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COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THIRTEENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 13 September 1962, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. MATSCH

(Austria)

Programme of Work

General Debate (continued)

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: I have been informed that at the end of our meeting yesterday, the representative of Canada asked for the floor in connexion with the question of future meetings. I regret that I did not notice his request at the time, and I would like to give him an opportunity now to speak on the question of meetings.

Mr. TREMBLAY (Canada) (interpretation from French): Yesterday, Mr. Chairman, you hinted at the possibility of holding meetings next week. So far as my delegation is concerned, we would prefer to increase the number of our meetings this week so that we could use to the maximum possible advantage the two or three days remaining. This is primarily for practical reasons. The next session of the General Assembly will begin next week, and members of the national delegations will be arriving at the end of this week. This means that, beginning on Monday, we will be very busy, and this is particularly true of the delegations which have a limited staff. Therefore, I would suggest to the Chair that we should schedule as many meetings as possible for today, tomorrow, and, if necessary, Saturday, so that our work can be concluded before the start of the General Assembly.

Miss GUTTERIDGE (United Kingdom): My delegation fully supports the plea of the Canadian representative that we should now consider what steps we should take to finish our present work in the limited time available and to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion. We have already discussed in the general debate the report of the Legal Sub-Committee and the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. On the latter, it seems that we are in general agreement. On the report of the Legal Sub-Committee, we should, I suggest, now direct our minds to an agreed recommendation on that report, and endeavour to avoid, when we come to item 5 of our agenda, undue repetition of what we have already said.

(Miss Gutteridge, United Kingdom)

I would therefore suggest that if we are to have only two more meetings at our disposal after the general debate is finished, the first of these meetings should be devoted to any further statements any of us wish to make on the report of the two Sub-Committees, and the second on agreement on our own report to the General Assembly.

I would, however, add that my delegation would be prepared to agree to additional meetings, for example, if it were possible, later today or on Saturday.

The CHAIRMAN: In reply to the suggestion which has just been made by the Canadian representative, supported by the United Kingdom representative, the Chair is now in a position to announce that our Committee has been assigned two meetings for tomorrow, one in the forenoon and one in the afternoon. The Secretariat is at present earnestly considering the possibility of having a night meeting tonight, and one or two meetings, if necessary, on Saturday, so as to avoid having to hold meetings on Monday and Tuesday.

At noon, the Chair will announce the possibilities and ask the Committee whether it would be agreeable to the holding of a meeting tonight.

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

Mr. CHAKRAVARTY (India): Since our last meeting, further spectacular advances have been made in man's conquest of outer space. The Soviet spaceships Vostok III and IV, piloted by Major Nikolayev and Lt. Colonel Popovich respectively, broke all previous records and their performance evoked admiration all over the world. The Americans have lately launched the Mariner II rocket, which is expected to pass near Venus. All these achievements will naturally further spur the desire for international co-operation in this field.

My delegation would like to express satisfaction that the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee is unanimous. We take this as a further proof that when the two super Powers make a sincere effort to co-operate with each other they can arrive at an agreement which is not only mutually satisfactory to them but also to others as well. We particularly welcome this agreement since we believe that co-operation in outer space may reduce international tension and create understanding and mutual confidence leading to co-operation in other matters on this planet of ours.

Only the very rich and highly technically advanced countries can at present manage to conduct space research. The time may soon come when even the richest and the most technically advanced country would not find it possible to conduct such researches on their own resources. Pooling of resources by several countries may then become essential. Co-operation is therefore necessary if the world is to avoid duplication and wastage of resources.

Among individuals of nation States, there are often some internal disputes, but these are forgotten when the people of one country have to deal with those of another. In dealing with outer space, I submit, men must forget ideological differences and close their ranks at least in their common efforts to conquer outer space.

The recommendations of the Sub-Committee closely follow the directions of General Assembly resolution 1721 (XVI). We attach very great importance to the dissemination of knowledge and technique and the exchange of information in this new field of science. This would be of particular benefit to the less developed countries. The report makes recommendations for the encouragement

(Mr. Chakravarty, India)

of international programmes and suggests specific measures on which international co-operation could start. With the advancement of atmospheric science, man may ultimately have the power to influence weather and even climate on a large scale. We are happy to note that some of these programmes were mentioned in the exchange of messages between President Kennedy and Chairman Khrushchev last spring.

We particularly welcome the recommendations made by the Sub-Committee in regard to the creation and operation of international equatorial sounding rocket launching facilities. These facilities would further the advancement of human knowledge and would provide valuable technical training for interested users. My delegation fully supports the recommendations of the Sub-Committee and would like to take this opportunity to express India's interest in being the host State for the international equatorial sounding rocket launching facilities on the terms proposed by the Sub-Committee. Our offer to be a host State is, of course, on the basis that this would be a United Nations project in which the principal Powers concerned would co-operate. Detailed proposals in this respect would be made at the appropriate time after it had been decided that the facilities in question would be given United Nations sponsorship.

My delegation regrets that no similar agreement could be reached in the Legal Sub-Committee. It is, however, necessary to recognize the extreme complexity of the problem and the general difficulties of breaking new ground in this complicated field. The lack of quick agreement in the Legal Sub-Committee is, therefore, understandable and should not make us unduly pessimistic. In this general debate I do not propose to go into the details on the points in dispute. I should, however, like to make some general observations.

There have been objections that available scientific data is far too inadequate for a thorough examination of the whole problem and for the framing of detailed regulations. Scientific progress in the next few years may make obsolete any detailed regulations that we may now frame and regulations may have to be amended or framed anew in keeping with the data that may then be available. There is no doubt some force in this argument. On the other hand, if there are no regulations and we wait for further knowledge, many undesirable activities

(Mr. Chakravarty, India)

may be carried on wittingly or unwittingly and precedents may be established which may stand in the way of our efforts to make rules at a later date. While it is true that scientific data are by no means yet complete, the knowledge and data available on certain issues are fairly adequate to enable us to make a beginning. The principles set forth in the General Assembly resolution provided a good starting point. These broad principles now need elaboration. General Assembly resolution 1721 (XVI) commends the principle that international law, including the United Nations Charter, should apply to outer space and celestial bodies. International law is based on the concept of the sovereignty of States. Can this be applied without modification to outer space? Apparently not, because the same resolution goes on to say that outer space is not subject to national appropriation by claim of sovereignty. It is therefore necessary to define to what extent international law would operate and to what extent sovereign rights have to be waived. The concept of the sovereignty of States, if carried to outer space, would create many complications. International law as applicable to the high seas may give us some guidance. The Treaty of Antarctica could provide another example.

We should also like to emphasize that outer space should be reserved for peaceful uses. This has always been the view of my delegation. If Antarctica can be kept free from military use, it is all the more desirable that outer space should be reserved for peaceful use to the benefit of mankind. We would therefore welcome a declaration to this effect.

