

happened in the case of stocks of fissionable materials, in a few years it might be impossible to draw up any inventory of modern weapons which made use of outer space for their delivery. With regard to outer space, the situation today was the same as it had been in 1953 for atomic energy. His delegation supported the twenty-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.220), which it thought might be entitled "Space for peace".

10. The exploration and use of outer space constituted an undertaking with important consequences. A broad space programme would give impact to fundamental and applied research in many fields of science and engineering. Scientists from many countries would certainly want to participate in the great task. Inasmuch as few countries could afford to sponsor a major space project, opportunities should be given to competent scientists of small nations to give their assistance. His delegation was of the opinion that the exchange of scientific personnel might start before the proposed *ad hoc* committee had submitted its report.

11. He agreed with those who thought that the juridical aspects of the question should be left to the *ad hoc* committee, and he would therefore refrain from stating the views of his delegation on those matters. He did, however, wish to make an earnest appeal on three important points to all members of the Committee, and especially to the Governments of those countries which were conducting or intending to conduct scientific space experiments.

12. First, it was essential to safeguard celestial bodies for the sake of science. There was a general interest in the question whether there was any form of living organism on the planets. Unless proper precautions were taken, a probe might inadvertently introduce some living organisms from the earth into

the planets. Such an accident might cause irreparable damage.

13. Secondly, while some secrecy was bound to exist in military and industrial matters, there should be none in international scientific co-operation. At the Second International Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy, held at Geneva from 1 to 13 September 1958, all representatives had greatly appreciated the frankness with which the "nuclear Powers" had reported their efforts to achieve nuclear fusion.

14. With regard to outer space, the situation was unfortunately different. He quoted an article from The New York Times of 6 October 1957, according to which five days before the launching of the first sputnik on 4 October 1957 by the USSR, three Soviet scientists participating at Washington in an exchange of views among scientists sent by a dozen nations in connexion with the International Geophysical Year had refused to give any relevant details of the Soviet satellite to be launched or any indication of the date of its launching.

15. Thirdly, the space-nuclear age would demand one open world for all mankind. According to present scientific forecasts, it would be possible in a few years to install telescopes and television instruments on artificial satellites and full information on the universe would thus become available to man. Such scientific progress would also permit an aerial inspection of the earth's surface, which would automatically put into effect President Eisenhower's "open-skies" plan. He expressed the hope that such technical advances would help break the deadlock over disarmament.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.

# GENERAL ASSEMBLY

THIRTEENTH SESSION

Official Records



Thursday, 13 November 1958,  
at 3.20 p.m.

NEW YORK

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Chairman: Mr. Miguel Rafael URQUIA (El Salvador).

## AGENDA ITEM 60

Question of the peaceful use of outer space (A/3818 and Corr.1, A/3902, A/C.1/L.219, A/C.1/L.220) (continued):

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

### GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. SANDLER (Sweden) said that his delegation had welcomed the suggestion that the United Nations should study the question of the peaceful use of outer space and the announced desire of the Western Powers to begin the study of that question without waiting for agreement on other problems of disarmament. Sweden supported that approach, for if effective work was to be done on the problem, it should not be bound up with other more controversial questions. The goal was to prevent the firing of military devices through space and in that connexion thought should be given to intermediate, as well as intercontinental or even interplanetary, missiles. If that point of view was adopted, there would be no convincing reason for introducing the question of existing military bases into the discussion.

2. As the Committee's discussion had already shown, the term "outer space" was extremely vague; its meaning in terms of altitude should be clearly defined. It was also necessary to clarify questions of sovereignty over the atmosphere or outer space,

including the rights and responsibilities of neutrals. In that connexion it was encouraging that no protests had been made by States against the flight of artificial satellites over their territory, for outer space should be as open to peaceful traffic as the high seas. However, the fact that no protests had been made in no way meant that general agreement on the altitude at which outer space began had been established.

3. His delegation hoped that the General Assembly would, by deciding on the proposed study at the current session, take a first step towards the universally accepted goal of accelerating and controlling the peaceful use of outer space. It therefore recommended the adoption of the twenty-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.220), which it had co-sponsored.

4. Mr. TINAUD (France) said his delegation was glad that the question of the peaceful use of outer space had been brought before the United Nations, for the time had come to co-ordinate the efforts and research of all countries, under United Nations auspices, in order to serve the welfare of mankind as a whole.

5. It was, however, disturbing that two other questions, the banning of the use of cosmic space for military purposes, and the elimination of foreign military bases, both of which were directly related to disarmament and should be dealt with in that context, had been introduced into a debate devoted to international scientific co-operation. To link the three questions would have the practical result of obstructing the development of international co-operation for the study of the peaceful use of outer space; for that reason his delegation could not support the Soviet draft resolution (A/C.1/L.219).

6. The subject of outer space was new and unfamiliar. His delegation therefore considered that a debate by the Committee on the substance of the question was premature and unlikely to lead to practical conclusions. The task of making a systematic study of the problem and of laying the groundwork for an organization which would co-ordinate work on it might well be assigned to an *ad hoc* committee. The twenty-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.220), which his delegation had co-sponsored, was in complete conformity with France's ideas in that respect, and had the advantage of proposing an immediate start on the preparation of programmes of international co-operation in accordance with a practical, rational and realistic plan. For its part, France would co-operate fully with the proposed committee.

The meeting rose at 3.45 p.m.