

12. He pointed out that, if the motion was adopted, the Committee would be able to consider the questions of outer space and Cyprus alternately, in accordance with a procedure frequently followed by the Committees of the United Nations General Assembly.

The motion was adopted by 63 votes to none, with 6 abstentions.

The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

THIRTEENTH SESSION

Official Records



Thursday, 20 November 1958,
at 10.55 a.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/Rev.1, 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 (concluded)

1. Mr. SYLVAIN (Haiti) said he thought his delegation had voiced the wishes of the majority of the members of the Committee in appealing to the great Powers, at the 961st meeting, to make every effort to seek agreement. His delegation welcomed the submission of the revised Soviet draft resolution (A/C.1/L.219/Rev.1) as a significant response to that appeal. Although the twenty-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.220) still seemed preferable because of the caution of its approach and, above all, because it reaffirmed the important principle of the equality of States, there seemed no reason why the two draft resolutions, which were now almost identical, should not be combined so as to make possible a unanimous decision on the question by the General Assembly.

2. His delegation therefore appealed to the sponsors of the two draft resolutions to make an effort to reach agreement on a common text, and suggested that the Chairman take the initiative in bringing them together.

3. Mr. DE LEQUERICA (Spain) said his delegation welcomed the withdrawal by the Soviet delegation of the unfortunate clause in its original draft resolution (A/C.1/L.219) linking the question of foreign military bases with that of outer space. His delegation did not put too much faith in agreements between the two camps into which humanity was divided; it continued to be attached to the Western Powers, believing that the

peace and security of the world depended on their continued strength and scientific progress. Nevertheless, it welcomed every step in the direction of harmony, and hoped that mankind would find a way to submerge its differences when it undertook the exploration of outer space. Many problems remained to be solved, particularly those relating to the legal status of outer space which the representatives of Argentina (985th meeting) and Brazil (986th meeting) had so clearly outlined. Nor could the military possibilities of the use of outer space and the need for a controlled restriction of its use to peaceful purposes, as part of a balanced programme of disarmament, be ignored. Agreement on a common text between the sponsors of the two draft resolutions before the Committee would be a first step towards those goals and would be welcomed by his delegation.

4. Referring to the Soviet representative's remarks at the 989th meeting on the economic origin of the friendship between the United States and Spain which had led to the establishment of certain military bases on Spanish soil, he said that his country, in agreeing to the establishment of those bases, had not been thinking in economic terms; it had been motivated solely by the desire to avoid the fate of all the once independent countries which had fallen before communist aggression.

5. Mr. VEGA GOMEZ (El Salvador) said that the International Geophysical Year had shown what international co-operation without regard to ideological differences could accomplish in a scientific field. The twenty-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.220), which stressed the sovereign equality of the Members of the United Nations and the need to use outer space for the benefit of mankind, represented a suitable approach under the present circumstances. The new Soviet draft resolution (A/C.1/L.219/Rev.1), which, unlike the original Soviet draft (A/C.1/L.219), did not mention the extraneous question of the elimination of foreign military bases on the territories of other countries, also possessed some merit. However, he considered the twenty-Power draft resolution was preferable because it left it to the members of the Committee to decide on the composition of the proposed *ad hoc* committee, whereas the Soviet draft specified the membership of the preparatory group which was to draft the programme and rules of the proposed international committee for co-operation in the study of cosmic space for peaceful purposes.

6. At the same time, he thought that certain improvements could be made in the twenty-Power draft resolution, or elements of both drafts could be woven into a compromise draft that might win unanimous support. Such a compromise draft would carry greater weight if, instead of merely fusing together the two draft resolutions now before the Committee, it dealt with matters of substance, such as the legal aspects of the problem. It might, for example, lay down the general

principle that outer space and the various celestial bodies could not be appropriated by any nation but, like the atmosphere and the high seas, were the common property of all.

7. Mr. MATSUDAIRA (Japan) said that the United Nations should promptly affirm the common objective, namely, that outer space should be used for peaceful purposes only. He welcomed the assurance given by the United States representative (983rd meeting) that, if there was general agreement to proceed with the study of an inspection system to ensure that the sending of objects through outer space should be exclusively for peaceful and scientific purposes, his country would be willing to enter into talks without awaiting the conclusion of negotiations on other problems of disarmament.

8. The role of the United Nations with regard to outer space should be similar to that which it had played with regard to the peaceful uses of atomic energy. The United Nations was the most appropriate organization to undertake the consolidation of the gains made under the programme of the International Geophysical Year, to which the scientists of Japan had made a substantial contribution. That task could not, however, be carried out without ample preparation, and the *ad hoc* committee recommended in the twenty-Power draft resolution of which Japan was a sponsor, might well initiate a study of the scientific, administrative and legal aspects of outer space.

9. Just as the discovery of new continents in the sixteenth century had produced a fundamental change in the then existing world order, and particularly in its legal concepts, so the opening of the space age through the new advances in technology would have a dynamic impact, for it introduced a new dimension in the world order and in law as it had hitherto been known. Without anticipating the conclusions which the *ad hoc* committee might reach on legal problems, Japan considered that that new dimension demanded a greater degree of international co-operation than had previously existed.

10. The twenty-Power draft resolution, although of a procedural nature, was an encouraging beginning. The revised draft of the Soviet proposal reflected a new conciliatory approach, and strengthened the hope that it might be merged with the twenty-Power draft in a single, unanimously acceptable text. Japan was particularly concerned with the composition of the proposed *ad hoc* committee: it was anxious not to introduce a new form of veto by setting up a group which would fail to reflect the general trend of thought in the General Assembly. The committee should be so composed as not to hinder the programme of international co-operation of which it would be the instrument.