The dangers of carrying out earthly conflicts to outer space would be quite unpredictable. The time to act for reserving outer space for peaceful purposes is now. In this connexion, it may not be out of place for me to read out an extract from President Kennedy's speech yesterday:

"I do say that space can be explored and mastered without feeding the fires of war, without repeating the mistakes that man has made in extending his writ around this globe of ours.

"There is no strife, no prejudice, no national conflict in outer space as yet. Its hazards are hostile to us all. Its conquest deserves the best of all mankind and its opportunity for peaceful co-operation may never come again."

(Mr. Chakravarty, India)

In conclusion, I would refer to the agreement reached in this Committee as stated by you, Mr. Chairman, on 19 March, that it would be the aim of all members of the Committee to conduct its work in such a way that the Committee would be able to reach an agreement in its work without need for voting. This was a wise decision because no solution which is not acceptable to the two space Powers can be implemented. At the same time, we, the other countries, are also equally interested, and it is therefore natural that we must press on these two Powers to come to some speedy agreement. We must concentrate our efforts to that end.

(Mr. Chakravarty, India)

Within the time at our disposal it is not, however, possible for the Committee to go into all the details and reach an agreed solution. The Committee can nevertheless indicate some guiding principles and ask the Legal Sub-Committee to make further efforts to reach agreement. In doing so, the latter would no doubt consider all the proposals that have already been made before the Sub-Committee and before this Committee, as well as other suggestions which may emerge in the course of further discussions.

Mr. BULO (Albania)(interpretation from French): The delegation of the People's Republic of Albania has studied closely the reports contained in documents A/AC.105/4 and A/AC.105/5 presented by the Legal Sub-Committee and the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee respectively, as well as all other documents at our disposal concerning the work of these Sub-Committees.

I must state with some regret that the two Sub-Committees have not responded equally well to the very important tasks with which they were entrusted at the time of their creation. The results of their work are quite different. While the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee succeeded in achieving some positive results in the questions contained in its mandate, unfortunately the same cannot be said for the Legal Sub-Committee. The deliberations and exchanges of views which have taken place in that Sub-Committee have made known the position of the participating States; but no advance has been made from there. On the contrary, the work has reached an impasse.

No agreement was achieved on the important questions on the agenda, despite the constructive proposals which had been submitted to the Sub-Committee. The settlement of the legal questions which arise with regard to the utilization and exploration of outer space for peaceful purposes is indispensable and urgent. The question of the establishment of fundamental principles of the legal system applicable to outer space is closely linked to international co-operation in this field and, above all, to the progress of science and of spatial technique. International co-operation in the field of outer space and the legal rules concerning spatial activities and the reports of States in this field are indissoluble. These are two aspects of the same problem. It is not by accident that the two resolutions -- 1472 (XIV) and 1721 (XVI) -- of the General Assembly determining the mandate of our Committee, deal with these aspects together in one and the same text.

In our opinion, what must be the guiding principle of our Committee in the establishment of a legal system applicable to space activities and to reports of States in this field are the fundamental principles enunciated in Part A of resolution 1721 (XVI) of the General Assembly. These principles, which were adopted unanimously by the Members of the United Nations, must constitute the guiding principle of all work on the elaboration of legal instruments applicable to outer space and celestial bodies.

Although it might seem to be somewhat premature to develop at once a complete code of juridical norms applicable to the field of space in view of the insufficient knowledge in this domain, we feel that it is incumbent on our Committee, according to its mandate, to devote its efforts at present to the determination of essential principles which will guide the space activities of States, and this must be done as fully as possible in view of experience up to now in the exploration and utilization of outer space. This will not interfere with the ultimate development and completion of outer space law when new knowledge will have been acquired. This, of course, is characteristic of development in all branches of law.

In the fulfilment of this task account must be taken of the fact that, in the final analysis, it is a question of relations between States, of international relations in the field of outer space, of rules of conduct which the States must observe in their space activities, in order to facilitate and promote the progress of science and cosmic technique in the interests and for the benefit of all humanity.

These are the principles universally recognized in international law and which apply here. Resolution 1721 (XVI) states that: "international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, applies to outer space and celestial bodies". The principles of international law and of the Charter must therefore be the foundation of space law. It is obvious that these principles cannot be applied mechanically to the field of outer space, but they can and must be adapted to it, and this is the task of our Committee. The primary task of our Committee must be to elaborate the fundamental provisions of resolution 1721 (XVI) of the Assembly.

On this particular point the Albanian delegation greatly appreciates the initiative taken by the Soviet Union in introducing a draft declaration on the fundamental principles which must guide the activity of States in the study and utilization of outer space, a draft document which has already been submitted to the Legal Sub-Committee and which has been presented to this meeting of our Committee in document A/AC.105/L.2.

We cannot fail to emphasize that this fortunate initiative on the part of the Soviet Union is the direct result of its peaceful policy, of its sincere desire to create the necessary preliminary conditions for progress in the exploration and exploitation of outer space and to contribute to the fruitful development of international co-operation in this field, taking into account the interests of all States and the welfare of all humanity.

The draft declaration of the Soviet Union outlines the fundamental and essential principles which must guide all States in their space activities. This text, which is based on resolution 1721 (XVI), not only develops and elaborates the basic principles of this resolution, but also completes them.

The principles outlined in this draft declaration -- the utilization and study of outer space for the benefit and in the interest of all humanity, freedom and equality of rights for all States in the exploration and exploitation in this field and the prohibition of extending national sovereignty, respect by States, in their space activities, for the principles of the Charter and the universally recognized principles of international law -- besides all the other provisions of this draft declaration, are not only an urgent necessity in the exploration and utilization of space, but must constitute the embryo or, better still, the chart of future legislation in questions of outer space.

To give a real and practical idea of freedom for exploration and utilization in the field of outer space and to establish the limits of this right in the interest of humanity, the draft resolution indicates what actions are forbidden to States and those which are permitted. For example, prohibited is the use of outer space for propagating war, national or racial hatred or enmity between nations, or for purposes of spying in the territory of foreign States, which is incompatible with the objectives of mankind in its conquest of outer space.

(Mr. Budo, Albania)

Another very important provision is the one which provides that actions which can interfere with the utilization of outer space cannot be allowed without the agreement of the interested parties. It is a well-known fact that despite the protests of many countries, protests supported by the people of the whole world, the United States has conducted very dangerous experiments with satellites and spacecraft, for instance the launching of a belt of copper needles and the high altitude explosions in June. We feel that the declaration proposed by the Soviet Union, which establishes the basic principles which must guide the activity of States in outer space, responds to the needs of the time and will help to solve the problems which will arise in this field. If it is accepted by the United Nations it will assist co-operation in the field of the exploration of outer space. Even those who would like to oppose this principle do not dare to do so openly but do so in devious ways by creating artificial obstacles in the way of its adoption. Such attempts are characteristic of the actions of the representative of the United States in the Legal Sub-Committee in Geneva and in this Committee. Apparently the United States is not interested in the legal aspects of space activities; it does not wish to establish order in the exploration and exploitation of outer space on the foundation of the principles of the Charter and international law, which alone would ensure that these activities would serve only the interests of humanity.

