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COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND ELEVENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Wednesday, 6 September 1972, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. JANKOWITSCH

(Austria)

- Consideration of the reports of
  - (a) The Legal Sub-Committee (continued)
  - (b) The Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, including the summary of the preparatory session of the Working Group on Remote Sensing of the Earth by Satellites (continued)
- Requests by the European Space Research Organisation and the European Space Vehicle Launcher Development Organisation for Observer Status

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## CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORTS OF

- (a) THE LEGAL SUB-COMMITTEE (A/AC.105/101) (continued)
- (b) THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL SUB-COMMITTEE (A/AC.105/102), INCLUDING THE SUMMARY OF THE PREPARATORY SESSION OF THE WORKING GROUP ON REMOTE SENSING OF THE EARTH BY SATELLITES (continued)

Mr. FRAZAO (Brazil): As this is the first time that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space is holding a regular session under your chairmanship, Sir, I wish to extend to you the most cordial greetings of the Brazilian delegation and to assure you, once again, of my delegation's full support and co-operation. We are confident that, like your predecessors, Ambassadors Waldheim and Haymerle, you will provide us with firm and wise guidance, so that we can bring outer space issues down to earth and settle them within the broad framework provided by the Purposes and Principles of the Charter.

May I also be allowed to extend my warmest welcome to our Vice-Chairman, Ambassador Ion Datcu of Romania, and pledge to both of you the unwavering collaboration of your Rapporteur, my alternate, Minister Celso de Souza e Silva, and of my own co-operation.

As a developing country which is not yet a space Power, Brazil has been very active in the United Nations work on outer space questions since the historic General Assembly resolution 1348 (XIII). Our position, consistently upheld in these 15 years, has always been guided by three main assumptions: first, that mankind has a common interest in outer space; second, that this common interest should be translated into concrete efforts towards the peaceful exploration and exploitation of outer space, predicated on world-wide international co-operation, for the benefit of all peoples; and third, that outer space activities should be entirely carried out in accordance with the principles of international law, and most particularly within the letter and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations.

(Mr. Frazao, Brazil)

On the basis of those fundamental assumptions, the Brazilian Government, at the domestic level, has been seeking to maximize the possibilities of placing space techniques at the service of its objectives of economic and social development. Accordingly, the competent Brazilian agencies, notably the National Institute for Space Research, have been successfully working on pure and applied research projects with the aim of investigating solutions to Brazilian problems in the fields of communications, education, meteorology, survey of natural resources, transfer of technologies, and systems analysis, as applied to the complex large-scale problems of the country.



(Mr. Frazao, Brazil)

At the international level, our action has been so oriented as to make sure not only that the activities carried out by space Powers conform to generally accepted principles and practices of international law but also that they contribute further to promoting international co-operation for development and assuring the maintenance of an international climate of peace and security.

In this connexion, Brazil considers that the outer space Treaty of 1967 provides a comprehensive and equitable legal basis for international activities in outer space. Although not exhaustive, it encompasses the main international doctrines on the juridical discipline of outer space activities; its provisions may be justifiably considered as the general layout from which more specific norms should spring and cover any particular areas of human endeavour relating to the utilization of outer space.

The Treaty has already made possible the negotiation of two such instruments: the Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space and the Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects. Both instruments were designed to complement and regulate the general provisions of the outer space Treaty and have in fact contributed to furthering the scope of positive international law.

However, innumerable issues broached in the outer space Treaty are still awaiting regulation. I could cite at random the question of the definition of outer space, the problems of registration and identification of spacecraft, the questions relating to space communications, including direct broadcast satellites for radio and television transmissions, the need for internationally accepted procedures for the prevention of potentially harmful space programmes and, in particular, a more effective control over undue military uses of outer space. I could go on to mention some highly technical questions, such as the need of a legal régime for future space shuttles capable of operating both in air space and in outer space. I could also refer to some purely legal issues, such as the need for a more precise determination of those principles and rules of international law which apply to outer space activities -- principles which

(Mr. Frazao, Brazil)

are very often referred to but seldom specifically quoted or identified. Last but not least, I could also emphasize on this same line of reasoning the advisability of devising formal instruments embodying the obligations that space Powers should positively assume of directing a substantial portion of their space programmes to the assistance of developing countries.

That listing of some of the issues that we have not yet tackled in our deliberations is enough, I believe, to prove that, notwithstanding a few important achievements, much remains to be done in the United Nations so as to build an all-embracing legal framework for outer space activities. I would say that, having left its launching pad, the rocket of international space law must still get rid of its first stage of propulsion and reach out for higher aims.

That is the reason why my delegation has repeatedly voiced its reluctance to have the Committee assign priority to the debate of questions such as the draft moon treaty put forward by the delegation of the Soviet Union at the last session of the General Assembly. In point of fact, even a cursory glance at the Soviet text reveals that, despite the amendments and modifications introduced during the last session of the Legal Sub-Committee, it still largely limits itself to questions already contemplated in the outer space Treaty of 1967. We feel that the draft treaty does not make any significant contribution to the elaboration of principles of international law. The text, as it now stands, conceptually does not go beyond the reiteration of the relevant principles already stated in the outer space Treaty and, in most cases, restated in the liability Convention and in the Agreement on astronauts, such as the principles of freedom of exploration, non-appropriation, respect for international law, peaceful purposes, international co-operation, settlement of disputes, and so on. The Brazilian delegation cannot think of any reason why we should in such a manner once again reiterate these principles which have already been accepted and enshrined in the pertinent international instruments.



