



CONTENTS

	Page
Agenda item 21: Report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (continued)	257

Chairman: Mr. Mario AMADEO (Argentina).

AGENDA ITEM 21

Report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer
Space (A/4987, A/C.1/857, A/C.1/L.301) (continued)

1. Mr. ZEMLA (Czechoslovakia) said that in the four years since the first satellite had been launched, mankind had achieved further enormous successes in the penetration of outer space. The Czechoslovak people appreciated at their full value the Soviet Union's historic achievements in the conquest of outer space, as also the important contribution made by American science. Satellites would eventually be used for world radio and television relays and for weather forecasting, and the exploration of outer space would make possible the study of life on other planets, the determination of the factors affecting earth organisms in outer space and the solution of problems relating to the origin of life.

2. The fact that space exploration was at present being carried out primarily by the USSR and the United States did not mean that that field of science must remain the exclusive domain of those two Powers. Wide international co-operation would permit the mobilization of the scientific knowledge and technical skill of all nations, would ensure the use of outer space and celestial bodies for peaceful purposes alone, and would enable all peoples to share in the results achieved. It was deplorable that such co-operation did not yet exist in the United Nations, whose comprehensive membership offered the best possible conditions for such an endeavour.

3. The USSR and the other socialist States had taken the initiative in developing international co-operation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space. On the initiative of the USSR the General Assembly had adopted at its fourteenth session a decision on the convening of an international scientific conference for the exchange of experience gained in the exploration of outer space (resolution 1472 B (XIV)), and agreement had been reached on the establishment of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (resolution 1472 A (XIV)). Unfortunately that Committee had achieved nothing, the reason being that the Western Powers, especially the United States, had tried to usurp a dominant position in the Committee—a position which reflected neither the present world situation nor the scientific achievement of the countries concerned. The United States had rejected every Soviet proposal designed to ensure the equality of all partic-

ipating States. It had demanded, for example, that decisions of the Committee should be adopted not by agreement between all participating States but by majority vote, which would have enabled a majority consisting of members of the Western military groups to impose their wishes on the Committee. During the debate in the First Committee, certain Western countries had described the justifiable demands of the Soviet Union as a sort of veto; such an approach could hardly lead to useful results in the current bilateral negotiations between the Soviet Union and the United States. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space would be able to achieve success only if its decisions were acceptable to all; the significant and complex problems involved could not be settled by majority vote. It was a committee different in nature from other committees of the United Nations; moreover, the experience of COSPAR and of the Conference on Antarctica showed that international co-operation was possible and useful, provided that it took place on the basis of agreed decisions. If the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space was to be effective, its composition must be in harmony with the present world situation: the three existing groups of States must be equitably represented in the Committee and its subsidiary bodies.

4. Although Czechoslovakia had not been able to match the achievements of the Soviet Union and the United States in the exploration of outer space, its scientists had made a great contribution, for instance during the International Geophysical Year, to world science in general, particularly in the field of astronomy. Czechoslovakia would continue to promote international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space, in accordance with the principles of peaceful coexistence. He hoped that the present debate would lead to the adoption of a resolution which would enable the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to start work without delay.

5. Mr. OKAZAKI (Japan) said that the recent progress of the Soviet Union and the United States in space activities had made the question of international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space a matter of urgency. Japan also had made substantial progress in that field. A Japanese model 9 rocket of the Kappa series had achieved a height of 350 kilometres, providing valuable information about the ionosphere, and a new and more powerful rocket, the Lambda type, should be completed in two years and was expected to achieve a height of 1,000 kilometres. Japan might then be able to conduct an independent survey of the great radiation belt, and even to put its own artificial satellites into orbit. Several countries were developing their own facilities for rocket launching, while others were taking an active part in space exploration—for instance, by tracking space vehicles and analysing their findings. Since space activities necessarily ignored national boundaries, the time

would come when no nation would be able to remain indifferent to them; moreover, no nation, however large, could effectively promote space activities without the co-operation of other States.

6. Bodies such as the International Council of Scientific Unions had already brought about a considerable degree of international co-operation with regard to the scientific aspects of space exploration, but in view of the many useful applications of space science, co-operation between Governments and on other levels would soon become necessary. For example, artificial satellites could be used for long-range weather forecasting—which would be very valuable to Japan—and for more economical and efficient long-distance communications. It was already essential that Governments should agree on the allocation of radio frequencies for the use of space vehicles and on the selection of launching sites for sounding rockets and other space probes, in order that there should be as little interference as possible with activities such as fishing and navigation. The United Nations, because of its comprehensive character, was the body best suited to promote international co-operation in that field.

7. Unfortunately, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had so far failed to make any substantial contribution. His delegation appealed to members of the Committee, and especially to representatives of the larger States, to end the present period of inactivity, by thinking less in terms of bloc politics and more in terms of true international co-operation.