As for the special and very important problem connected with the rescue of astronauts and space ships making emergency landings and the suggestions presented in connexion therewith by the Soviet Union, we think that the Committee should unanimously approve the idea of an international agreement which establishes the rights and obligations of States in this field. The draft agreement proposed by the Soviet Union in document A/AC.105/L.5, which provides the necessary rules of assistance to astronauts and space ships along with other obligations, responds to this need. We cannot understand the attitude of those who would like to come out against the conclusion of such an agreement, which would not only facilitate activities in outer space but which would provide for assistance to the heroes of space and thereby serve a humanitarian purpose.

(Mr. Budo, Albania)

For all these reasons, the delegation of the People's Republic of Albania will support the proposals of the Soviet Union. As we have indicated earlier, we feel that the work of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee has brought positive results and the recommendations of that Committee on a number of questions which were adopted unanimously are an example of the enormous possibilities of international co-operation in activities in outer space. The exchange of information on international co-operation in such programmes as the International Year of the Quiet Sun, in telecommunications, in meteorological satellites and other programmes will be valuable and the Committee's recommendations on this subject are constructive and will help in the development of science and technology.

In the time which has elapsed since the last session of this Committee great successes have been achieved in the conquest of outer space and the most important achievement, which marks an epoch in the history of the penetration of outer space by man, was the group flight on 11 and 12 August 1962 of the two Soviet astronauts. All the peoples of the world hailed the success of the Soviet Union and scientists and specialists in all countries have expressed their admiration for this marvellous achievement, noting among other things the perfection of Soviet technology shown by this group flight in neighbouring orbits.

The peoples of the world are more and more reaching an understanding of the limitless possibilities now open before humanity in the exploration of outer space. This Committee, in view of these achievements, must fulfil its task in regard to the implementation of resolutions 1472 and 1721 and must concentrate its efforts on the establishment of legal rules applicable to outer space. By its very nature outer space touches upon the interests of all States and the United Nations must do its best to prevent a situation in which outer space could be utilized for purposes alien to the interests of humanity at large. Guided by these principles, the delegation of the People's Republic of Albania will support all proposals designed to assist in the utilization of outer space for peaceful purposes.

Mr. DAUGE (France) (interpretation from French): My delegation cannot but entertain certain apprehensions with regard to the trend taken by the debate. We note, as a matter of fact, that the insistence of certain delegations upon the need to hold a general debate has led us into polemics which do not appear to be really necessary at the present time. We would have thought it more useful to avoid such polemics. Whether we like it or not the oratorical exercises which we have heard on the points examined by the Legal Sub-Committee have served to delay the time when this Committee and the General Assembly will be able to take appropriate follow-up actions on the recommendations of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. If this Committee does not react against this tendency, we run the risk of arriving at a dead end and compromising the results so far obtained both in the scientific and technical field and in the legal field. If we were to reach such a point, and I hope that will not be the case, a good number of members here will feel with some reason that they have been the victims of an obstructionist manoeuvre. In that case we should be far from the climate of confidence and co-operation which characterized the beginning of our work.

It is for this reason that my delegation proposes to speak only once in this debate, unless unforeseen developments make it necessary for us to take the floor again.

Our primary concern should be, in my opinion, to reach agreement on the terms of the report which we shall have to present to the General Assembly. Our report should, on the one hand, refer to the positive results achieved during the work of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and the relations established at the General Assembly's request, with the World Meteorological Organization and the International Telecommunications Union. It should also give a balanced picture of our activities in a field in which divergencies of view still obtain. Contrary to the view expressed by the representative of the Soviet Union, we do not think that this Committee itself at its present session is in a position to make a detailed examination of pending problems, and this for practical reasons as well as because, unfortunately, a cold war atmosphere has been introduced which will prevent us from doing anything constructive. Later I shall refer in more details to the method my delegation feels we should adopt in respect of the report of the Legal Sub-Committee.

(Mr. Dauge, France)

With regard to the results obtained by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, my delegation feels that they constitute an encouraging basis for work. It is particularly desirable, in my delegation's view, that these results should be endorsed by the Committee in the same form as they were submitted by the Sub-Committee, and the Working Paper prepared for our consideration and the statements of many of the previous speakers perhaps give the impression that this is indeed the course that the Committee proposes to take.

In studying the recommendations on the international equatorial sounding rocket launching facilities, my delegation noted certain differences between the text of the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee (A/AC.105/5) of 3 July 1962 and the text appearing in the Working Paper prepared by the bureau. I will not dwell on this point for I think that these changes may be viewed as drafting improvements.

At this juncture I should like to explain that the French Government is gratified to note the recommendation about the encouragement of international programmes. We can see only advantages in active bilateral and multilateral co-operation with other members of the international community, and we are prepared in particular to exchange with other countries scientific and technological information about space technology.

I should like to remind the Committee now that last spring France became a member of the European Organization on Space Research and the European Organization for Construction and Launching of Space Craft.

Turning now to the report on the work of the Legal Sub-Committee, my delegation would first of all like to state that it does not share the opinions expressed by certain delegation, in particular the Soviet delegation, on the scope of the results obtained. Reference has been made to an impasse. The United States delegation has been accused of being the only party responsible for that situation, giving the impression thereby that all the other members of the Sub-Committee have practically come to an agreement. But from a reading of the records of the Legal Sub-Committee, as far as we

(Mr. Dauge, France)

can see from reading these papers, such an interpretation of the debates of the Legal Sub-Committee is not in accordance with the truth, and I for my part do not see why we should talk about an impasse inasmuch as everyone is determined to pursue the discussions commenced at Geneva. I am afraid that the Soviet delegation may have some tendency to paint too black a picture in the hope of obtaining from the Assembly what the Committee would not be willing quickly enough to give it.

I confess that I do not fully understand, for example, the reasons why it would be essential to adopt a declaration of principle in the course of forty-eight hours; otherwise international co-operation in the field of outer space would perhaps be compromised. In order to justify this haste we are told, how can anyone talk about international co-operation in outer space if in advance we do not lay down the guiding principles for this co-operation. But that is exactly the point. The basic guiding principles have already been laid down by General Assembly resolution 1721 (XVI), and I am quite willing to concede that it is necessary progressively to spell out these general principles. But to go from that point and demand an immediate situation, there is quite a gap there.

The drafting of guiding principles may be conceived in two different ways. One would be to define the principles in the abstract and to make them a sort of a preface to effecting scientific and technical co-operation, and the other, which is probably less ambitious and seems to me to be more realistic, would be to draw up a list of legal questions the solution of which could serve as a point of departure for the drafting of space law. We hope that the Legal Sub-Committee will shortly examine the possibility of preparing such a list, even an incomplete list. It is only later, in all good logic, after having taken a global view of the problems, that the appropriate sub-committee would be able to tackle the question of principle that should prevail in solving the problems of space. To act in the opposite way would be to condemn oneself never to leave the field of pious wishes or of political propaganda.

