



General Assembly

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**Committee on the Peaceful
Uses of Outer Space**
Forty-sixth session
Vienna, 11-20 June 2003

Draft report

Chapter I

Introduction

1. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space held its forty-sixth session in Vienna from 11 to 20 June 2003. The officers of the Committee were as follows:

Chairman: Raimundo González (Chile)

First Vice-Chairman: Driss El Hadani (Morocco)

Second Vice-Chairman/Rapporteur: Susetyo Mulyodrano (Indonesia)

The unedited verbatim transcripts of the meetings of the Committee are contained in documents COPUOS/T.503-[...].

A. Meetings of subsidiary bodies

2. The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had held its fortieth session in Vienna from 17 to 28 February 2003 under the chairmanship of Karl Doetsch (Canada). The report of the Subcommittee was before the Committee (A/AC.105/804).

3. The Legal Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had held its forty-second session in Vienna from 24 March to 4 April 2003 under the chairmanship of Vladimír Kopal (Czech Republic). The report of the Subcommittee was before the Committee (A/AC.105/805). The unedited verbatim transcripts of the meetings of the Subcommittee are contained in documents COPUOS/Legal/T.674-692.



B. Adoption of the agenda

4. At its opening meeting, the Committee adopted the following agenda:
 1. Opening of the session.
 2. Adoption of the agenda.
 3. Election of officers.
 4. Statement by the Chairman.
 5. General exchange of views.
 6. Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes.
 7. Implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III).
 8. Report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on its fortieth session.
 9. Report of the Legal Subcommittee on its forty-second session.
 10. Spin-off benefits of space technology: review of current status.
 11. Space and society.
 12. Other matters.
 13. Report of the Committee to the General Assembly.

C. Membership

5. In accordance with General Assembly resolutions 1472 A (XIV) of 12 December 1959, 1721 E (XVI) of 20 December 1961, 3182 (XXVIII) of 18 December 1973, 32/196 B of 20 December 1977, 35/16 of 3 November 1980, 49/33 of 9 December 1994, 56/51 of 10 December 2001 and 57/116 of 11 December 2002 and decision 45/315 of 11 December 1990, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space was composed of the following States: Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Benin, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela and Viet Nam.

D. Attendance

6. Representatives of the following States members of the Committee attended the session: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Japan, Kenya, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay, Venezuela and Viet Nam.

7. At its 503rd meeting, the Committee decided to invite, at their request, representatives of Angola, Costa Rica, the Holy See, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Switzerland, Thailand and Yemen to attend its forty-sixth session and to address it, as appropriate, on the understanding that it would be without prejudice to further requests of that nature and that it would not involve any decision of the Committee concerning status.

8. Representatives of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) attended the session.

9. The session was also attended by representatives of the European Association for the International Space Year (EURISY), the European Community, the European Space Agency (ESA), the International Astronautical Federation (IAF), the International Institute of Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA), the International Law Association (ILA), the International Mobile Satellite Organization (IMSO), the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing (ISPRS), the National Space Society (NSS), the Regional Centre for Remote Sensing of the North African States (CRTEAN), the Space Generation Advisory Council (SGAC) and Spaceweek International Association (SIA).

10. A list of representatives of States members of the Committee, States not members of the Committee, United Nations entities and other organizations attending the session is contained in document A/AC.105/XLVI/INF/1.

E. Bureaux of the Committee and its subcommittees

11. The Committee noted with satisfaction that, as agreed at its forty-fifth session,¹ the Government of Austria had convened and facilitated intersessional informal consultations, including the chairpersons of the regional groups, on the composition of the bureaux of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies, with a view to reaching consensus before the forty-sixth session of the Committee.

12. At the 503rd meeting of the Committee, the Government of Austria reported to the Committee on a consensus agreement reached during the informal consultations. The agreement is reflected in a note by the Secretariat on the subject (A/AC.105/L.245). The Committee endorsed the agreement on the composition of

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-seventh session, Supplement No. 20 (A/57/20)*, para. 209.

the bureaux of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies, which is contained in annex [...] to the present report.

13. In accordance with that agreement, the terms of office of both the Chairman and the First Vice-Chairman of the forty-fifth session of the Committee were extended for one more year.

14. The Committee was informed that Harijono Djodjodihardjo (Indonesia) would be unable to extend his term of office as Second Vice-Chairman/Rapporteur of the Committee. The Committee recalled the agreement that it had reached in 1997 on the working methods of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies,² which provided that when any officer could not complete a term, the regional group holding the office concerned should nominate a candidate to be elected at the beginning of the session that immediately followed the termination of that officer's tenure.