(Mr. Frazao, Brazil)

The few advancements proposed in the original and the modified versions of the draft moon treaty are thus of a technical nature, or rather of an administrative and regulatory character, since they relate to specific situations regarding the eventual interaction of personnel on the moon. It is not my wish to indulge in a discussion of the need for or the priority of these regulations. None the less, my delegation feels that these regulations might be necessary and useful, but they would not seem to justify the completion of a new treaty which, by the very fact that it was called a "treaty", would be hierarchically placed on an equal footing with the outer space Treaty. In this connexion, let me recall that the liability issues were dealt with in a Convention and that the astronaut questions were disposed of in an Agreement.

With those considerations in mind, the Brazilian delegation would suggest not only that the Committee consider the possibility of avoiding in the draft moon treaty those provisions which duplicate the text of the outer space Treaty and other international instruments in force but also that it consider redrafting the text to take the form of a complementary agreement or an additional protocol for the regulation of the outer space Treaty.

(Mr. Frazao, Brazil)

This solution, besides enabling the Committee quickly to dispose of this matter and proceed to more urgent business, would have the advantage of circumventing the consideration of the controversial issues, namely the question of the scope of the draft treaty and the concept of common heritage, which deadlocked the Legal Sub-Committee in Geneva.

We trust that this Committee will give careful consideration to that suggestion, which is, let me assure the Committee, put forward by my delegation with no motivation other than conciliation and co-operation

Let me now turn very briefly to the draft registration convention. As this Committee will recall, the Brazilian Delegation has been consistently in favour of conferring a high degree of priority in our work to registration questions. In so doing, we have in mind not only the advantages per se of having a compulsory system of international registration of space objects but also the fact that the establishment of such a system of registration is indispensable for the full implementation of the Convention on liability and the Agreement on astronauts.

The provisions of the outer-space Treaty relating to control over possibly harmful non-peaceful outer-space activities are in fact still too general and do not afford an entirely satisfactory guarantee of protection to the international community. An open, effective and operative registration system would, in this sense, very much contribute to checking the growing concern that space Powers may be on the threshold of utilizing outer space for some military purposes, with certain negative implications for international peace and security.

My delegation thus welcomed the initiative taken by the delegations of Canada and France at the last session of the Legal Sub-Committee in submitting a joint text for a draft convention on registration. The Brazilian delegation has already, in Geneva, had the opportunity of presenting some preliminary comments on the French and Canadian text, which, on the whole, we consider quite satisfactory. We are prepared to co-operate further in the speedy completion of our work on this text, a task which, we believe, should be given high priority so that we can proceed to examine the many important issues still before this Committee.



(Mr. Frazao, Brazil)

Turning now to the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, I should like first of all to express our appreciation for the work performed by its Chairman, Professor Carver of Australia, and by the Chairman of the Working Group on Remote Sensing of the Earth by Satellites, Dr. Franco Fiorio of Italy. Both the report of the Sub-Committee and the summary of the preparatory session of the Working Group on Remote Sensing contain very useful information and are undoubtedly of great value to the conduct of our business here in the Committee.

In connexion with the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, I should like to make some comments on the question of the United Nations programme on space applications and on the future work of the Sub-Committee.

The delegation of Brazil has already had several opportunities to express its great satisfaction with the work carried out by the expert on space applications, Professor Humberto Ricciardi. As the first expert to conduct the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, Professor Ricciardi has indeed set very high standards of scientific and organizational abilities which we hope will be matched by his successors.

We regret the fact that Professor Ricciardi is not in a position to remain in his post for a further period. My delegation is, however, confident that Professor Ricciardi's successor, to be officially appointed by the Secretary-General after consultation with the delegations represented in this Committee, as urged in the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, will be able to expand further the United Nations Programme on Space Applications in view of its particular relevance to developing countries. For its part, Brazil is prepared to contribute to the accomplishment of this task. My country hosted the United Nations panel on the establishment and implementation of research programmes in remote sensing which took place in November and December 1971 and has already indicated its willingness to host the workshop or special seminar on space applications envisaged in the United Nations programme on space applications for 1974, as well as to offer fellowships in this area.

As to the future work of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, my delegation is of the opinion that it should be increasingly concerned with space applications, particularly as they apply to the national development of developing countries. Although we fully recognize that scientific matters should

(Mr. Frazao, Brazil)

continue to be an important part of the Sub-Committee's work, we also believe that, in order to fulfil the expectations derived from the outstanding achievements already accomplished by the space Powers, the United Nations should in the scientific and technical fields concentrate more and more on the task of orienting and co-ordinating the spread of information and data as well as the dissemination of the possibilities open to the international community in the field of space applications.

That suggestion, which was put forward by the Brazilian delegation at the last session of the Sub-Committee, has received significant support from delegations not only of developing countries but also of some developed ones also. We trust that this Committee will endorse it and, accordingly, provide specific guidelines for the future work of its Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee.

I could not conclude without mentioning the significance my Government attaches to the Agreement on Co-operation in Space Exploration signed last May in Moscow by the two space super-Powers. As part of the congeries of international commitments undertaken by the super-Powers in their exercise of entente at the highest level, the Space Agreement represents a positive step inasmuch as it registers if not the obligation at least the desire of the parties to make the results of scientific research gained from their exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes available for the benefit of all the peoples of the world. It also contains a specific provision by virtue of which both parties undertake to co-operate in order to

"encourage international efforts to resolve problems of international law in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes, with the aim of strengthening the legal order in space and further developing international space law".

