benefits to wide areas of the world. We consider it a vivid example of the possibilities of international co-operation in matters of outer space and in the practical application of space research for the benefit of all countries, particularly those which are not space Powers and the developing countries.

69. I should now like to turn to a subject to which the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space devoted particular attention at its tenth session and which we hope will be one of the highlights of United Nations activities in 1968 in the field of outer space—the United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space scheduled to take place from 14 to 27 August 1968 at Vienna. We have noted with great satisfaction the statements made during the meeting of the Committee on Outer Space and by previous speakers in this present debate stressing the importance of the Vienna Conference, and I wish to assure the Committee and the General Assembly that the Austrian Government, which is privileged to be host to that Conference, will do everything in its power to contribute to its complete success. The General Assembly's decision at its special session early this year to convene the Conference in the summer of 1968 rather than this year [*General Assembly resolution 2250 (S-V)*] has provided additional time for the preparation of the Conference. The Committee will recall that in December 1966, in resolution 2221 (XXI) the Assembly entrusted the Secretary-General with undertaking, with the assistance of the Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and a special panel of experts, the necessary organizational and administrative arrangements for the Conference.

70. This preparatory work has already begun. All Member States have been invited to send in by the end of October 1967 abstracts of working papers which they wish to submit to the Conference. The Panel of Experts has already met and will meet again, we hope, before the end of 1967 to consider the abstracts and to advise the Secretary-General on other scientific and technical aspects concerning the preparation of the Conference.

71. We have also noted with pleasure that the Executive secretary of the Conference, in response to a wish expressed by the Austrian Government, paid a visit to Vienna earlier in October, which has given him the opportunity for on-site inspection of the Conference facilities as well as for discussion with the Austrian authorities of all questions relating to the administrative and organizational arrangements. The preparatory work for the Conference is thus under way. Much, however, remains to be done.

72. It is important, above all, that all Governments—and in particular the non-space and developing countries—should realize the potential benefits which their countries can derive from the Conference. In a decade of space exploration there have been many international meetings devoted to outer space. Most of these, however, were concerned primarily with progress in the exploration of outer space and in research for this purpose. The Conference to be held at Vienna in 1968 will not only be the first United Nations conference on outer space, it will also be the first such conference devoted to the practical applications of space technology and to the benefits which all countries, especially the non-space and developing countries, can derive from the achievements which outer space research and technology have yielded over the past ten years. The possibilities in this respect are great indeed.

73. I have already mentioned the use of meteorological satellites in a world-wide weather forecasting system, with great potential benefits for agricultural areas as well as for the protection of life and property. Navigational satellites will make it possible greatly to improve services for air and sea traffic. At the last session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the Government of India reported on experiments already under way utilizing satellites for mass television communications to help with the problems of a rapidly growing population. There are also important advances in the field of biology and medicine.

74. To impart the knowledge of these achievements and of how they can benefit directly the economic and social progress of all nations will be the theme and the purpose of the Vienna Conference. We sincerely hope that all countries will make use of this opportunity and that the Conference will thus become a milestone in international co-operation in the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.