15. At its 509th meeting, on 16 June, the Committee was informed that the Group of Asian States had nominated Susetyo Mulyodrono (Indonesia) as its candidate for the office of Second Vice-Chairman/Rapporteur of the Committee. The Committee elected Susetyo Mulyodrono (Indonesia) as Second Vice-Chairman/Rapporteur of the Committee for its forty-sixth session.

F. General statements

16. The Committee expressed its sympathy and solidarity with the families and friends of the international crew of the Space Shuttle Columbia, as well as with the international space community, for the loss of Columbia and its crew during re-entry on 1 February 2003, which affected all humanity. The Committee expressed its hope that that tragic event would not negatively affect international space programmes.

17. The Committee expressed its sympathy with the people of Algeria, Turkey and other countries that had recently suffered major earthquakes. In the light of those events, the Committee noted the urgency of ensuring wider use of space services for disaster management.

18. The Committee expressed its gratitude to Petr Lála and Mazlan Othman for their exceptional service in the Office for Outer Space Affairs of the Secretariat. The Committee also expressed its satisfaction with the appointment of Sergio Camacho as Director of the Office.

19. Statements were made by representatives of the following States members of the Committee during the general exchange of views: Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Ecuador, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, Ukraine, United States and Venezuela. The representative of Cuba also made a statement on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States. The representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya also made a statement. Statements were also made by the representatives of ESA, EURISY and ISPRS.

² *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 20 (A/52/20), annex I, para. 2.*

20. At the 503rd meeting, on 11 June 2003, the Chairman made a statement outlining the work of the Committee at its current session and stressing the need for the Committee to identify concrete initiatives that would ensure the effective use of space capabilities to promote global health and education, to strengthen decision-making in the management of natural resources, in particular water resources, and, in general, to alleviate the effects of poverty. He noted that one way to achieve that would be for the Committee to invite high-level representatives of the space agencies to organize a working group to prepare a report for consideration by the Committee, with a view to strengthening international cooperation. The working group could examine, for instance, action called for in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.³

21. Also at the 503rd meeting, the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs made a statement reviewing the work of the Office during the previous year.

22. At the 509th meeting, on 16 June, the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna made a statement to the Committee.

23. The Committee noted with satisfaction that the Fourth Space Conference of the Americas had been held successfully in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, from 14 to 17 May 2002. The Committee also welcomed the memorandum of understanding between the Office for Outer Space Affairs and the pro tempore secretariat of the Conference, under which the parties had demonstrated their intention to collaborate in promoting and implementing joint activities, in particular through the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, and to promote cooperation in projects at the regional level. The Committee also noted the desire of its member States in Latin America and the Caribbean to institutionalize the Space Conference of the Americas.

24. The Committee welcomed Algeria as a new member and noted its active participation in the Committee and the subcommittees during its first year of membership. The Committee urged all its members, in particular new members and significant space-faring countries, to participate actively in its sessions.

25. To ensure that it was possible for all delegations to participate actively in its sessions, the Committee agreed that a letter should be sent to the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna, requesting that other intergovernmental meetings not be held in Vienna at the same time as sessions of the Committee.

G. Adoption of the report of the Committee

26. After considering the various items before it, the Committee, at its [...] meeting, on [...] June 2003, adopted its report to the General Assembly containing the recommendations and decisions set out below.

³ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1), chap. I, resolution 2.

Chapter II

Recommendations and decisions

A. Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes

27. In accordance with paragraph 42 of General Assembly resolution 57/116, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space continued its consideration, as a matter of priority, of ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes.

28. The Committee was of the view that the General Assembly, by requesting in resolution 57/116 that the Committee continue to consider, as a matter of priority, ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes and to report thereon to the Assembly at its fifty-eighth session, had expressed the concern of the international community about the need to promote international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space, taking into particular account the needs of developing countries. The Committee, through its work in the scientific, technical and legal fields, had a fundamental role to play in ensuring that outer space was maintained for peaceful purposes. That role could be strengthened by new initiatives, as well as continuing progress in implementing the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III).

29. The Committee agreed that it had responsibilities relating to strengthening the international basis for the peaceful exploration and uses of outer space, which could cover, among other things, the further development of international space law, including, as appropriate, the preparation of international agreements governing various practical peaceful applications of space science and technology.