Let us hope that these commitments will be concretely translated into action. Although the United Nations is not once mentioned in the text of the Soviet-American agreement, I believe we are entitled to presume that this Organization, and more specifically this Committee, is the forum where this display of entente and co-operation will eventually materialize to the benefit of space and non-space Powers alike.



The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Brazil for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. PIRADOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): On behalf of the Soviet delegation I am very pleased to greet all present in this room and to welcome them to the resumed fifteenth session of our Committee.

I am particularly pleased to greet you, Sir, and I ask you to accept the warmest congratulations of the Soviet delegation on your election to the chairmanship of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. All members recall that your predecessors at this post were outstanding diplomats from Austria -- Mr. Kurt Waldheim and Mr. Heinrich Haymerle. We all understand that the general confidence shown by the international community in Mr. Waldheim in electing him Secretary-General of the United Nations was rooted in his very active role in the international arena as Chairman of our Committee over a great many years.

(Mr. Piradov, USSR)

The theme of outer space has a very important place in Austrian diplomacy and we are convinced, Mr. Chairman, that you will continue to carry on this tradition. Allow me to wish you all possible success in your very responsible post, which is aimed at strengthening peace and mutual understanding among peoples and developing international co-operation in the field of outer space.

I should now like to begin my statement with a brief review of progress achieved in the past year. This year has been a year of very fruitful and active work. It was marked in Soviet space activities by outstanding achievements in the study of space and the use of space technology for the benefit of mankind, and also by the advancement of the great dream of mankind, namely, the conquest of outer space.

Great landmarks in the Soviet space programme during this period were the launching of the automatic space station Luna 20, which made a soft landing in the mountainous area of the moon and brought samples of moon rock back to earth. The flight of the Soviet automatic stations Mars 2 and Mars 3, which have become artificial satellites of Mars and transmitted to the earth very important information about Mars for more than eight months, also was a great success. During that flight, a soft landing was accomplished from the Mars 3 station on the surface of the planet and radio signals were transmitted to earth. The Soviet automatic station Venus 8 also achieved an outstanding feat. As we know, on 22 July this year that station, after travelling more than 300 million kilometres, approached Venus, after which a scientific package detached itself from the station, made a soft landing on the sunlit portion of the planet and for almost an entire hour transmitted very important scientific information to earth.

In addition, studies of outer space are continuing by means of satellites of the Cosmos series, of which there have been more than 500.

I need hardly go into the details of the importance of all those achievements to space science. I simply wish once again to stress that the Soviet programme of space study in all its phases is at the service of peace and progress.



(Mr. Piradov, USSR)

Co-operation between the Soviet Union and other countries in the conquest of space has been expanding. Acting together with the other socialist countries, the Soviet Union is successfully carrying out a broad programme of cosmic and space studies and experiments. Within the framework of this programme, the satellite Intercosmos 6 was successfully launched last April. That satellite was built by scientists of Hungary, Mongolia, Romania, Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union. On 30 July this year, a new satellite of this series, Intercosmos 7, was placed into orbit.

Only a few weeks ago there entered into force an agreement calling for the creation of an international space communication organization, Intersputnik. That agreement had been signed last November on the initiative of the socialist countries.

I should like to recall that Intersputnik is an open organization created on the basis of full equality among all participants, and any State whatsoever may become a signatory to it. We think this is a very important factor because only on this basis will it be possible to ensure the interests of all States regardless of their degree of development. One of the most important tasks of the new organization of space relations will be to organize co-operation in this field on a world-wide basis.

The Soviet Union is carrying out joint work in studying space with a number of developing countries. For example, on 10 May this year an agreement was signed between the Soviet Union and India concerning co-operation in the conquest of space. This agreement provides for a number of joint space experiments. We are very pleased to note the successful development of space co-operation with France. This co-operation covers a broad series of joint programmes. As an example, we can refer to the experiments that have been carried out with the Oreol satellite within the framework of the Franco-Soviet Arcade project.

On 4 April this year, a Soviet space rocket placed the satellite Molniya 1 into orbit, opening the door to the launching of the French satellite of the MAS series. The Soviet space station Mars 3 carried the French experiment STEREO, designed to study the radiations of the sun.

(Mr. Piradov, USSR)

We are also pleased by the development of co-operation with the United States in the field of space. A particular feature of the flight of the Soviet space stations Mars 2 and Mars 3, which I just mentioned, was the fact that while they were studying Mars the American satellite Mariner 9 was also in outer space. The placing into orbit of Soviet and American space apparatus containing scientific equipment and instruments and the simultaneous operation and exchange of information between Soviet and American scientists in carrying out scientific experiments have created very favourable preconditions for the achievement of progress in the study of the planet Mars and constitute one more illustration of the possibilities in space studies which are provided by the development of international co-operation in this field.