8. One of the most important tasks before the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space was to study the legal problems arising from increasingly intense space activities. It would be unrealistic to seek a wholesale solution of all the possible legal problems of outer space at present. Specific legal questions should be solved as they arose; however, certain general principles should be established as soon as possible, in order that space activities might be conducted peacefully and openly, for the benefit of all mankind. One such principle was that outer space must be used for peaceful purposes alone. Although the prohibition of the use of outer space for military purposes, or specific steps to enforce such a prohibition, might be part of the disarmament question and therefore outside the scope of the item under discussion, care would have to be taken, in studying the legal problems involved in space activities, to do nothing which might hinder efforts to prevent the use of outer space for other than peaceful purposes. In proclaiming freedom of the exploration and use of outer space, for instance, any implication that such exploration and use were being sanctioned for any and every purpose, including military purposes, must be avoided.

9. The sounding rockets to which he had previously referred had been developed by the Institute for Industrial Science of the University of Tokyo. Japan was proud to have achieved some success in developing unique types of rockets through the efforts of a purely academic group, and believed that that fact might encourage other countries with limited resources to take part in space activities. Rocket technology was only one aspect of the study of outer space by Japanese scientists. Shortly after the war, a research committee on the ionosphere had been formed under the Science Council of Japan, and the results of Japanese work in that field had been highly valued by the international scientific community. Japanese scientists

had been engaged for some time in the study of altitudes higher than the ionosphere, including the great radiation belt. In May 1960 a Council on Space Exploration had been set up under the Cabinet in order to work out a balanced and co-ordinated programme of space exploration in co-operation with other countries and with international organizations. Japan hoped to increase its contribution to the study of the peaceful uses of outer space, and to keep the field free from international conflict.

10. The Japanese delegation agreed with the general lines of the draft resolutions in document A/C.1/L.301, which were aimed at bringing about wider and more effective international co-operation in the peaceful use of outer space. Japan's interest in such co-operation was based on its conviction that any use of outer space for military purposes should be banned as soon as possible.

11. Mr. SCHEYVEN (Belgium) said that the question under discussion raised extremely complex legal issues, which required clarification. He was therefore glad to note that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space would be invited, under draft resolution A in document A/C.1/L.301, to study the relevant legal problems.

12. So far as concerned the proposal that certain services in the field of international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space should be provided by the Secretariat—a point which the United States representative had discussed at the 1210th meeting—his delegation considered that it would be preferable to entrust the tasks in question to the specialized agencies, which had the necessary technical staff and scientific knowledge.

13. The representatives of the Soviet Union and Poland had put forward certain views based on the argument that useful co-operation in the matter presupposed agreement between the United States and Soviet Union. But while such agreement was clearly desirable, it would be dangerous to establish a special procedure for the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. So far as the membership of the Committee was concerned, the importance for the developing countries of the questions to be studied made some increase in its numbers desirable; he was glad, therefore, that under draft resolution E Nigeria and Chad would be added to the Committee.

14. Finally, he expressed the hope that the Committee would be able to adopt unanimously the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.301, for that would represent an act of faith in the United Nations.

15. Mr. KIZLA (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the rapid progress of science and technology had completely transformed man's way of life and opened up new horizons. Of all the twentieth century's scientific achievements, however, none could be compared to the conquest of space. So far, only the Soviet Union and the United States had launched satellites and other space devices. Other States might follow in their footsteps, but even when flights to other planets had become an everyday occurrence, people would remember that the way had been laid by a country building communism, and that the first man to leave the earth had been a citizen of that country. The Soviet Union did not keep its scientific achievements in outer space a secret, and was ready to co-operate with all countries in the peaceful exploration and development of space. It would be difficult to over-estimate the

contribution made by Soviet scientists in that field, no small part of which was to be attributed to Ukrainian scientists. In recent years, Ukrainian scientific institutions had been devoting more and more attention to the study of outer space and to the practical problems raised by space exploration. He described the important work which had been and was being done in the Ukraine in the study of the sun, the moon, the planets and the earth, and in astronomy, space biology and other fields. The Ukrainian scientists engaged in that work, like all scientists in the Soviet Union, were ready to exchange information and experience with their foreign colleagues. The value of such exchanges was beyond question. Many delegations had spoken of the practical importance of the discoveries of space exploration for life on earth. To take one example, the Ukraine, as a highly developed agricultural region, was very interested in the new prospects opened up in the field of meteorology.

16. The draft resolutions before the Committee in document A/C.1/L.301 contained some positive elements, which might help to develop international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space within the framework of the United Nations and its specialized agencies. Both the Soviet representative and the United States representative had stressed the desirability of such co-operation, and the latter had expressed the hope that new life would be put into the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The best way of achieving that end would be to make the Committee an effective instrument for co-operation, with well-defined functions, including that of providing "a focal point for international co-operation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space" referred to in draft resolution B. The draft resolutions in their present form would entrust the Secretariat with new tasks, to which it was not suited and which, moreover, might have considerable administrative and financial implications. If new life was to be put into the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the Committee should undertake those functions itself, with the technical assistance of the Secretariat.