(Mr. Dauge, France)

I must speak out against the affirmation that those delegations which do not wholly accept the Soviet delegation's point of view are trying to follow a purely negative attitude. Now whether we are working in Geneva or here, many delegations have already said why they were opposed to the Soviet delegation. They never said that they were hostile to any form of declaration. If the French delegation did not consider it useful here to submit amendments or to offer a counter text, it is for procedural reasons, and I might even say for methodological reasons.

The United Kingdom representative has also pointed out that it is not for those who are in the Committee to work out drafts on space; it is the role of the experts on the Legal Sub-Committee to do this. These experts, informed of our debates, will have sufficient elements available to ascertain what is the real issue involved here and provide the proper solutions.

Another reason which leads me to doubt whether it is essential before the end of our work to adopt the declaration of principle introduced by the Soviet delegation is the following. If the Committee will recall the recommendations of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, it will note that those recommendations, whether they deal with exchange of information, encouragement of international programmes or the launching of sounding rockets in the equatorial region, can be applied without it being necessary in advance to adopt any declaration of principle. What is more, some of these recommendations will begin to be applied only in two or three years and why, in the circumstances, should we complain about an so-called intolerable lag between achievements in the scientific field and the lack of progress in the legal field.

I should like once again to point out that my Government has no fundamental objection to the subsequent examination of a document which would lay down the basic principles of General Assembly resolution 1721 (XVI) and take them up in some other form. In this connexion my delegation has no hesitation in

(Mr. Dauge, France)

willingly recognizing that the drafting of principle 4 of the Soviet delegation seems to us better drawn than the terms of paragraph 1 of General Assembly resolution 1721 (XVI). Having said this, the other principles of the declaration evoke serious objections on the part of my Government and I would like briefly to review them.

First of all the affirmation of principle 9 on assistance to astronauts seems to me useless if we can reach agreement on the way in which the problem of assistance to astronauts and space vehicles should be dealt with. Putting things in the best light, the adoption of this principle should lay down an agreement on a specific issue involved and should not be proposed to our Committee in the form of a pre-condition.

Secondly, with respect to principle 7 on exclusive competence of States, we could consider examining this on the condition that, first of all, we agree on the fact that it expresses only the idea that States should govern the launching of spacecraft from their territory, for example by issuing permits, in order to avoid ill-prepared undertakings. If, on the contrary, principle 7 is designed absolutely to forbid in essence any non-governmental activity, it is quite unacceptable for it would in consequence impose upon all States concepts entertained by some States and thereby would constitute interference in the domestic affairs of States.

Thirdly, as regards principle 6, upon which the Soviet delegation has laid particular stress, this also gives rise to serious difficulties. Despite the arguments of my friend Mr. Morozov, my delegation thinks that the present draft would give third States the possibility of blocking the carrying out of national or international programmes on scientific pretexts, whereas as a matter of fact their designs would be purely political in nature.

Fourthly, principles 5 and 8 relate to war propaganda and the use of satellites for purposes of intelligence information, and this relates to problems that are primarily of interest in the field of disarmament. They bring into question other principles in respect of which the Communist societies and the Western societies are fundamentally divided.

(Mr. Dauge, France)

I might take a single example. Information that one finds in Western Newspapers -- which are sometimes cited here by the Communist delegations -- are considered secret by the countries of the East and their research in this field is considered as espionage.

In these circumstances, what use would it be to hastily adopt a general principle when there is fundamental opposition to the very meaning of the words used?

For all these reasons, my delegation is opposed to the Soviet draft as it stands now. The controversy raised by the declaration of principle, submitted by the Soviet delegation, should not lead us to forget the more concrete problems with respect to which it seems to me agreement might be more easily reached. I should like briefly to outline my Government's position on this point.

With respect to assistance in the case of accidents and the returning of vehicles and personnel, we think that the United States position of a commitment in the form of a resolution of the General Assembly, and the Soviet proposal of a treaty, differ more with respect to the procedure to be followed than they do in substance, although certain articles of the Soviet draft, in particular article 7, should be spelt out, if not amended.

It is certain that the United States proposal undoubtedly would lead to more speedy results. The method recommended by the Soviet Union, on the other hand, would offer the advantage of imposing upon the solutions that we had accepted, the binding force which would be beyond question. I do believe, for my part, that it would be wise to study this question in a realistic way and to admit that it is highly possible that with time the present enthusiasm for the exploits of astronauts will weaken and diminish and that they will not necessarily always be considered as "envoys of humanity", to take up the expression used by the Soviet declaration, but that, depending on the status of relations between the countries concerned, they might perhaps be even considered as malfactors. A General Assembly resolution would be, in such circumstances, legally inoperative.

(Mr. Dauge, France)

Such are the considerations that have led the French representative in the Legal Sub-Committee to propose, as a matter of compromise, that we should now begin to prepare a General Assembly resolution and that at the same time we should prepare a draft treaty. If this procedure were followed, the two drafts could be discussed first by the Legal Sub-Committee, which has a small working group; it could be asked to study these texts and to prepare the final draft. It is difficult to see how a group as large as the Sub-Committee itself could usefully engage in drafting work.

It would be interesting, we feel, to follow the same procedure with regard to the question of responsibility in respect of accidents and the finding of aircraft.

In conclusion, I should like to draw the attention of the Committee to the need for reverting to a more reasonable method of work.

I am convinced that our first task should be to adopt the recommendation of the Technical and Scientific Sub-Committee. We should then seek to work out the manner of starting again on the work of the Legal Sub-Committee by making it plain, if the Committee so deemed, in what conditions the Legal Sub-Committee should tackle the questions put to it. This method it seems to me would be wiser than that of seizing the General Assembly directly with this matter without it being able to rely upon a serious legal study of the issue.

I do feel that if we do not proceed in this latter method, the work of the space Committee in the future will be seriously threatened.

Mr. de CARVALHO SILOS (Brazil): On behalf of the Brazilian delegation, I should like to express its gratification at the results of the work of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, contained in the report of its first session. In our view, the recommendations of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee constitute a very solid starting point for co-operation among States in the exploration of outer space. I should like to point out the special importance of the recommendation relating to the creation in the southern equatorial region of sounding rocket launching facilities under United Nations sponsorship. As has been said, such facilities would make it possible for countries to participate in the exploration of outer space which are at present unable to do so for economic or technological reasons or because of their geographic location. Moreover, such installations would promote closer co-operation in this particular field among Members of this Organization. The principles recommended by the Sub-Committee to guide the use of these facilities offer a sound basis for further discussion.

Two other decisions of special interest to my country were arrived at by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. The first relates to the study of various programmes and suggestions of the International Telecommunications Union regarding the use, on a world-wide basis, of telecommunications by means of satellites. The second decision has to do with the recommendations directed to the Member States and to the Specialized Agencies in regard to measures for improving the universal system for the distribution of meteorological data in preparation for the possibility of obtaining, dissemination and interpretation of such data through satellites. The Brazilian delegation at the last session of the plenary meeting of this Committee gave particular emphasis to this point, having in mind the fact that these scientific data would open up hopes for improved weather forecasting services in tropical zones, an achievement which would have consequences of great importance to the economic development of those areas.

I now turn to the work of the Legal Sub-Committee which, as everyone knows, was very disappointing. The lack of agreement does not mean that the Committee could not look into very important matters such as the declaration on the principles regulating exploration of outer space, assistance to and return of space vehicles and personnel, and liability for space vehicle accidents. As

(Mr. de Carvalho Silos, Brazil)

stated in paragraph 14 of the report on the work of the Legal Sub-Committee, some representatives suggested that the Sub-Committee examine at a later stage other legal problems such as the demarcation between outer space and atmospheric space, jurisdiction and law applied to men in outer space and manned stations on celestial bodies, measures to prevent interference with space projects due to scientific experiments or other space activities, prevention of contamination of or from outer space and celestial bodies, control over the launching and orbits of spacecraft and artificial satellites, United Nations control of radio and television programmes through outer space instrumentalities. Such an array of items proves that if the Sub-Committee were in a position to work properly, it could perhaps have achieved the same results as those obtained by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. Many of the legal problems mentioned are very pressing ones and should be dealt with as soon as possible.

During the discussion which took place in Geneva in the Legal Sub-Committee, the Brazilian delegation stated its views on many of these questions. I shall not take the time of the Committee by repeating the stand taken by our delegation at the Geneva meeting. I would like to say, however, that while favouring in principle the idea of a declaration on the legal principles which should guide the exploration of outer space, the Brazilian delegation believes that the question of the use of outer space for military purposes or the carrying out of nuclear tests in outer space, of the use of satellites for reconnaissance purposes, should not be dealt with in such a declaration at present as they are matters which should be tackled by the Disarmament Committee. Brazil is opposed to such uses of outer space but it would be impossible to avoid the political realities of our time and try to prevent the misuse of outer space outside disarmament agreements in specific fields. In its statement in Geneva, the Brazilian delegation also expressed its opposition to nuclear tests carried out to explore geomagnetic fields.

(Mr. de Carvalho Silos, Brazil)

In previous meetings of this Committee, the Brazilian delegation has raised the question of the control by the United Nations of radio and television broadcasting through outer space by means of satellites. The fascinating break-through achieved in this field recently shows all of us that in the near future many problems in connexion with the dissemination of information through these new media may arise, and, in the view of my delegation, this Committee should go deeper into the study of such a control. In this regard, I wonder whether it would not be practical to set up a small working group whose task would be limited to the study of satellite communications on a world-wide basis.

Having reviewed what happened in both the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and in the Legal Sub-Committee, I now come to my final remark. One of the main purposes the General Assembly had in mind when it set up this Committee was to prevent the expansion to outer space of earthly national rivalries. The Brazilian delegation is fearful that the good omen which presided over the work of our Committee last April has vanished. This is most unfortunate, for without the support, the understanding and the co-operation of the super-Powers -- which are startling the imagination of the whole world by their fabulous exploits and ventures in outer space -- this Committee cannot properly perform its duties and outer space may very well become not the youngest province of mankind, free from the heritage of hatred, but an ancient battlefield of misunderstanding.

Sir James PLIMSOLL (Australia): I propose to speak very briefly this morning, because I do not intend to go into the polemics that have unfortunately marked a lot of our discussion since we assembled here at the beginning of this week. Our debates here got off on the wrong foot, I think, from the beginning. We had an attack by one of the great Powers on the other, and a reply. Both have stated that nuclear tests have been conducted in outer space by the other. Both, of course, have been attacking the motives and the conduct of the other. This deterioration continued until yesterday morning, when I think we had a

(Sir James Plimsoll, Australia)

most unfortunate meeting with vituperation. The representative of Bulgaria went so far as to discuss the Soblen and Rosenberg cases, and I do not think any of us feel that the work of this Committee is going to be advanced by that.

The Australian delegation has firm views on a lot of the aspects of nuclear tests in outer space and on the earth itself. We have always deplored the fact that nuclear tests were resumed, and we hope that a way will be found to end nuclear tests everywhere. But it is a question now of finding a way of doing this, and we are prepared to state our views on this in forums of the United Nations and other international organizations where we may hope that there can be effective discussion -- for example, in the General Assembly or in the kind of discussions that have been taking place in Geneva, where a number of countries, committed and uncommitted, have been doing very useful work in exploring this question and in expressing views. But none of us can believe that any progress can be made by discussions in this Committee this week of the sort that culminated yesterday morning. Fortunately, today the atmosphere is rather more calm and the speeches have been more restrained.

I suggest that what this Committee can most usefully do now in the short time available to us is to get agreement or endorsement of those matters where it is clear from the work of the Sub-Committees and from the discussion here that an area of agreement has been worked out, and that is primarily on the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee.

This report is a valuable one. Australia had the honour of providing the Chairman of that Sub-Committee in the person of Dr. Martyn. Its report demands our immediate attention, partly because it represents an area of agreement among all of us, but also because it opens the way for greater participation by countries of the world other than the two great Powers -- the United States and the Soviet Union -- which have embarked on outer space in a way that none of us could have conceived even a few years ago. But there are many things that other countries can do fitting into the grand design, and the recommendations of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee provide

(Sir James Plimsoll, Australia)

a framework for international effort and an opportunity for the rest of us to play our part. It has made available recommendations on the exchange of information, on the encouragement of international programmes, and on international sounding rocket launching facilities, referred to in paragraph 37, has shown how, in limited fields, perhaps in specific fields, it is possible for us to agree on some basic principles. Many of us here have referred to the fact that basic principles have not yet been agreed upon on outer space as a whole, but there has been some progress on basic principles in certain limited and specific fields. They are contained in paragraph 37 of the report, and they include, incidently, the principle that the sounding rocket launching facilities would be used only for peaceful scientific experiments.

I should like also at this stage to welcome the statement made by the representative of India that the Indian Government has an interest in being the host to a range under United Nations auspices. The Australian Government would welcome a range being established in India if this were brought about under conditions acceptable to the Government of India.

We also have before us the report of the Legal Sub-Committee. That, of course, is an inconclusive document, and none of us can be happy that the Legal Sub-Committee has not been able to reach a wider area of agreement. Its work has not been wasted. Issues have been clarified. Those who participated in its work are, I hope, rather better informed on the views and interests of the other participants. But I myself do not see any prospect, as a result of the current meetings of this Committee, of agreement on any principles emerging. We see, if we examine these principles, that sometimes there has been a temptation for one or other of the Powers to try to word a principle which would inhibit the other one from doing what it wants to do, while allowing itself full scope to do what it itself wants. This is a natural temptation in international negotiations. It is, in fact, part of the whole essence of international negotiation that one asserts one's own interests and attempts to accommodate the interests of others.

(Sir James Plimsoll, Australia)

But there are a lot of very fundamental considerations underlying some of these principles, some of which impair the interests of the Soviet Union and some of which impair the interests of the United States. There is no point in our glibly asserting one or the other principle without recognizing some of these real considerations that lie behind them. What I have just said can be illustrated by the remarks made by many delegations drawn from different groups. A few minutes ago the representative of France made an analysis of some of the principles. Without necessarily associating myself with all that he said on these principles, I think it was useful to have his analysis of the implications of some of them.

Having said that, I should like to return to the theme with which I opened my remarks, and to echo the remarks made by the representative of Brazil. We are not merely on the threshold of outer space; mankind has now crossed the threshold of outer space. It is a great challenge to mankind. All our imaginations are moved by what is happening. We are rather awed by what lies before us. It is wrong and really a betrayal of our responsibility to mankind for us here to assemble in these circumstances and to consider these subjects and in a few days descend into a rather vulgar dog fight as part of the cold war.

I hope that, while recognizing so many of the deep political and military considerations involved in these questions, we shall recognize that this body is not really the forum in which to hammer out those aspects. We can discuss them elsewhere. We started in our first work in this Committee on the basis of trying to reach the maximum possible agreement. I think it is in those areas where agreement is open to us that we should concentrate and give priority. I hope that we shall all approach our task in this Committee on the basis of securing agreement and avoiding, as far as possible, vituperation and all the conflicts associated with the cold war.

Mr. LEWANDOWSKI (Poland): The achievements of the pioneers of cosmonautics give spectacular proof of the gigantic strides of modern science and of man's genius and labour. They also create a magnitude of urgent and important problems relating to the exploration of outer space. My country from the very outset raised its voice for close co-operation of all countries in the peaceful uses of outer space. That is why Poland so readily accepted the honour of participating in the work of this Committee.

There are many examples of international co-operation in the scientific field. One of them -- the International Geophysical Year -- proved to be of great usefulness for the world scientific community and of considerable material value when scientific gains commonly acquired have been translated into everyday life.

The recommendations submitted for our consideration by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee could also mark the beginning of similarly fruitful endeavours in the new area of scientific exploration.

In this connexion, I would like to recall the view I had the honour to present on behalf of my delegation at the spring session of our Committee, namely that we believe that the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee should not duplicate nor replace the work being done by various specialized agencies of the United Nations or by international scientific organizations and associations. Neither does the need arise to establish special bodies for undertaking the task which can be executed by the existing organizations. Instead the Sub-Committee should initiate, guide, if necessary, and mainly co-ordinate the work of these bodies in the specific field of the peaceful use of outer space. It is with this understanding that my delegation is ready to go along with the recommendations submitted by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee.

The General Assembly in its unanimous resolution 1721 (XVI) recommended two principles to all States: first, that international law, including the United Nations Charter, applies to outer space and celestial bodies; and second, that outer space and celestial bodies are free for exploration and use by all States in conformity with international law and are not subject to national appropriation.

During its spring session, this Committee delegated to the Legal Sub-Committee the task of elaborating these two principles into legal instruments to facilitate future peaceful co-operation in the field hitherto inaccessible to man. As is known, the Sub-Committee failed in that task. I might add that

(Mr. Lewandowski, Poland)

I am sure that Mr. Lachs, the representative of Poland, who had the honour of presiding over the meetings of that Sub-Committee, regretted it even more than his Australian colleague, the Chairman of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, who was satisfied with the progress of his Sub-Committee.

My delegation believes that progress could have been achieved during the Geneva meetings had it not been for the regrettable intransigence of the United States delegation and its refusal to approach the problem in a realistic manner. There were some hopes that this attitude could be changed during the present session of this Committee.

Unfortunately, all the arguments expressed in Geneva by the United States representatives and those who supported them are being repeated here and thus we have to enter again the very ground which it would seem was more than sufficiently covered during the deliberations of the Legal Sub-Committee.

The representatives of the Western countries who spoke before me expressed the opinion that it takes time to build the new system of law and that one has to proceed slowly and cautiously in such a venture. My delegation also considers it premature to expect at present the drawing up of a comprehensive code of space law, since our knowledge and experience of outer space is still insufficient. A **very** detailed regulation of space law, similar to existing sets of rules and conventions in the other branches of international law, has to wait for a more detailed knowledge of conditions prevailing in outer space. But such was not the task of the Legal Sub-Committee nor, I submit, did this Committee aspire to do this during the present session.

It is sufficient to go through the records of those pleasant and, I am sure everybody will agree, fruitful meetings we held in this chamber last spring in order to find out that by consensus of all the Legal Sub-Committee was not to aim at the immediate elaboration of a systematic code but was to take up specific questions which were already of practical importance or might become so in the near future.

A draft declaration presented by the Soviet Union in Geneva and introduced during this session, in our opinion, meets this necessity and proposes the principles which could guide future efforts to work out more precise regulations.

(Mr. Lewandowski, Poland)

It has been suggested here that the draft declaration touches upon political matters, sometimes of a controversial nature, and hence is beyond our terms of reference. But if views on some matters differ, it is the task of this Committee to reconcile them. Since relations between States are essentially political, it is hardly possible to escape that reality in legal discussions. In the progressive development of international law it is necessary, while speaking of the relations to be covered by legal rules, to touch repeatedly upon matters which at that stage fall only within the domain of politics.

The problem remains whether this Committee should agree, at least on questions of immediate political importance, on some legally binding rules -- and I would stress the words "legally binding" -- taking into account the interests of all States, or whether all questions of policy in outer space should be left to the discretion of individual States regardless of the possible legitimate interests of others -- a situation fraught with the risk of serious conflict. Supporting the Soviet draft declaration of principles, my delegation favours the first alternative. If we all accept that the task of the Committee is to establish commonly acceptable standards of conduct, then no delegation could have any difficulty in accepting the offer of the representative of the Soviet Union to negotiate the draft declaration, as he put it yesterday, in a step-by-step manner.

The representative of the United States should not be surprised, however, if his repeated rejection of that offer evokes suspicion and fear lest his Government should refuse to agree on measures which by mutual consent could safeguard the peaceful use of outer space. Moreover, there is ground to believe that the United States refusal to negotiate the declaration of basic standards of conduct in the peaceful exploration of the cosmos might be dictated not by diplomatic tactics but by narrow and self-defeating military goals. These goals led to the United States Air Force effort to spread tiny copper wires in outer space. These goals led to the high-altitude explosion conducted by the United States on 9 July, the harmful results of which may last for many years and which has already caused considerable damage. The announced intention of the United States to continue these tests is even more alarming. Nature itself created so many dangers for astronauts in their courageous space voyages that the multiplication of these dangers by men evokes the strongest protests -- and many have protested against such experiments, among them the world community of scientists.

I submit that it is a dangerous situation indeed in which the ambitions of generals prevail over the opinions of professors and the desire for conquest in order to dominate overpowers man's urge to explore in order to know.

My delegation would like to believe that the present attitude of the United States towards the safeguarding of the peaceful uses of outer space will soon be changed. I should like to stress the word "soon", for the pace of technical progress is frightfully quick and the necessity of agreement on the prevention of irrevocable damage in space surrounding us is beyond question. To make such an agreement, to facilitate co-operation and the peaceful exploration of the cosmos, would enhance the interests of all, including the United States.

In conclusion, permit me to recall yesterday's appeal by Ambassador Morozov, in which he asked his adversary not to project into outer space the troubles which we encounter on this planet. We wholeheartedly join in that appeal.

Mr. DASHTSEREN (Mongolia)(interpretation from Russian): The great and lofty task of implementing the objectives of General Assembly resolution 1721 (XVI) is now placed before the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. For this purpose, we created in the spring of this year a Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and a Legal Sub-Committee for the study of the concrete issues arising from the exploration of outer space. At this stage of the work of the Committee, our task consists of establishing a balance of the work of the Sub-Committees in Geneva and of preparing the report of the Committee for presentation to the seventeenth session of the General Assembly.

The questions studied by the two Sub-Committees are closely related. Practical measures in the technical field are impossible without the establishment of the legal foundations for outer space. We feel that the Committee should present a single report to the seventeenth session. Therefore, our delegation feels that the Committee should in the first place consider the problem of the legal system for outer space, the question not resolved by the Sub-Committee. In the view of the majority of representatives, this is a question on which there are disagreements. Therefore, our delegation has no objection to additional meetings, even night meetings.

Those who have studied the report of the Legal Sub-Committee can only be disappointed by its results. The successful penetration of space demands the immediate settlement of the legal issues which arise in connexion with human activity in outer space.

In this connexion, we should emphasize the recent brilliant successes of the Soviet Union in the field of the penetration of outer space, successes which were greeted by the whole world a month ago. The lengthy group flight of the Soviet cosmonauts was a great achievement of technology and science and marks an important step by humanity in the penetration of space. It opens up enormous perspectives and possibilities of further achievement. There is no doubt that in the future such flights will become the normal thing and, if norms are not elaborated to regulate such flights, there may be very dangerous consequences.

Resolution 1721 of the General Assembly requested the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to study the legal issues which might arise in connexion with the exploration and use of outer space, and to present a report

(Mr. Dashtseren, Mongolia)

thereon. My delegation regretfully notes that, at the first session of the Legal Sub-Committee, no agreement was achieved on the issues before the Sub-Committee, and among them were issues of such actuality that one cannot deny them. At the present time, when man is penetrating more and more deeply into outer space, when activity in outer space is developing every day, the elaboration of common principles for the guidance of all States in their activity in outer space plays a great role. The rejection by the United States delegation of the constructive proposals of the Soviet Union on this issue, which are presented in the draft declaration, surprised our delegation in Geneva. I personally witnessed this painful and regrettable occurrence. The adoption of the Soviet declaration would create a basis for the elaboration by the Legal Sub-Committee of solutions of the issues before it. In the view of my delegation, in order to regulate legal questions which arise in connexion with the exploration of outer space, one has to begin precisely from these general principles.

(Mr. Dashtseren, Mongolia)

On the basis of general principles expressed in legal terms it will be easier to solve concrete issues connected with the exploration and uses of outer space. That is why our delegation, in the Legal Sub-Committee, supported the proposal of the Soviet Union concerning the elaboration of a declaration of principles governing the activities of States in the exploration and use of outer space.

Once again, my delegation declares that it supports fully the draft declaration introduced by the Soviet delegation, and we also support the draft international agreement on the rescue of astronauts making emergency landings.

The report of the Scientific and Technical Committee and the recommendations therein are of great interest. Many of the issues touched upon in that report are contemporary ones the solution of which is demanded by the development of our society and by the scientific and technical progress in the field of the exploration of outer space. Thus it may be said that the first step has been taken by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. That Committee, at its first meeting, discussed the technical and scientific aspects of international co-operation in this field and elaborated recommendations about the exchange of information and encouragement of international programmes in certain areas, especially in the International Year of the Quiet Sun and the World Magnetic Survey, and studied the possibility of creating international bases for sounding rocket programmes. All this is a great service to the development of technical and scientific collaboration, especially for the benefit of those States which are still to undertake activity in outer space. The International Year of the Quiet Sun and the World Magnetic Survey are programmes which are now foreseen by Cospar and are an elaboration of the programme of the Geophysical Year. As representatives are aware, the Geophysical Year has supplied us with very important scientific information, the result of an honest and fruitful international co-operation.

During the International Geophysical Year the scientific and research institutions of our Republic participated in these activities. Our scientific bodies are now ready to participate also in the programme of the International Year of the Quiet Sun to the best of its capabilities.

(Mr. Dashtseren, Mongolia)

I should like to emphasize here the practical significance which we attach to the exploration of outer space with regard to the development of agriculture. In this connexion a series of questions which are touched upon in the report of the World Meteorological Organization are of great interest and importance. The details and timely data on the weather solved many problems concerning agriculture. Thus we are deeply interested in the further developments and improvement of this meteorological service. The creation of international meteorological systems, with the utilization of satellites, will open up new vistas. Our delegation welcomes the efforts of various international organizations in this field and also welcomes the creation of meteorological regional centres. Such measures will, to a great extent, develop knowledge of outer space and its penetration by other States.

The first session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, which has elaborated a common endeavour in the study of outer space, has shown the importance of international co-operation in this field. The recommendations made by the Sub-Committee deserve careful study and approval on the part of this Committee. The measures outlined in the report will contribute to the development of the study and penetration of outer space.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of the Soviet Union, who wishes to exercise his right of reply.

Mr. BLAGONRAVOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I wish to exercise my right of reply to answer certain remarks which have been made with regard to the Soviet delegation.

The representative of France accused the Soviet delegation of imposing upon the Committee polemics which were unnecessary in order to interfere with the adoption of constructive decisions on the report of the sub-committee. I must decisively reject such an accusation. On the contrary, the Soviet delegation takes as its point of departure the fact that when there is no **regulation** of a series of fundamental legal issues, a heavy brake is applied to the peaceful

(Mr. Blagonravov, USSR)

co-operation of States in the penetration of outer space. Therefore, the Soviet delegation has expressed, and continues to express, its wish that these issues should be solved as soon as possible in order that real progress in this area may be achieved -- achieved not only in words, but in deeds. Even the finest words are after all only words. Thus, when it is proposed merely to approve the report of the Legal Sub-Committee, inexperienced as I am in the diplomatic world, I cannot understand how a report can be approved which does not contain a single positive proposal in substance. This explains our insistent desire to draw the attention of the Committee to various fundamental legal issues. I repeat, without a solution of these issues, we can only proceed very slowly in our co-operation.

(Mr. Blagonravov, USSR)

I must say one thing in relation to the criticism of some of the points in the Soviet proposed declaration. The whole of that declaration is, after all, directed towards the developments of the provisions laid down in General Assembly resolution 1721, for which the French delegation, among others, voted. I feel therefore that the criticism we heard here was based on artificially created positions, for instance in regard to paragraph 6. We are told that that paragraph cannot be accepted because it would create difficulty, but after all the General Assembly gave this Committee the task of elaborating concrete measures of assistance in the field of outer space and our first duty should be to remove the obstacles which may stand in the way of performing this lofty task. I am grateful to the representative of France for agreeing at least to paragraph 4, against which he could find no argument. However, the Soviet Union delegation reserves its right to return to an analysis of these criticisms after having seen the full text of the statements that had been made.

The CHAIRMAN: Only two speakers remain on the list for the General debate and they have asked to speak tomorrow. According to the established practice in the Committees of the United Nations this Committee can resume the general debate tomorrow, and, unless I hear any objections, we shall now turn to the fourth item of our agenda. I hear no objections, and we shall so proceed.

CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT OF THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL SUB-COMMITTEE ON THE WORK OF ITS FIRST SESSION (A/AC.105/5), OF THE REPORTS PREPARED BY THE WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION (E/3662) AND THE INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION (E/3645) IN RESPONSE TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 1721 (XVI), AND OF THE RESOLUTION CONCERNING INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE ADOPTED BY THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ON 2 AUGUST 1962 AT ITS THIRTY-FOURTH SESSION.

Mr. ATTOLICO (Italy): I am grateful for this opportunity of presenting the views of my delegation on the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and on the reports of the World Meteorological Organization and the International Telecommunications Union.

(Mr. Attolico, Italy)

I shall begin by presenting our views on the ITU report. When our Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee discussed the ITU report in Geneva it took the view that no detailed and deep analysis of this document could be made by it since the report reflected the findings of the most qualified experts in that specific field. If this is the case, I feel even less competent to delve into such complex problems as the ITU has outlined. There are, however, a few points of a general nature with regard to this document to which I should like to call the attention of the Committee.

In the first place, General Assembly resolution 1721 (XVI) has had the beneficial effect, among others, of bringing about the decision to convene in October next year the Extraordinary Radio Administrative Conference of the ITU to decide on the choice of radio frequencies for space telecommunications, a most important aspect to be approached in order to attain concrete progress in this field. Secondly, according to the ITU report, and I quote:

"the immediate task in the technical co-operation field would seem to be the survey of the needs and the developments of domestic facilities of member countries."

Thirdly, the ITU report states:

"until the results of some space research programmes are available, the extent to which space radio-communications services and other radio-communications services may share frequencies without harmful interference cannot be assessed."

Fourthly, the ITU report points out that additional research experience and the results of studies by specialized organizations relating to space radio-communications are essential before it will be feasible for the ITU to take decisions on firm frequency allocations for space telecommunications purposes.

Summarizing our point of view on the contents of this report, especially in the light of the statements, I would say that it is difficult to foresee today the future ways and means of international co-operation in the field of space radio-telecommunications since the full impact of progress in space technology is some years away. A major effort should still be concentrated on research activities in the endeavour to develop the best possible global space network for space communications.

(Mr. Attolico, Italy)

An equally interesting report has been produced by the World Meteorological Organization, which concludes with an acknowledgement of the great assistance rendered to the agency by the United States and the Soviet Union, which have provided the services of high level scientists whose knowledge and co-operation have been instrumental in achieving such high technical standards as are reflected in the report. This in itself constitutes a most hopeful omen for further profitable developments in this field.

I agree with the suggestion that the report and its contemplated plan of action be kept under review, since as WMO itself states:

"with the still unforeseeable technological developments in satellite operation, any report and plan drawn up now may well require amendments within a short time."

In substance, my delegation feels that the technical and operational recommendations contained in the report, as well as the concepts envisaged in the World Weather Watch and the whole WMO plan of action for the next ten years -- naturally with the understanding that it will be kept up to date with technological progress in satellite meteorology -- constitutes steps in the right direction.

Now I wish to state in brief the position of my Government with respect to the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee after its meetings in Geneva. Indeed, it is our opinion that the Sub-Committee has covered a lot of ground and has drafted most constructive recommendations which we fully support. In this respect I should like to inform the Committee that Italian agencies, scientists and technicians are already active in several fields which the Sub-Committee has singled out as most appropriate for effective international co-operation.

With regard to the programme of the International Year of the Quiet Sun, the Italian Commission for Space Research is preparing scientific projects in the framework of the International Geophysical Solar Year and is looking forward to co-operating fully with COSPAR and the Committee for the International Year of the Quiet Sun in this area.

Italian physicists of several agencies are preparing to give their contribution to the programmes of the World Magnetic Survey.

(Mr. Attolico, Italy)

Equally I feel that some kind of initiative by UNESCO for the training of space scientists and technicians in space centres and institutions of other countries would be well received in Italy.

A point of special importance among the Sub-Committee's recommendations is, in our view, the programme for the creation of international equatorial launching facilities sponsored by the United Nations. In this field also Italy is most willing and eager to afford its contribution. The Committee is aware, and our Chairman mentioned it in his opening statement, of our offer to make available to all countries interested in peaceful scientific activities the use of a mobile launching platform in the framework of the International Year of the Quiet Sun or other scientific activities. I refer here to the San Marco project, which is well under way and has aroused a deep interest in the world's scientific community.

The unanimous acceptance of the idea of having international ranges under United Nations supervision, where scientists and technicians of many nations can experiment together and carry on joint space activities is, in our opinion, the most encouraging step towards an effective international co-operation for the peaceful uses of outer space.

These three technical reports are, I believe, both realistic and constructive. They are realistic because they state very clearly that there are many areas in which as yet we know too little to plan any kind of co-operation, and constructive because they point out what we can do now to prepare for further progress tomorrow. The Italian delegation is in full agreement with this approach.

These are my observations with regard to the technical and scientific aspects of international co-operation for the peaceful exploration and utilization of outer space. My delegation will have some further brief comments relating to the legal aspects of this co-operation.

The CHAIRMAN: I have been informed by the Secretariat that it is possible to hold a night meeting at 8.30. I would like to consult the Committee now as to whether it would be prepared to hold a night meeting. The subject of the discussion would be item 4 of the agenda, including the working paper. Up to now only one speaker is inscribed on the list with regard to this subject. Furthermore, I would like to inform the Committee that it may also be possible to arrange a meeting for Saturday morning. A decision on this will be submitted to the Committee during the course of tomorrow morning's meeting.

May I now consult the Committee as to whether it is agreeable to hold a night meeting. Tomorrow morning we will have a continuation of the general debate, lasting only half an hour, with one right of reply. Does any member wish to make a suggestion?

Mr. LEWANDOWSKI (Poland): I just have a question, Mr. Chairman. I heard you mention this morning that we might have two meetings tomorrow. Is it still feasible and possible?

The CHAIRMAN: The two meetings for tomorrow are assured. May I now invite members to inscribe their name on the list of speakers with respect to item 4 for an eventual meeting tonight because we cannot hold a night meeting with only one speaker.

Mr. TREMBLAY (Canada): I should like to inscribe the name of my delegation for tonight's meeting.

The CHAIRMAN: If I hear no objection, and with the understanding that the night meeting can only last two hours, I will take it that the Committee is prepared to hold a night meeting at 8.30 this evening.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.