(Mr. Piradov, USSR)

In speaking of space studies and the study of the solar system, I should like to point out the very outstanding contribution made by United States scientists, technicians and workers in studying the only natural satellite of our own planet, namely, the moon, and I should like once again to congratulate our United States colleagues on the successful completion of the mission carried out by the Apollo 16 team. The Soviet-American agreement on co-operation in outer space and the use of outer space for peaceful purposes is of very great importance. This agreement was concluded during the visit of President Nixon to the Soviet Union. We hope that the agreement not only will make it possible to achieve innovations in astronautics but will also lead to progress in the most diverse fields of human activity on earth and to the development of international co-operation. The implementation of this agreement has already begun. Soviet and American scientists have now undertaken the preparation of a joint experiment on the docking of the space ships Soyuz and Apollo, and this is planned for 1975. We should like to stress the humanitarian nature of this experiment, which is aimed at ensuring the safety of astronauts and creating conditions for the rescue of astronauts in distress.

Thus we are very pleased to point out that international co-operation in the study and use of outer space for peaceful purposes is developing successfully and that the broadest possible horizons are open to us in this area.

Commenting on the results of the past year, I should like to note the very fruitful and constructive work carried out by the eleventh session of the Legal Sub-Committee, during which the draft of an important international document, a treaty on the moon, was formulated and agreed upon in principle. Throughout its existence the Legal Sub-Committee has shown itself to be an effective international body which can find generally acceptable solutions to the most complex problems relating to the legal régime governing outer space. This is to the credit of that outstanding diplomat and jurist Mr. Wyzner. The preparation of the treaty on the moon is a worthy reflection in international law of the outstanding achievements of space science and technology and this treaty is of fundamental importance for the expansion

(Mr. Piradov, USSR)

of further co-operation among States in the study of the moon, as well as the progressive development of space law. Thanks to the constructive approach shown by most of the delegations at the session of the Sub-Committee, the majority of the articles of the future treaty were formulated and agreed upon. We agree with you, Mr. Chairman, that work on the still unresolved articles of this treaty could be completed during the present session of the Committee during the discussions of the report of the Legal Sub-Committee. Thus we should culminate the work on the draft treaty on the moon and in so doing we should be implementing the directive given to us by the General Assembly by being able to transmit this treaty to the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly. We have every possibility of being able to do so. In response to your suggestion, Mr. Chairman, I can assure you, that the Soviet delegation will continue to make every possible effort, as it has done in the past, to find all possible areas of agreement, and we hope that this same approach will be taken by other delegations.

In discussing the draft in the Legal Sub-Committee we tried to take into account the viewpoints of other members of the Sub-Committee. In order to harmonize positions, we did not insist on a number of provisions and formulations to which we attached very great importance. For this is the internal logic of any international agreement: a reasonable compromise will always lead to agreement. That is the attitude that has guided us in welcoming your proposal, Mr. Chairman, that we conclude our preparation of this draft treaty on the moon during the present session of the Committee. My delegation is ready to make contacts to that end with all delegations which might have proposals to make on formulations for individual articles of the treaty.

The second fundamental question examined in the report of the Legal Sub-Committee is the preparation of a convention on the registration of objects launched into space. During the session of the Legal Sub-Committee we stated that, in our view, the existing system of registration on a voluntary basis fully meets the requirements of the present stage in space studies. However, in view of the great interest shown by a number of countries in the



(Mr. Piradov, USSR)

preparation of a special convention on registration, and guided by the principles of co-operation and mutual understanding, my delegation did not object to the Sub-Committee's discussing the draft convention submitted by France and Canada.

(Mr. Piradov, USSR)

At the same time, we must point out that the draft contains a great many complex provisions from the technical standpoint. These various points require careful study by the specialists of various countries. Our specialists have already begun to study them. We consider, however, that the Sub-Committee has already carried out very useful work in beginning discussion of the draft convention on registration, and perhaps this work could be usefully continued at the next session of the Sub-Committee, which, as has already been suggested, might be held in March and April of 1973.

This Committee has before it also the report of its Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee (A/AC.105/102). My delegation, generally speaking, supports the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report. But I should like to make certain comments on the report. First of all, we should like to support the evaluation given in the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee of the activities of the United Nations Expert on Space Applications. On behalf of my delegation, I should like to express our deepest gratitude to Professor Humberto Ricciardi for the broad and varied work he has done. At the same time, we must stress that the activities of the Expert -- which, in accordance with the recommendations of the Sub-Committee, are planned over a two-year period -- will be all the more effective if they are closely related to the activities of the United Nations Outer Space Affairs Division.

Close co-ordination and co-operation between the United Nations Outer Space Affairs Division and the Expert would make it possible to avoid duplication and overlapping, and at the same time it would enhance the role of the Outer Space Division in dealing with the practical tasks facing the United Nations Secretariat. This would also ensure appropriate condition for a rational use of the budgetary funds allocated to us by the United Nations, all of which is of fundamental importance in our view.

As we all know, the preparatory session of the Working Group on Remote Sensing of the Earth by Satellites was held simultaneously with the work of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. In examining the results of the work of that session, we must express our view that the Working Group was set up to implement a concrete, specific task; it was set up as a subsidiary body of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. In this connexion, we would like to point



(Mr. Piradov, USSR)

out once again that, in addition to the purely technical problems involved in the remote sensing of earth resources, a great many problems of a political, legal and economic nature have been raised. These problems arise from the absolute and exclusive rights of States to control their own natural resources and information about such resources.

I must say that this circumstance has been pointed out by the representatives of a great many States, both within the framework of the United Nations and at the seminar of Sao Jose dos Campos, held recently in Brazil. I should like to take this opportunity once again to express the thanks of the Soviet delegation, which participated as an observer at that seminar, to Brazil for its excellent organization of the work of the seminar.