17. The United States representative had stressed the need for all countries to participate as fully as possible in international co-operation of the kind under consideration. The Ukrainian delegation shared that view, and accordingly could not support the proposal in draft resolution E that the membership of the Committee should be increased by no more than two. There were no grounds for fear that an increase in the Committee's membership would reduce its efficiency. It was not the number of members that mattered, but their willingness to co-operate and to pay due regard to the interests of all parties concerned. The Committee's membership should be increased considerably, from among those States which had a genuine desire for co-operation. Whatever its membership, however, the success of the Committee's work would ultimately depend on the way in which it organized its work, and above all, on the procedure for taking decisions. The Committee must not become a machine for rubber-stamping decisions taken by a mechanical majority. If it was to be really effective, its decisions must be acceptable to all. The procedure of unanimous decisions proposed by the Soviet Union would thus be most suitable, particularly in connexion with the legal problems relating to outer space.

18. Finally, he expressed the hope that the General Assembly would be able at the current session to reach agreed decisions which would open the door to

wide international co-operation in the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space on a basis of equality between all States taking part.

19. Mrs. ROSSEL (Sweden) said that in the two years since it had been established, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had been prevented from carrying out its limited mandate by differences of opinion regarding the organization of its work. As a result, the report it had submitted (A/4987) was of a purely formal nature; the failure of the main Powers in space technology, the United States and the Soviet Union, to agree on the voting procedure in the Committee had ruled out any substantive discussion. The Swedish delegation felt that since the measures of international co-operation which the Committee had been asked to elaborate could not be given practical effect without the active support of those two main Powers, matters of voting procedure were of no great importance, and it hoped that a solution to that problem would soon be found. Sweden trusted that the General Assembly would renew the Committee's mandate, and that it would bear in mind the need for the widest possible geographical representation in the Committee and for the inclusion of States in a position to make the most valuable contributions to its work.

20. The experiments which were being conducted in space might have consequences affecting all mankind; all countries had an interest in sharing the benefits of international co-operation in space research and exploration. The Swedish delegation considered it particularly important that study of the legal problems arising from space activities should be begun as soon as possible. While it might be premature to envisage a comprehensive legal code for outer space at the present stage of scientific and technological development, the studies defined in the report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (A/4141) should be undertaken without delay. It was gratifying to note, in that connexion, that it was generally agreed that celestial bodies should not be subject to national appropriation. The legal aspects of international co-operation in outer space were amply covered in draft resolution A in document A/C.1/L.301. Sweden would also welcome a decision at the Assembly's current session to establish a system for the registration of space launchings, and had noted with satisfaction that draft resolution B contained a proposal to that effect and that the Soviet Union supported the principle of openness in connexion with space launchings.

21. While it welcomed draft resolutions A and B, Sweden had certain reservations with respect to draft resolutions C and D. It was not convinced that it was absolutely necessary that efforts to utilize satellites for meteorology and communications should be made under the aegis of the United Nations, and feared that such United Nations activities might duplicate or interfere with the activities planned by the specialized agencies in those fields. In view of the Organization's current financial difficulties, moreover, prudence should be exercised in assuming new financial obligations.

22. Mr. LORINC (Hungary) said that the launching of the first sputnik by the Soviet Union had paved the way for the exploration of outer space, and that subsequent achievements by the United States and the Soviet Union had awakened world-wide interest in the real problems involved in space activities. The very nature of those problems called for international co-operation, in which the United Nations had an important part to

play. Without such co-operation, anarchy would ensue and human and material resources would be wasted. Hungary's primary concern, however, was that achievements in the field of outer space should serve the welfare of humanity. Outer space must not be allowed to become, like the earth, a theatre of war; it must be a place of fruitful co-operation among scientists and Governments.

23. Hungary was a member of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, and had been disappointed by its failure during the two years of its existence to achieve any useful work. The lesson to be drawn from those two years, as also from the current discussion in the First Committee, was that the peaceful use of outer space could be finally ensured only through general and complete disarmament, and only on the basis of genuine international co-operation.

24. His delegation was pleased to note that there were a number of points in the draft resolutions submitted by the United States and three other countries (A/C.1/L.301) with which it fully agreed. However, it had strong reservations concerning the role assigned to the Secretary-General under draft resolutions B, C and D. While his delegation did not underestimate the importance of the Secretary-General's part in United Nations space activities, it considered that the actual co-ordination of those activities should be the responsibility of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. It would be unable to support a text which would leave that Committee unemployed.