30. The Committee agreed that activities involving international cooperation, such as participation in international scientific campaigns, sharing of satellite data, providing educational and training assistance to other countries and building institutional capacity, should be further encouraged to enable outer space to be explored and used for peaceful purposes.

31. The Committee agreed that beneficial uses of space had enormous relevance for human development, in particular in developing countries, and that the wider adoption of such beneficial applications would strengthen the goal of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes.

32. The Committee agreed that, under the agenda item entitled “Ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes”, it could consider issues such as ways to promote regional and interregional cooperation based on experiences stemming from the Space Conferences of the Americas and the role space technology could play in the implementation of recommendations emerging from the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

33. The view was expressed that the increased use of space applications was in contradiction with the decline in the market share for the space field. That trend could provide opportunities if more innovative applications using space systems could be created in areas such as distance education, telemedicine and disaster

management and if more cooperative ventures could be organized so that States could make optimal use of the resources available to them, thereby avoiding competition and making more developing countries stakeholders in the space field.

34. The view was expressed that the success of the efforts of the Committee to revitalize its work was evidenced by the growing relevance of its work to the international community, in particular, by the steady increase over the past few years in the number of other intergovernmental organizations, as well as non-governmental organizations and private entities, seeking to participate in the activities of the Committee. That delegation also expressed the view that the increased presence of non-governmental experts in the work of the Committee was an extremely positive development that had enriched the Committee and that the successful implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III would ultimately depend on the increased presence of those experts.

35. The view was expressed that, under this multifaceted agenda item, the Committee should develop a clear, structured methodology oriented towards achieving specific results. To that end, the Committee should develop a questionnaire to be completed by member States and compiled as a special report of the Committee. Based on that report, the Committee could identify themes for special consideration, as well as the objectives of discussions and deadlines for any action. That exercise could lead to, among other things, the identification of principles to be included in a universal comprehensive convention on outer space law.

36. The view was expressed that the Committee had been established as the body of the General Assembly concerned exclusively with promoting international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space. That delegation expressed the view that it had been clear at the time of the Committee's formation that there would be entirely independent efforts to address disarmament issues, including in forums such as the First Committee of the General Assembly and the Conference on Disarmament. That delegation expressed the view that the unprecedented level of international cooperation and the significant presence of the private sector in outer space did not support calls for the Committee to consider matters relating to the militarization of outer space. That delegation was of the view that the Committee provided a unique forum for the exchange of information among developed and developing countries on the latest developments in the use and exploration of outer space and that there were tangible opportunities to enhance international cooperation in line with the mandate of the Committee.

37. The view was expressed that the Committee had not been fulfilling the mandate given to it by the General Assembly in recommending ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes. That delegation expressed the view that the Committee should address itself to that issue, since military activities in outer space were seriously affecting international cooperation in the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space.

38. Some delegations expressed the view that the Committee should establish a practical mechanism for coordinating its work with that of other related bodies, such as the Conference on Disarmament.

39. The view was expressed that it would be natural for the Committee and its subcommittees, as the United Nations bodies concerned with outer space, to provide

expertise on scientific, technical and legal aspects of outer space to the Conference on Disarmament and other United Nations entities.

40. Some delegations expressed the view that a greater risk of the introduction of weapons into outer space and the adoption of a concept of a use of force in outer space would undermine the basis for and the very logic of developing non-proliferation mechanisms and of the whole system of international security.

41. The view was expressed that, since an international legal mechanism capable of preventing the militarization of outer space had not yet been developed, the Committee should make greater efforts to prevent the militarization of outer space, in particular by drawing up an international agreement to prevent an arms race in outer space.

42. The view was expressed that an international agreement should be concluded to prohibit the deployment of weapons in outer space. That delegation recalled initiatives to that end that had been made in the Conference on Disarmament.

43. The Committee was informed that prior information on space objects to be launched by the Russian Federation, their purpose and parameters was available on the web site of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (www.mid.ru) and that plans were being made to make that information available on the web site of the Office for Outer Space Affairs as well. The view was expressed that the provision of similar information by other launching States would help to promote greater trust in the area of space activities.

44. The view was expressed that the emerging practice of States concluding agreements specifically addressing technology safeguard issues for rocket and other space technologies, as well as the inclusion into framework intergovernmental space cooperation agreements of provisions on the physical and legal protection of space-related property on the territory of an importing State, including immunity of such goods from seizures and executive action, was one positive development in ensuring that those technologies were used only for peaceful purposes.

45. The Committee recommended that, at its forty-seventh session, in 2004, it should continue its consideration, on a priority basis, of the item on ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes.