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COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE
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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 14 September 1967, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. WALDHEIM

(Austria)

Report of the Committee to the General Assembly (continued)

- (a) Report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee (A/AC.105/39)
- (b) Report of the Legal Sub-Committee (A/AC.105/37)
- (c) Report of the Working Group on Navigation Services Satellite Systems (A/AC.105/38)

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REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (continued)

- (a) REPORT OF THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL SUB-COMMITTEE (A/AC.105/39)
- (b) REPORT OF THE LEGAL SUB-COMMITTEE (A/AC.105/37)
- (c) REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON NAVIGATION SERVICES SATELLITE SYSTEMS (A/AC.105/38)

The CHAIRMAN: We shall now continue with the general debate on this item. I call on the representative of the United Arab Republic.

Mr. HILMY II (United Arab Republic): Before giving my comments, I should like to associate myself with you, Mr. Chairman, and the previous speakers of yesterday in welcoming Ambassador Bérard of France to our Committee. I am sure we shall all benefit from his vast experience.

The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space is meeting to adopt its annual report to the General Assembly. That report represents the Committee's achievements for a whole year. It is then an appropriate moment for us here to scrutinize its contents in order to find out whether the mandate set out by the General Assembly resolutions has been scrupulously carried out.

My delegation is truly grateful for the important and constructive efforts which were undertaken by the two Sub-Committees under their distinguished and able Chairmen. My delegation is happy to state its approval for the adoption of the report. However, we expected the outcome of this year's deliberation to be more conducive to the promotion of international co-operation in outer space. We aspired to a more convincing balance sheet.

As a member of a subsidiary body of the General Assembly, my delegation deems it fit to make the following remarks.

First, when adopting the Committee's report last year, the General Assembly reiterated, in operative paragraph 5 of resolution 2223 (XXI),

(Mr. Hilmy II, United Arab Republic)

"... its request, contained in section III, paragraph 1, of resolution 2130 (XX), to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to continue, in co-operation with the Secretary-General and making use of the available resources of the Secretariat and in consultation with the specialized agencies and in co-operation with the Committee on Space Research, the preparation and consideration of suggestions for programmes of education and training of specialists in the peaceful uses of outer space to assist the developing countries;"

We regret to say that, for the second time, our Committee has failed to carry out the Assembly's recommendation. The Secretariat prepared an international directory of facilities for education and training. We do appreciate the production of this valuable document. Yet, it must be pointed out that preparing this document falls short of what was required by the Assembly's recommendation. The General Assembly twice pronounced itself in unambiguous terms in asking for suggestions for training programmes. How can this consistent shortcoming be explained? Are we to deduce that the Committee can disregard two specific recommendations by the General Assembly? This matter is of considerable importance to my delegation and, I am sure, to all the developing nations.

(Mr. Hilmy II. United Arab Republic)

Second, the General Assembly, in paragraph 4 (b) of resolution 2222 (XXI), requested the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to begin the study of questions relative to the definition of outer space and the utilization of outer space and celestial bodies, including the various implications of space communications. This request was addressed to the parent Committee and not to one of its Sub-Committees. Hence, to our understanding, both Sub-Committees are duty bound to begin this study simultaneously.

The Legal Sub-Committee addressed a questionnaire to the Scientific Sub-Committee asking for guidelines to define outer space. The Scientific Sub-Committee discussed the matter, but confined itself to the definition of outer space, though the General Assembly resolution included the utilization of outer space and the various implications of space communications.

Third, the delegation of Iran submitted two proposals which were fully supported by Austria and the United Arab Republic. Both proposals had in view the encouragement and the advancement of international co-operation in outer space. It is also appropriate to state that it was made clear from the outset that we did not propose a specialized agency. The entire purpose of the proposal was to initiate a study to ascertain the desirability and feasibility of the international machinery that is required for the peaceful exploration and utilization of outer space. Therefore, the essence of the proposal was to examine the present organizational arrangements for international co-operation in the area of peaceful uses, plus the evaluation of the effectiveness of such arrangements. Based on such evaluation, we may be able to consider the desirability and feasibility of new organizational arrangements.

My delegation is somewhat surprised to learn that such a constructive initiative has not been endorsed by the Committee.

Fourth, the International Conference which is scheduled to convene next year in Vienna is of particular interest to all the non-space countries and to the international scientific community. My delegation is hopeful that all the necessary preparation will be undertaken without delay. We cherish a sincere hope that the space Powers will spare no effort towards the success of this Conference.

(Mr. Hilmy II. United Arab Republic)

As I mentioned a few moments ago, my delegation approves the Committee's report and will in due time submit to the General Assembly concrete proposals on the implementation of the previous points.

In conclusion, we do appreciate the sincere efforts made by you, Mr. Chairman, and by both Mr. Martyn and Mr. Wyzner in carrying out the Committee's mandate in such an admirable and efficient manner.

Mr. ASTROM (Sweden) (interpretation from French): Before beginning my statement, which will be brief, may I say how happy the Swedish delegation is at seeing in the United Nations the new Permanent Representative of France. He is new, but he has a rich experience of the workings of our Organization. We welcome him again in the most warm fashion, and I should like to ask his charming representative here to be kind enough to transmit these words to him.

(continued in English)

May I express the appreciation of the Swedish delegation for the comprehensive and lucid statements that you, Mr. Chairman, and the Chairmen of the two Sub-Committees made to us yesterday on the activities of the Outer Space Committee during the past year. They form an excellent basis and a valuable starting point for our discussions during this session.

The year 1967 marks the conclusion of the first decade of the space age. It seems to us fitting to use this session of the Committee on Outer Space to pay tribute, with admiration and gratitude, to the invaluable contributions that the leading space Powers, in particular the Soviet Union and the United States, have made towards widening the horizons of man by their exploits in outer space. The advance of technical and scientific knowledge during this period truly staggers the imagination. It bears hopeful witness to the vitality and the ingenuity of the human spirit.

Although these spectacular results have been achieved largely through the concentrated efforts of only two countries, it is proper to note that the basic research, which is a prerequisite of these results, has to a large extent been a common enterprise of scientists and technicians in many countries.

(Mr. Astrom, Sweden)

I think we can be allowed to say that this Committee, faced with the difficult task of keeping pace with the rapid technical and scientific progress, can look back with some satisfaction on its work up till now and can look forward with some confidence to its work in the future. The greatest achievement so far is, of course, the Space Treaty of last year, which constitutes our first successful attempt to bring outer space within the framework of international law. As a member of this Committee my delegation cannot refrain from noting with regret that the Treaty so successfully brought about has not yet been ratified by the three depository Powers, which is the necessary requirement for its entry into force. I wish to state in this connexion that Sweden is prepared to ratify the Treaty as soon as those three Powers have done so, and thereby give further evidence of our desire to secure the pacification of outer space.

In the view of my delegation, the Treaty is not complete. As we had occasion to state in the First Committee's debates on the Treaty last year, work remains to be done with a view to achieving complete demilitarization of outer space. We also feel that continued and sustained efforts should be made towards reaching an agreement on a definition of the limit of outer space.

Perhaps it is natural that after last year's successful work in this Committee there should have followed a year of comparatively minor achievements. However, my delegation, and I presume many others, had entertained some hope that the conclusion of the Space Treaty would be an incitement to stronger efforts at reaching solutions on those two issues which have for some years now been on the agenda of the Legal Sub-Committee, namely, the question of liability for damage and the question of assistance to and the return of astronauts.

(Mr. Astrom, Sweden)

We note that although some progress was made on these issues at the last session of the Sub-Committee, it was not as substantial as might have been wished. It is still our hope that the momentum created by last year's Treaty will not have been lost and that renewed and sincere efforts will be made to reach agreements on those two questions.

I want to say also that the United Nations at some stage will have to come to grips with the problems connected with the development of mass communications satellites. In particular, this will be the case when systems are created and made operative, perhaps in a few years, involving fixed satellites that can transmit television and radio programmes directly to individual receivers on the ground. The Government of India has already presented an interesting study of some experiments undertaken in India, and various aspects of the problem have been under study by other Governments as well as by some specialized agencies. It is evident that the development and use of this type of satellite will have tremendous potentialities for good and for evil, for the enlightenment of man and for the corruption of man. Some international understanding and some international regulation will clearly be called for, and therefore a detailed study of the problem will have to be made at some time. We have only wanted now to point to this problem without wishing to formulate any proposals.

Finally, I should like to register the satisfaction of the Swedish authorities at the work done by the Working Group on a navigation services satellite system at its initial meeting in July. We consider a navigation services satellite system to be of great importance and of potential far-reaching benefit. We feel that the conclusions arrived at by the Working Group will provide a suitable basis for further studies of the matter.

Mr. DIACONESCU (Romania) (interpretation from French): It is with great pleasure that I associate myself with the feelings expressed in the words of welcome extended by the representatives who have spoken before me to the representative of France, Mr. Bérard, on the occasion of his return to the United Nations.

Each new report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to the General Assembly marks new achievements in the exploration and use of outer space is the benefit of the progress and civilization of mankind. The delegation of Romania wishes to express its satisfaction at the progress achieved in space research in the period since the last report of this Committee was drawn up.

The most noticeable result and perhaps the most important activity in scientific and technical research in the field of space has been the furnishing of obvious proof of the special significance which the peaceful use of outer space has for all mankind. Today artificial satellite systems are already being used for meteorology, telecommunications and navigation.

The increase in the number of States directly engaged in space research constitutes a potentially important factor in achievements in this relatively new area of human activity. More than in any other sector, placing outer space at the service of mankind requires active co-operation on an international scale. We note with satisfaction that space activities are proceeding on an increasingly wider scale on the basis of bilateral and multilateral co-operation.

We also note with great pleasure the growing interest taken in space activities by the different international organizations and specialized agencies, especially by the Committee for Space Research (COSPAR), the International Telecommunication Union, the World Meteorological Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization and the Consultative Inter-governmental Organization for Maritime Navigation.

In our opinion, the international co-operation sponsored by the United Nations to establish and maintain permanently in operation the international installation for the launching of sounding rockets at Thumba, in India, is one of the first steps towards a broader co-operation in the peaceful use of outer space.

(Mr. Diaconescu, Romania)

In the course of the past year, the efforts to expand activities in the exploration and peaceful use of outer space have been accompanied by a new concern to create and consolidate a legal basis on which those activities should be founded. After the signature last January of the Treaty on the principles governing activities by States in the exploration and use of outer space, including the moon and other celestial bodies, the Legal Sub-Committee continued discussions on the draft agreements before it: the draft agreements on liability for damages caused by objects launched in outer space and the draft agreement on assistance to and return of astronauts and space vehicles.

At the same time, the reports of the two Sub-Committees -- the Legal Sub-Committee and Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee -- draw attention to the fact that a start has been made in considering questions concerning the definition of outer space. While we appreciate the inherent difficulties which must be overcome to arrive at an acceptable scientific definition -- difficulties due to the absence of a physical frontier between atmospheric space and outer space, as well as to the fact that the term "outer space" came into current usage before it received a scientific definition -- Romania would like to stress the usefulness of the start which has been made in these debates and to state that we are prepared to participate with great interest in the study of this question which concerns, to the greatest degree, relations among States and respect for their sovereignty.

As an advocate of broad co-operation among States on the basis of the principles of national sovereignty and independence, of equal rights, of non-intervention in internal affairs and of mutual benefit, Romania seeks to make its contribution, to the best of its ability, to the efforts of the international community devoted to the exploration of outer space and its use in the interest of all mankind.

The main concern of my country with respect to space research and the collaboration that it has developed in this regard with other countries have been drawn to the attention of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and may be found set forth in document A/AC.105/L.36: Review of national and co-operative international space activities.

(Mr. Diaconescu, Romania)

It may be hoped that the growing interest of States in space activities will result during the next stage, in an increase in international co-operation in this field. To promote the development of this co-operation, it appears to us important for our Committee to consider now the need for a broader examination of the new aspects of international collaboration on the basis of the present knowledge of space technology.

In this connexion, attention might be drawn to the advantages which would result from the creation, in the future, of systems of artificial satellites for telecommunications, navigation, meteorology, or of other single systems which could be used throughout the world.

(Mr. Diaconescu, Romania)

Similarly, consideration might be given to the question of the training and teaching of specialists. Consideration might be given to the possibility of including courses in space research in university curricula. Consideration might be given to the possibility of setting up summer courses and seminars at university level of an international nature, subsidized, if necessary, partially by a special fund which would also make it possible to provide scholarships. To this might be added a careful system of scholarships for advanced study which might include also studies of launching installations. In this way all States would be able, even those which do not at present possess the facilities for space research, to make their contribution to the progress of science in this field.

As regards the exchange of information, the most useful work done by the Committee in the preparation and the updating of the bibliography might be supplemented by recommendations concerning, for example, the publication of periodicals of a specialized nature at the international level. Here there might be published the main results of scientific and technological research in the field of space. Consideration might also be given to the periodic convening of international conferences on the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

The new strides accomplished in the field of present-day space, which are mentioned in the reports of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee (A/AC.109/39), of the Legal Sub-Committee (A/AC.105/37) and of the Working Group on Navigation Services Satellite Systems (A/AC.105/38) which are the subject of our discussions, justify our hope that we shall witness in the coming years an intensification of the activities devoted to the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space, as well as an extension of international co-operation in this field. An important milestone in this direction would be, we are confident, the International Conference on the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space which will be held in Vienna in August 1968. My delegation wishes every success to that Conference.

Mr. HOPE (United Kingdom): This Committee has before it three reports. Those reports touch on many varied matters. And on those subjects we have had the great benefit of an introduction by you, Mr. Chairman, and by the Chairmen of the Sub-Committees, including my friend, Mr. Wyzner, whom I take this opportunity to welcome here in his new capacity.

May I at this stage also pay tribute and indeed offer a welcome to Ambassador Bérard of France. I have for many years deeply admired both his great skill as a diplomat and his eloquent oratory. The Ambassador will be returning here with a warm welcome from all of us.

My delegation has the privilege to be represented in all the bodies whose reports are before us, and the views of the United Kingdom were made clear in the course of those discussions. I do not think, therefore, that it is either necessary or justified, in view of the short time available to the Committee and the nearness of the General Assembly, to attempt to give a general survey of this work or to recapitulate in any detail my Government's views. I would prefer rather to pick out certain salient points which seem to me to merit comment, and in particular to refer to certain remarks which have been made by delegations earlier in this debate.

Earlier this year the Outer Space Treaty was first opened for signature after adoption during the twenty-first session of the General Assembly. It has by now been signed by a large number of States. But this Treaty, however important, is necessarily limited to setting out in general terms certain particular principles. It is in the working out of those principles that difficulties will arise. But because the more detailed examination of those questions brings to light complications, it is all the more necessary that this Committee and its Sub-Committees should work resolutely towards their solution. In this my delegation, I promise you, will endeavour to play its part.

The Legal Sub-Committee met in Geneva from 19 June to 14 July, with three substantive items on its agenda. On the first subject, namely, the draft agreement on Liability for Damage Caused by the Launching of Bodies into Outer Space, the Sub-Committee made some limited measure of progress in recent agreements on one text, thanks to the work of the Canadian delegation, and agreement on a number of other points.

My delegation is of course particularly interested to see that agreement was reached on the reference of disputed questions to an arbitral commission since, in matters of this kind, the determination of relevant facts and the assessment of damage is clearly especially important.

But we regret that our viewpoint on the position of international organizations is still apparently opposed by some delegations. Many States choose to -- and many States can only -- conduct and participate fully in outer space activities within the framework of international organizations, and this state of affairs should be fully recognized in the legal work of this Committee.

For the rest, I need not enter into details. But it is our hope that further discussion on this important subject can broaden the degree of consensus reached and lead to a full text for agreement. This agreement would be of importance to all Members of the United Nations since the possibility of such damage is one which must be in all our minds. If, most unfortunately, damage should be caused to another country by an accident, it is in the interests of all nations that adequate and complete arrangements should be established for the determination of liability and assessment of compensation.

The second item on the agenda of the Legal Sub-Committee was entitled "Draft Agreement on Assistance to and Return of Astronauts and Space Vehicles". On this topic my delegation regretted that the course of debate brought into issue the scope of this agreement. The topic of Return is linked with that of Assistance not only in the agenda of the Committee but also in article V of the Outer Space Treaty. Obviously, in a Committee which proceeds by consensus, it is important that the views of all delegations, where they have views which are relevant to the subject matter of the agenda and which they wish to defend in debate, should be brought before the competent organ. The Sub-Committee was ultimately able to discuss all aspects of the field falling within its terms of reference, though participation in all aspects was not equal. My delegation hopes that further discussion of this subject will enable an agreement to be concluded which is both broad and useful and which covers the indicated field; the progress so far made on the formulation of two articles only, which indeed do not go beyond the common ground apparent from earlier contributions during previous meetings of the Sub-Committee, is, I fear, a starting point which is not entirely promising.

My delegation is nevertheless confident that further consideration will lead to a working out of the principle enshrined as a whole in article V of the Outer Space Treaty.

On the third subject discussed, the definition of outer space, the Sub-Committee was able to begin its work. The formulation of a questionnaire for the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, intended to elicit the scientific facts which might assist the Legal Sub-Committee in its further consideration of this subject, was a useful step.

This topic, the definition of outer space, makes a convenient bridge by which I may turn to the work of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, which met in New York from 28 August to 6 September. Here again the agenda before the Sub-Committee was varied and detailed. It is a pity that the time of the meeting of the Sub-Committee was such that it has hardly been possible to examine the report with the care which one would have wished, both in New York and at home.

The Sub-Committee had some discussion of the scientific and technical aspects of the definition of outer space in the light of the questionnaire from the Legal Sub-Committee, and certain papers were made available to it. These will no doubt be of considerable interest to those concerned with the scientific aspects in my country. It is right that the Legal Sub-Committee should have the benefit, for its next meeting, of the course of debate and the papers of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. But the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee has, in our view also rightly, decided to continue consideration of this matter at future sessions. The further course of discussion of this difficult question, in both its technical and its legal aspects, will be of great interest to my delegation. We are particularly glad to think that it will receive the detailed examination which it requires. The absence of a definition has not up to the present time created practical difficulties, and it is therefore highly desirable that any definition which may be adopted should be based on sound thinking and careful study.

My delegation supports the view expressed in the Sub-Committee that the World Weather Watch, now increasingly using satellites, is a most valuable service, which is indeed, if I may quote, "for the benefit of all mankind". This is a fine example of a practical and directly beneficial use to which space technology can be put for the advantage of the whole world. In addition, we welcome the progress which has been made with the Thumba Equatorial Rocket Launching Station in India, for which United Nations sponsorship has been recommended.

The Sub-Committee heard with interest also the request of Argentina that the rocket launching station near Mar del Plata should be considered for sponsorship by the United Nations, thus proposing a new link between the United Nations and the great South American continent. We look forward to hearing the report of the Group of Experts who are to visit this range.

Certain delegations have touched on the question of the structure of the organizational machinery in the United Nations for dealing with outer space. The thought seems to be that this should be enlarged, or even transformed. My delegation has, naturally, listened with interest to the remarks in this sense which have been made, but we do not feel that the case for such a change has been made out. There are a large number of collaborative ventures in which many countries, including my own, have been closely involved, and the Powers interested in space have made available their assistance and facilities in many ways. My delegation considers that this manner of collaboration ensures adequate facilities in the field of outer space and waits to be persuaded that any transformation of it would be for the true advantage of the world.

The report of the Working Group on a Navigation Services Satellite System is a new matter before us. This report rightly pays tribute to the work done by specialized organizations concerned with possible uses for air and sea traffic, and this work will happily be continued. The general conclusion of the Working Group was that there is no immediate requirement for the establishment of such a system, but that it may arise in the future.

(Mr. Hope, United Kingdom)

It was the feeling of the Working Group that the need for a system in this field may arise in the future, and in the view of my delegation, the matter can best be kept under review in this Committee, so that we can decide the appropriate moment when it would be desirable for further work to be done upon it.

These are a few brief comments which my delegation wishes to offer to the Committee at this stage in its work. But we would wish at the same time to commend the Sub-Committees and the Working Group for their work and look forward to further study of the material which they have put before us and to a continuation of their work in the coming year.

Mr. GOTMANOV (Czechoslovakia): First of all, I should like to express the appreciation of my delegation to the representatives of the Soviet Union, the United States, France and other countries which also this year reached significant success in the exploration of outer space.

We are of the opinion that this year can be characterized as an active period in the development of scientific and technical co-operation of States in this field. This is attested to in the light of the reports submitted by a number of the Member States on the advancement of national activities in the exploration of outer space, as well as reports elaborated by specialized agencies and discussed by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. This very fact is a proof of the growing importance of our Committee, the activities of which are expected to contribute to the deepening of international co-operation. We therefore note with satisfaction that this year important deliberations took place both in the Legal and Scientific and Technical Sub-Committees and that a session of the Working Group was organized to consider the feasibility of setting up a universal navigation services satellite system.

The position of the Czechoslovak delegation on the questions that were on the agenda of both of our Sub-Committees had already been spelt out in detail and is contained in the records of these organs. In this connexion I should like to note that, during the sixth session of the Legal Sub-Committee, certain

(Mr. Gotmanov, Czechoslovakia)

useful progress has also been achieved. Here I have in mind the work in connexion with the draft agreements on the assistance to and return of astronauts and space vehicles, and the draft agreement on liability for damages caused by the launching of objects into outer space.

(Mr. Gotmanov, Czechoslovakia)

We are of the opinion that, because of the growing number of manned space flights, the agreement on assistance to astronauts is acquiring the highest importance. Therefore, we should like to express the conviction that the Legal Sub-Committee will give that agreement maximum attention at its next session in order that substantial progress may be achieved.

There were also new topics on the agenda of the Legal Sub-Committee. The first examination and study relative to the definition of outer space and the utilization of outer space and celestial bodies, including the various implications of space communications, has been undertaken. The Legal Sub-Committee decided to continue its study of those matters at its next session.

Therefore, it is my intention now to outline very briefly the views of the Czechoslovak delegation on the question of the utilization of outer space, particularly on space communications. In this connexion I should like to express our appreciation to the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Ambassador Morozov, who yesterday mentioned our initiative and fully supported the ideas proposed by the Czechoslovak delegation in this field.

During the session of the Legal Sub-Committee we stressed once again the necessity of settling the questions relating to the establishment and utilization of space communications by earth satellites. We mentioned that problem because we recognized the general importance and necessity of such proposals and programmes. We hold the view that the work should be started as soon as possible on the formulation of basic principles governing the further development of space communications on which future international agreement might be based. Those principles should include, inter alia, the following points: first, the principle that all States have the right to use outer space for space communications and bear responsibility for any such activities; second, that satellite broadcasting and transmission must serve the interests of international peace and security and must respect the sovereign equality of all States; third, that any discrimination in the establishment of a system of space communications must be prevented; fourth, and finally, that all space activities in this field must promote progress and co-operation among nations in the economic, scientific, social and cultural fields.

(Mr. Gotmanov, Czechoslovakia)

The Czechoslovak delegation believes that those points might serve as a basis for further elaboration on the basic principles which should govern the development of satellite telecommunication systems. That is why we recommend that this question should be included in the agenda of one of the next sessions of the Legal Sub-Committee. In addition, the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and the ITU should be asked to start and develop a systematic study of the scientific and technical problems of space communications requiring solution.

My delegation has nothing to add to the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee which is submitted to this Committee and which contains the description of its work. We maintain that that Sub-Committee carried out very useful work. It adopted recommendations on a number of items which have traditionally been on its agenda, such as those concerning the exchange of information about outer space research, international programmes, international sounding rocket launching facilities and education and training. The Sub-Committee also dealt with other problems that are extremely difficult from the scientific point of view.

Czechoslovakia attributes great importance to the international efforts in outer space research. We appreciate very much the fact that co-operation with the other socialist countries is increasing in various forms of outer space research. We are convinced that the joint efforts by the scientists of those countries in the peaceful uses of outer space contribute to international co-operation.

I should like also to emphasize that we welcome the decision that the first international Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space be held next year. That Conference, which will sum up the knowledge gained during the first decade of the exploration of outer space, will certainly stimulate efforts to ensure that the knowledge gained so far shall gradually find the widest possible utilization in various and different fields of human activity. Proceeding from that, we believe it desirable that the Conference should be held with the widest possible participation of States. As far as the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic is concerned, we are prepared to attend that Conference, and our scientists intend to submit for consideration, in accordance with the programme of the Conference, some working documents summing up the results of their research.

(Mr. Gotmanov, Czechoslovakia)

Finally, Mr. Chairman, it is my pleasure to associate myself with all the warm sentiments expressed by other representatives on your address. I wish to congratulate you wholeheartedly for the efforts you devote to the conduct of the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. I wish also to express my appreciation to the Chairmen of both our Sub-Committees for their tireless and successful efforts in the course of the work of those bodies.

In the name of the Czechoslovak delegation, I should like to take this opportunity to greet most warmly the representative of France, Ambassador Bérard, on the occasion of his return to the United Nations.

Mr. COLE (Sierra Leone): My delegation would like to associate itself with the sentiments already expressed in welcoming to our Committee the representative of France. My delegation would also like to express its grateful appreciation to Mr. Martin and Mr. Wyzner for the very lucid and excellent statements which they made in introducing the reports of the Sub-Committees of which they are the Chairmen; and also to you, Sir, for your brilliant and instructive opening statement.

My delegation also wishes to place on record its recognition of the very good work done by this Committee and its Sub-Committees. We wholeheartedly commend the work done during the year under review. My delegation sincerely regrets that, owing to circumstances beyond its control, it was unable to continue its participation in the work of the Legal Sub-Committee in Geneva until the completion of its sixth session. That should not be interpreted as a lack of interest on the part of my delegation in the Sub-Committee's work. My Government's signing of the Outer Space Treaty and my delegation's participation in the sixth session of the Legal Sub-Committee for about ten days underline the importance which my Government attaches to the work of this Committee and its Sub-Committees.

My delegation accepts without reservation the report of the Working Group on a Navigation Services Satellite System, contained in document A/AC.105/38, and that of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, contained in document A/AC.105/39. In so doing, my delegation would like to express its

(Mr. Cole, Sierra Leone)

gratitude to those eminent scientists and to assure them of its continuous faith and confidence in their knowledge and understanding of the highly technical nature of their respective assignments. Their reports already show that in the execution of their work they were guided by the principle that, because of their training and knowledge, they have the duty to help educate their fellowman on this all-important subject of the peaceful uses of outer space so that they in turn may be enabled better to avoid the awesome threat to civilization and to the human race itself held out by other than peaceful utilization of space discovery.

(Mr. Cole, Sierra Leone)

My delegation looks forward anxiously to the time -- which we hope is not far distant -- when the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee will be able to give us a working definition of outer space. Its inability to arrive at a definition at this stage is a constant reminder that no discovery in our time has been so bold as the exploration and exploitation of outer space and the chain of scientific advances resulting from it, a chain as yet only partially forged. My delegation would urge the Sub-Committee to continue its search for the definition sought because we feel that, like most great discoveries, the exploration and exploitation of space has had consequences far transcending its immediate scientific effects.

It cannot be denied that space discovery has exerted its influence on world politics and economics. It is constantly changing the attitudes of modern man as well as his environment. My delegation wholeheartedly welcomes the proposed international space conference scheduled for August 1968, not only because of the immense benefits that we of the developing and non-space nations can derive from such conferences, but also because we believe that they can make a great and invaluable contribution towards international co-operation by revealing to the whole world the the gigantic achievements of the great Powers in outer space.

With regard to the report of the Legal Sub-Committee (A/AC.105/L.37), while my delegation had hoped to see a much wider area of agreement, nevertheless what was achieved is not only encouraging but impressive. Humanitarian considerations alone dictate that the most urgent consideration should be given to an early conclusion of the work of this Sub-Committee. We do not have to go far to find reasons for this point of view. The tragic episode of the disappearance of both the Soviet and the American astronauts -- to which reference has already been made -- is still fresh in our minds. An astronaut whose spacecraft is in difficulty has little or no time to make a discriminatory choice as to the territory -- developed or developing -- on which to land his spacecraft. Even worse is the case of an unmanned spacecraft in difficulty. The problems therefore concern all of us, regardless of the category of nations to which we belong. Hence my delegation would make an urgent and earnest appeal to all concerned to abandon, in a spirit of co-operation and compromise, certain fixed positions which they hold on various aspects of these very difficult and complex problems so that the interests of mankind can best be served.

(Mr. Cole, Sierra Leone)

Experience teaches that to solve a difficult and complicated problem one must be objective and must be free from bias. Experience also teaches that we must learn to trust each other.

Finally, my delegation would like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the work which you have done and once again to commend the Committee as a whole, as well as all those who in various ways have contributed in such large measure to the fruitful work of our Committee during the period under review.

The CHAIRMAN: Does any other representative wish to speak at this meeting?

Since no one wishes to speak, I suggest that the list of speakers should be closed at 4 o'clock this afternoon.

I should like to inform the Committee that it would be possible to hold two meetings tomorrow, but some delegations have expressed a desire that the session should be terminated tomorrow morning. Therefore, it will depend on how many speakers we have at that meeting. At the moment three names are inscribed for tomorrow, namely, those of the representatives of Brazil, India and Italy. I would appeal to other representatives who wish to speak to inscribe their names by 4 o'clock this afternoon.

The meeting rose at 12 noon.