25. In connexion with the need to ensure the peaceful use of outer space, he pointed out that it was not quite true, as the United States representative had asserted at the 1210th meeting, that the field of outer space was a clean slate—an area as yet unmarred by the accumulated conflicts and prejudices which impeded the solution of problems on earth. In point of fact, the Midas and Samos satellites were military espionage satellites launched by the United States, and the West Ford project was a military project of the United States Air Force. Only through general and complete disarmament could the use of outer space for military purposes be outlawed once and for all. Rockets launching satellites for the peaceful exploration of space were also capable of launching nuclear and thermo-nuclear warheads, and until general and complete disarmament had eliminated the possibility of launching such warheads there could be no absolute guarantee that outer space would not be used for military purposes.

26. With regard to the need for international co-operation in space activities, he pointed out that no positive achievements could be made against the will of either of the two Powers which had demonstrated their mastery of space technology. The Soviet Union took that fact into account in its approach to the problem. However, judging from the two-year record of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the haste with which the United States had pressed for the convening of its recent meeting, the United States was not following the Soviet Union's example. In approaching the question of outer space, all considerations of group or bloc interests should be banished—as several Western representatives had observed. The United States should renounce its attempt to maintain a majority in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and should accept the principle of equality with regard to both the composition of the Committee and the rights of its members. Real equality was expressed by agreements

unanimously reached; the propaganda slogan of the "veto" had been used to besmirch one of the great Powers because it insisted on exercising its constitutional rights and would not be coerced by others. It was a historical fact that United Nations undertakings embarked upon with the concurring votes of the great Powers had always succeeded. It was the conviction of his delegation that given genuinely co-operative effort the United Nations would make significant gains in the field of outer space.

27. Mr. UYS (South Africa) expressed appreciation of the initiative taken by the Acting-General in connexion with the problem of the peaceful use of outer space. South Africa would be glad to participate in a joint venture to ensure that outer space was used in the interests of all mankind, and had demonstrated its ability to contribute to that goal. Thanks to its geographical position and its advanced facilities for scientific research, South Africa could play an important part in international research programmes, and had already done so in connexion with the International Geophysical Year. At present, six space and satellite-tracking stations in South Africa were playing a vital role in the implementation of the United States space programme. One such station, in co-operation with stations in the United States and Australia, would provide tracking and communications facilities for the lunar, inter-planetary and deep space programmes of the United States National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and would be capable of tracking research vehicles as far away as 30 million miles. Moreover, in co-operation with sixteen nations throughout the world, the station would also provide facilities for tracking artificial earth satellites used for study of the earth and its immediate environment in space.

28. His delegation was in agreement with the general terms of the various proposals contained in document A/C.1/L.301, and hoped that the First Committee would help to promote co-operation between nations in the field of outer space.

29. Mr. LULO (Albania) said that since Soviet scientists had first begun the exploration of outer space a new era had opened. The launching of the first artificial satellite had initiated a series of achievements culminating in the space flights by Soviet citizens, which offered limitless possibilities of research for the benefit of all mankind. Space exploration confronted man with an immense task, which, by its very nature, was international and called for close co-operation between all States. The fruitful results achieved in the International Geophysical Year showed that such co-operation was both possible and valuable. The establishment of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space at the fourteenth session of the General Assembly, thanks to the efforts of the Soviet Union, had been generally regarded as a first step towards international co-operation in outer space. Albania was a member of the Committee, and was ready to contribute to its work; but although two years had passed since the Committee had been set up, it had so far been unable to function. The reason was that the United States and its allies, disregarding the spirit and the letter of General Assembly resolution 1472 (XIV), had tried to secure a privileged position in the Committee. In particular, the United States had rejected the Soviet Union's constructive proposal that the Committee's work should be based on complete equality between its members, so as to ensure equitable distribution of seats in the Committee, in its sub-

sidary bodies and at the international scientific conference proposed in the same resolution. Similarly, the United States, wishing to be able to impose its views by means of the Western Powers' numerical majority in the Committee, had insisted that decisions should be taken by votes, and not by agreement as the Soviet Union proposed. It was clear that the Western Powers were wholly responsible for the Committee's failure to function. It was particularly extraordinary that the United States should be attempting to achieve a position of advantage over the Soviet Union when everyone knew that the latter led the world in space exploration. The Committee would be unable to carry out its task in accordance with resolution 1472 (XIV) until a preliminary agreement had been reached be-

tween the Soviet Union and the United States on the principles which should govern its composition and operation. Many delegations had stressed that outer space could be used both for the benefit and for the destruction of mankind. The American Press had reported many military projects planned by the United States, such as making the moon a military base, launching spy satellites and so on. Outer space should be used only for peaceful purposes and for the benefit of all peoples. An agreement must therefore be reached regarding the Committee responsible for international co-operation in that field, and the United Nations must endeavour to promote such co-operation.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.