It is quite obvious that the only sound basis for scientific co-operation in the use of satellites for remote sensing of earth resources is the international legal regulation of activities of States in this field. For that reason we support the view of a great many delegations that there is a need to examine the political and legal aspects of remote sensing of earth resources, and we consider that this task should be entrusted to the Legal Sub-Committee. If I am not mistaken, the Legal Sub-Committee's agenda already contains a relevant agenda item. If I am mistaken, then I hope that this item will be included in the Legal Sub-Committee's agenda.

The rapid development of space technology raises ever more complex tasks for jurists. In our view, one of the most important and complex problems at the present time is the legal regulation of the activities of States in the use of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting. The transmission of television programmes directly to home receivers is a very promising way of utilizing outer space for the benefit of mankind. This will promote the improvement of better relations amongst peoples and the expansion of the exchange of cultural values and raise the educational level of the populations of various countries, particularly the developing countries.

(Mr. Piradov, USSR)

However, this new technique raises very serious legal problems related to the need to establish conditions under which this new form of space technology will serve only the lofty goals of peace and friendship between peoples.

We must give priority to the need to protect State sovereignty from any external intervention, and we must prevent the conversion of this type of direct broadcasting from satellites into a source of international conflict and aggravation of relations between States. We know that this might well occur if the necessary conditions are not established and we can establish such conditions by elaborating and adopting the rules of international law defining the rights and obligations of States in respect of direct television broadcasting.



(Mr. Piradov, USSR)

As members know, the Soviet Government, guided by the aforementioned considerations, instructed the Soviet Foreign Minister to send a letter to the Secretary-General of the United Nations proposing the inclusion in the agenda of the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly of an item entitled "Preparation of an international convention on principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting". The Secretary-General has received the Soviet draft of this convention, which has been circulated as an official United Nations document (A/8771), in accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

I believe that the delegations here will have sufficient time to study the Soviet draft convention. I should like to emphasize that it has been prepared bearing in mind the numerous proposals that have been put forward in various United Nations bodies and other international organizations. I should also like to recall that at the third session of the Working Group on Direct Television Broadcasting, which was held in May 1970, the Soviet delegation submitted a working paper containing typical provisions of general principles concerning the use of artificial earth satellites for direct radio and television broadcasting. The delegations of a number of other countries also submitted proposals to the Working Group. We are all familiar with the work of the group of experts from UNESCO on a draft declaration on direct television broadcasting.

The Soviet draft convention embodies all the aforementioned proposals and documents, which have been very carefully studied. For that reason nobody can say that the Soviet draft convention is something new and unexpected. Furthermore, this draft convention embodies the best of what has been said in this Committee on the subject, having regard for the latest achievements in science and technology related to the launching of artificial earth satellites.

We hope that the General Assembly will give all due attention to the Soviet draft convention and will take an appropriate decision. Without trying to prejudge that decision, I should like to avail myself of this opportunity

(Mr. Piradov, USSR)

to stress our deep conviction that the main role in preparing legal rules governing the practical use of space, particularly the use of direct television broadcasting, should be assumed by the United Nations and, more specifically, by its Outer Space Committee. I should also like to stress the fact that the basic purpose of the Soviet draft convention is the further development of international co-operation on a sound international legal basis.

In conclusion, I should like to express the hope that the resumed fifteenth session of our Committee will be held in the traditional atmosphere of mutual understanding and co-operation between the delegations represented here -- a tradition which, as we know, has been typical of those bodies engaged in the study of space problems.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to thank the representative of the USSR for his kind words and also for the tribute he has paid to my predecessor as Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and to me.

Mr. LECLERCQ (France) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, my delegation wishes first of all to congratulate you once again on your election to preside over our Committee. We also appreciated very much the high qualities of your predecessor, who with great distinction guided our work over a number of years until he was elected to the highest office of the Secretariat of our Organization. Having observed the remarkable fashion in which you have become in a few months -- that is, since your arrival in New York -- one of the most active and best informed permanent representatives, we are convinced that under your chairmanship the work of our Committee will be conducted with determination and ability.

We also wish to convey our warm congratulations to our new Vice-Chairman, Ambassador Datcu, who is the permanent representative of a country with which France maintains very deep and long-standing ties of friendship.



(Mr. Leclercq, France)

During this session, the Committee, as is customary, will examine the reports of its two Sub-Committees.

The Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, which has a dynamic Chairman and a very competent secretariat, carried out an appreciable amount of work. Its members examined a considerable volume of data which permitted it to define very precisely the possibilities at the present time of the use of space technology.

In the field of space applications and their advancement, a useful programme, which would take due account of available resources, was approved while, in the field of international co-operation, the support given to the programme of training and education for the purpose of the peaceful uses of outer space is promising. France, for its part, has invited technical groups to observe a certain number of experiments and studies on the applications of space technology which are being carried out at its National Centre of Space Studies. It has also taken the initiative in granting scholarships for training in space technology.

Moreover, it has decided to take an active part in the Working Group on Remote Sensing of the Earth by Satellites, which at the end of its preparatory session last May entrusted to a limited group, in which France is participating, the task of assisting the Secretariat in the preparation of an evaluation of available documentation in this area. This small group, for that matter, is meeting during our resumed session to study the preliminary draft prepared by the Secretariat. The work of this group and that of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee will undoubtedly lead us to consider the advisability of recommending the preparation of an international agreement concerning the legal principles which should be applied in this field.

In all these fields of action which are designed to promote in the best conditions the practical use of space technology, it is appropriate to pay a tribute to the assistance given by the Outer Space Division, ably headed by Mr. Abdel-Ghani, and the expert entrusted with the application of space technology to development. We regret very much that Mr. Ricciardi cannot continue his functions, and we should like to convey to him our full gratitude for the remarkable work he has done. We are sure that the directions which he followed in his work will guide our future programmes of work.

(Mr. Leclercq, France)

Turning now to the report of the Legal Sub-Committee, we cannot but emphasize the remarkable results achieved in the past year. It was therefore with justified satisfaction that the Chairman, Mr. Wyzner, was able yesterday to give us a report on its work.



(Mr. Leclercq, France)

If years of effort and much stubborn devotion were required last year to reach the point where we could approve the convention on liability for damage caused by space objects -- it would seem that less than a year after the submission by the Soviet Union of a draft treaty concerning the moon an important stage has already been achieved in the path towards an agreement. It is true that in respect of the Sub-Committee this is not a completely new problem because several countries, in particular Argentina, had already put before us various proposals concerning new laws in respect of material from the moon and other celestial bodies.

With respect to the draft treaty there are still, however, divergencies of view, the most important of which, as far as we are concerned, relate to the provision of information on lunar exploration, on the terms of the utilization of the moon, on the problem of responsibility and, finally, on the scope that the treaty should have. We consider in this respect that this agreement should concern only the moon, excluding the other stars and the whole of the cosmos. First of all, we note that the mandate given by the United Nations as a matter of fact relates only to the moon. Moreover, conditions for the exploration of other stars are not known to us; they may give rise to different problems from those encountered on our satellite and therefore require special regulations. Therefore, it does not seem to us advisable to commit ourselves in advance to something about which we know nothing as yet. Nevertheless, regardless of the current divergencies of views, it would not seem to be ruled out that satisfactory compromises could be found in the course of the present session. My delegation, while ready to associate itself with the efforts that will be undertaken in the course of this session to reach this goal, considers that other questions deserve equal priority of attention from this body -- as, for that matter, our Committee decided last year.

First it is a question of the registration of space objects. We were among the first to draw the attention of our Committee to this question by submitting a draft convention in 1968. The Canadian delegation at the eleventh session of the Legal Sub-Committee also submitted a draft. These two texts were, as the Committee knows, combined into a single text which was submitted to the consideration of a working group presided over by the representative of Austria. As in the case of the treaty on the moon, there are still considerable divergencies of view, particularly with respect to the list of data to be provided

(Mr. Leclercq, France)

for the international register and to the placing of markings on the vehicles. We are not unaware of the technical difficulties that the latter problem gives rise to. But we should like to believe that in the course of this session these problems would be the subject of examination in depth and that considerable progress towards an agreement could be made.

We also have the problem of the definition of outer space. It is quite paradoxical to note that we can try to deal with this subject-matter and work out provisions for an area the limits of which are unknown to us. Our present lack of knowledge on this subject is not without an impact on our other work. Thus, in the draft treaty on the moon it seems to us not very well-founded to refer to "circumlunar space" because we still do not know what is the space which surrounds the moon.

Moreover, there are questions which concern direct telecommunications. The development of this technique gives rise to questions of law that concern both the sovereignty of the States covered by the broadcast and the content of the information broadcast. These questions have already been considered by a special Working Group, but its work has been in suspension for two years. They are also being discussed in other places. In a few weeks, when the Soviet Union draft will undoubtedly be taken up by the General Assembly, these questions will also be considered, and the Soviet representative reminded us of a proposal of his delegation, which will perhaps be accompanied by a draft convention. It seems therefore that we should consider, as was requested by the Swedish delegation, again convening the specialized Working Group. The results of its work could be very useful to our Legal Sub-Committee at its forthcoming session.

The programme that my delegation has thus sketched out is broad. It is based on our belief that our will to co-operate, which was reflected particularly in the recent meetings of our Legal and Scientific Sub-Committees, should make it possible to reach outstanding results in the area of outer space. Mr. Chairman, we therefore should like to express the hope that this session of our Committee, which for the first time is under your guidance, will be crowned by these results.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I thank the representative of France for the kind words he has addressed to me and to the former Chairman of our Committee.



Mr. RYDBECK (Sweden): Mr. Chairman, the Swedish delegation looks forward to this new session of the Outer Space Committee which you will be chairing with, no doubt, all the efficiency and skill that have been the hallmark of the long line of eminent Austrian Ambassadors preceding you as leaders of this Committee. My delegation extends its most sincere congratulations to you, Sir, and to the other officers of the Committee.

The projects with which the Outer Space Committee is dealing, or should be dealing, are each year gaining greater importance for an increasing number of countries. The practical applications of space technology are steadily growing in number and today influence developments in a multitude of human activities. Some of them have already revolutionized traditional patterns, whereas others are only starting to make their impact felt. The space age is thus slowly leaving its childhood behind and space technology is becoming a significant element in the lives of most nations. Those nations are, however, very unequally endowed to meet the technical, economical and organizational exigencies typical of space activities. In this sector as well as in most others involving a heavy reliance on modern science and technology the developed countries, especially the super Powers, are making quantum jumps ahead, while to many developing countries the possibilities opened up by modern space applications do not yet seem to have been fully realized or encouraged and even less utilized. The Swedish delegation finds that energetic means should be employed to remedy this situation which, if unchecked, will tend further to aggravate the technological and economic divergencies between developed and developing countries.

That situation, among others, renders the task of the Outer Space Committee more important every year. The work of this Committee should, we think, to a great extent be seen in the light of the over-all United Nations effort to come to grips with underdevelopment. Certainly, we need to continue the legislative work which has already shown many significant results. But increased attention must be paid to the various practical space applications and their implications. This should involve not only a continuation of general information activities but a more active and detailed assessment of the potential of such applications for United Nations Members. In dealing with those

(Mr. Rydbeck, Sweden)

problems my own delegation has consistently stressed the organizational aspects of the problem, since we are convinced that proper international organization is in many cases the clue to the avoidance of possible conflict and the best way of ensuring speedy acceptance of operational application systems.

The trend towards stressing the practical applications of space technology is visible in national and international space programmes. True, spectacular results have been achieved in the past year by the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in the exploration of the Moon, Mars and Venus. But the plunge into deep space represented by the grand tour to the outer planets has been reduced in scope, and instead the utilitarian but somewhat less far-reaching space shuttle and the tug move to the fore. Is it possible to hope that the announcement of a joint United States-Union of Soviet Socialist Republics docking mission in 1975, based on the general 1971 space agreement between the two States, could initiate a much-increased collaboration between those two and also other States with a view to maximum rationalization of scarce resources in the costly adventure of exploring and exploiting outer space?



(Mr. Rydbeck, Sweden)

The restructuring of European space co-operation within ESRO, which also reduces science allotments in favour of applications, has led to reshuffling and strengthening of the Swedish space organization. A special body, the Swedish Board for Space Activities, combining government and industry interests, has been set up and is seconded by a State-owned company providing technical expertise. As a result of our joining the whole of ESRO's activities, the Swedish space budget has now almost doubled, to about \$8 million. We think that there is hope for a viable European applications programme and we would regret it if the impetus gained were now to be slowed down as a result of recent problems in United States-European co-operation in the Aerosat field. We also hope that a meaningful European participation in the post-Apollo programme can be ensured in the near future.

After that general introduction, I now pass on to the items on our agenda.

The Legal Sub-Committee devoted particular attention to the two items of a draft treaty concerning the moon and the registration of space objects.

Detailed exploration and practical use of the moon and its resources are probably, notwithstanding the phenomenal technical and scientific results achieved by the two space Powers, still some time off even for those two, not to speak about smaller nations like my own. Even if for those reasons my delegation feels that detailed legislation of activities on the moon --- and a fortiori on other celestial bodies --- should not be undertaken, we have no objections to drafting a treaty of a general character which could usefully complement certain articles of the existing outer space Treaty.

Certain basic questions were dealt with in the Sub-Committee and I should like again to record my delegation's views on them. Like a number of other delegations, we should like to see the treaty -- or at least the main parts thereof --- cover not only the moon but other celestial bodies as well. Perhaps one should add, however, that we should still stay within our own solar system; going outside it might seem not only somewhat presumptuous but possibly even inimical to some distant civilizations that might one day punish us for our boundless legislative appetite. I recognize that a transgression in this respect has already been committed in the outer space Treaty, but perhaps we need not repeat it.

(Mr. Rydbeck, Sweden)

As I have said, only few nations can expect to reap any direct economic benefits from the use of the moon within the foreseeable future. So much the more important, therefore, that we try to implement in some way the wording of the outer space Treaty that the "moon is the province of mankind". Even if this concept is probably not primarily aimed at creating a property title for mankind as far as resource utilization is concerned, it seems to point clearly to the related concept of the "common heritage of mankind", later accepted in relation to the sea-bed and its resources. The usefulness of this concept for the moon should, in our mind, be positively studied. Once we accept this concept, the question of a proper international administration for the exploration of the moon and other celestial bodies arises. It may, indeed, be early to settle now on the proper type of international machinery. It seems clear, however, that the idea of such machinery should be recognized, since without it expressions such as "common province" and "common heritage" will be of limited value to the majority of nations. This is, of course, just part of the much larger problem of turning the exploration and exploitation of outer space from its present unilateral or bilateral course into an international undertaking with tangible United Nations involvement.

Finally, as regards the moon we find it important that the freedom of scientific research should be guaranteed and that scientific results obtained from activities on the moon should be widely publicized and distributed. These principles were, we believe, accepted in the course of the Sub-Committee's debate.

As far as the registration of space objects is concerned, my delegation appreciates the reasons which have prompted the Canadian and French delegations to push for a more comprehensive international system and we find their proposals most interesting. We remain somewhat hesitant, however, as to the practicability and economic feasibility of registering all space objects. We tend to agree with those who find this technically difficult and probably not an immediate necessity. For the few cases where verification is necessary from the point of view of damage caused available means would generally seem satisfactory. However, it might well be that an agreement on registration should be negotiated for certain types of space vehicles once shuttle service into space has become a reality.