11. Mr. Krishna MENON (India) said that the debate would not gain from further controversy at that stage, since there was hope of unanimous agreement on a single draft resolution.

12. He reserved the right to intervene during the discussion on the draft resolutions.

13. The CHAIRMAN, having consulted the Committee, invited the observers, from the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to address it.

14. Mr. FITZGERALD (International Civil Aviation Organization) pointed out that as early as 1956, when the use of outer space had not yet been a reality, the question had been included in the work programme of the standing Legal Committee of ICAO, and that, since that time, the secretariat of ICAO had been keeping under review the developments taking place in relation to outer space in so far as they had implications for the use of air space and for international civil aviation. The documentation on those developments would be placed before the appropriate organs of ICAO in order to enable consideration to be given to those aspects which came within its purview. He reaffirmed ICAO's intention to co-operate in whatever measures might be necessary to make co-ordination of the activities of specialized agencies and of the United Nations fully effective.

15. Mr. GAGLIOTTI (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that three phases of UNESCO's programme were related to the question of outer space: basic research, the co-ordination and dissemination of information, and the International Geophysical Year. The General Conference of UNESCO, now meeting in Paris, had recently added outer-space exploration to the fields of scientific study in which UNESCO was promoting basic research. Half of UNESCO's programme in the field of science was devoted to the subject of scientific communications and the dissemination of scientific information. The regional activities conducted in that field by UNESCO were carried out by four science offices responsible, *inter alia*, for the co-ordination of scientific research and the dissemination of scientific information.

16. In connexion with the International Geophysical Year, UNESCO was assisting the non-governmental organizations concerned with international scientific co-operation and had contributed funds and provided strong support since 1952 to the preparatory and permanent committees of the International Geophysical Year. It was making a large contribution to the cost of the programme of the International Council of Scientific Unions and its affiliates. Moreover, its 1959-1960 budget had allocated an additional \$25,000 expressly for the purpose of compiling and publishing the mass of material obtained during the International Geophysical Year. That sum might possibly be increased by a further \$10,000.

17. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization would gladly co-operate to the fullest extent with any committee which the General Assembly might set up to study the question of outer space.

18. Mr. SHANAHAN (New Zealand) said that the two draft resolutions before the Committee had much in common and that there was hope that agreement might be reached on a single text. Progress towards that end could best be made in private discussion. Accordingly, he moved adjournment of the debate until the following afternoon.

The motion was adopted by 67 votes to none, with 4 abstentions.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.

GENERAL
ASSEMBLY

THIRTEENTH SESSION

Official Records

Wednesday, 19 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/Rev.1, 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. PALAMARCHUK (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) emphasized that the latest achievements of science, which might contribute to man's advancement or lead to his destruction, placed new responsibilities on the United Nations.

2. The attempts of certain Western political and military leaders to extend the armaments race to space could not fail to arouse the most serious alarm. Mr. Roy William Johnson, head of the Pentagon's scientific research branch, had suggested to a committee of the Congress that all space between the earth and the moon should be used by the United States for military purposes, and General Thomas D. White, Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force, had advocated that the United States should conquer interplanetary space and retain the capacity to control it. As for General John Brice Medaris, he believed that it might be necessary to bring down the Soviet artificial earth satellites.

3. At the 986th meeting the United States representative had told the Committee that distrust and fear would not appear in cosmic space unless they were sent on ahead. It could be asked, however, whether the Government which was attempting to control space for selfish ends and which was constantly postponing the banning of the use of space for military purposes and opposing the elimination of military bases on foreign territories was acting accordingly.

4. If there had been agreement on the prohibition of atomic and hydrogen weapons, there would be no problem, for the nuclear warheads of rockets would automatically be excluded from the arsenals of States. Unfortunately, the position of the Western Powers made it necessary to seek other solutions to the new problem confronting mankind. The Soviet Union proposals of 15 March 1958 (A/3818 and Corr.1) provided an excellent solution: States would pledge themselves not to use cosmic space for military purposes, rockets would not be launched except under an agreed international programme and bases on foreign territories would be eliminated, all the foregoing to be under controls organized within the framework of the United Nations. In addition, a United Nations body would co-ordinate international co-operation for the study of cosmic space.

5. Those proposals took into account the security interests of all States. The Soviet Union could not be expected to renounce the intercontinental ballistic missile with which it could, in case of necessity, threaten the territory of the United States, unless at the same time the network of military bases threatening its own territory were eliminated. It had been said that the question of bases should be dealt with only in the event that some Power set one up on the moon, but it was the actual bases established close to their borders that were a cause of concern to the Ukrainian people.

6. Whereas ten years before, United States forces, including occupation forces, had been stationed in only ten countries, there were now United States bases (over a million men) in thirty-five countries. Furthermore, at many of those bases there were aircraft of the Strategic Air Command, each of which carried a nuclear bomb and had an assigned target in the Soviet Union. A solution which gave one party so great a military advantage could not be satisfactory. Yet the United States was not prepared to accept an agreement covering both the use of cosmic space exclusively for peaceful purposes and the elimination of bases.

7. The peaceful and the military aspects of the question of cosmic space were closely interrelated. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to overlook the possibility of a separate agreement merely because agreement could not be reached on all aspects of the question. The United Nations had an active part to play with regard to international co-operation for the study of cosmic space.

8. The Soviet Union had submitted a revised draft resolution (A/C.1/L.219/Rev.1) which would make it possible to achieve that aim. At the 989th meeting, the United Kingdom representative had called it a "move in the right direction". It was to be hoped that the sponsors of the twenty-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.220) would also exert every effort to find a common denominator acceptable to all.