(Mr. Rydbeck, Sweden)

The work of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee has been characterized in the last two years by efforts to spread knowledge about space applications to a larger number of countries, especially in the developing world. The results achieved were in no small measure attributable to the United Nations space expert, the eminent Professor Ricciardi of Argentina. We have been much impressed by his skill and his ability to reach towards meaningful projects within a sadly limited budgetary framework and the maze of competing United Nations and specialized agency claims. We are sorry to see him leave the United Nations and hope that in his new functions he will still be able to devote some time to international space co-operation where his great experience will be of particular use.

We stand ready to co-operate with Professor Ricciardi's successor when he has been appointed and we wish him good luck in his difficult task. We hope that he will enjoy the same great freedom of action within the Secretariat as did Professor Ricciardi, and that he will soon be able to submit to the Outer Space Committee a draft outline of his scheduled two-year activity which, we hope, will not be too much hampered by financial constraints. For certainly if we want to redeem our pledge to share the fruits of space applications with all countries we have to provide the United Nations and the space expert with sufficient means to do so; so far the budget has been comparatively meager.

The panel concept has now been tried for about two years and we find that it has been a valuable way of imparting practical space application knowledge, especially to developing countries. We feel that more experience is still necessary before a general assessment of the usefulness of the panel method can be made. Constant efforts must be made to attract students from developing countries to the projects. To that end continued attention should be directed, *inter alia*, towards providing sufficient travel funds for participants from developing countries to complement the amounts provided by the host country to cover the actual panel costs.

(Mr. Rydbeck, Sweden)

The innovations provided by the space expert and panel concepts have undoubtedly given new impetus to the work of the Technical Sub-Committee. However, there was a general feeling at the latest session of the Sub-Committee that something more needs to be done to further revitalize it in order to provide it with some more substantial work than is now the case. It was noted that the documentation was massive but not always very purposeful, quite apart from the fact that it was put at representatives' disposal far too late to allow any meaningful discussion.

The Swedish delegation ventured to suggest that, whereas the documents contained a comprehensive survey of the world's space activities and should continue, it was not actually necessary to discuss them all in the Committee; rather, the Committee should select one or a few subjects of great topical interest on which it could make a contribution and concentrate discussion on them during one or two sessions. Without making any formal proposals, we suggest that such topics might be, for example, aeronautical or meteorological satellites. My delegation would very much appreciate it if before the next session of the Sub-Committee some thinking could be devoted to thus enhancing the work of the Sub-Committee. In such consultations, which could, we hope, be directed by the Chairman of the Sub-Committee, the question should also be pondered of the relationship to the Sub-Committee of organizations such as COSPAR and IAF. These, as we know, possess great technical expertise and their repeated offers to co-operate actively with the Sub-Committee should be positively explored for mutual benefit.

I turn now to the Working Group on Remote Sensing Satellites and should like to record my delegation's satisfaction with the organizational meeting held by that Working Group in May, which created a good basis for our future work. The Swedish delegation has from the outset stressed the organizational and legal aspects of remote sensing activities, namely, the questions of who should manage this technology and who should exploit its results.



(Mr. Rydbeck, Sweden)

In so doing we certainly do not want to seem to disregard the formidable technical problems involved. But those problems are being assiduously tackled by an army of scientists and technicians. Probably the best proof of their proficiency is given by the recent successful launching of ERTS-1, for which we wish to express our sincere congratulations and admiration to the United States and to NASA. The results to come from ERTS will obviously constitute one of the corner-stones of the edifice we will try to erect here in the United Nations. Now the question is: Is anything being done to match this prodigious technical achievement in the organizational field? We submit that so far very little has been done and that therefore the United Nations Working Group should proceed speedily to consider those problems.

My delegation submitted a working paper on organizational matters which, after some initial hesitancy, was generally favourably received. This paper was intended as a first structuring of the organizational problem. We very much hope that other delegations will elaborate on it in the course of the Working Group's debates so that some substantive proposals may emerge in the organizational field, for failing this the United Nations will probably have missed the chance to play a significant role in the operational phase of remote sensing systems. The losers would be the great majority of nations that cannot wield this technique on their own. We appeal especially to the great Powers to realize that the best way to avoid conflict around the utilization of this new technology is through a United Nations-type co-operation which would be sure to safeguard the rights of nations to exploit their own resources. The experimental ERTS programme is characterized by a high degree of openness and a wish to accommodate national sensitivities. It is, however, a debatable question whether openness as such also means that all have the same chance to utilize the results of the technology. The contrary may well be true, especially for countries with a weak technological base and limited abilities to assess and make use of information. And this in turn points to one of the very basic problems in the remote-sensing field, namely that of training and education. This problem must be tackled without delay.

As members know, the Working Group established a task force to assess available material on the basis of studies to be carried out by the Secretariat. The first results of the efforts of the Secretariat have just been published and

(Mr. Rydbeck, Sweden)

will be studied this week by the task force. At first glance the Secretariat study seems to us to be a promising one. Certainly, however, in some fields it is somewhat sketchy and contains some rather unwarranted statements. It will, therefore, need further elaboration in the months and years to come. The Working Group and the outer-space Committee will have a great job to perform in the remote sensing field.

The second Working Group of this Committee, which deals with direct broadcast satellites, has not met for about two years. You will recall that the Working Group has so far held three sessions and published three reports which were generally considered to be of great interest and considerably influenced later debate in the field of broadcasting satellites. The Working Group concept proved useful in this interdisciplinary field, where legal problems are intertwined with purely technical considerations, frequency allocation problems, and so on. The Working Group has in its reports adopted a suitably pragmatic approach where practical co-operation between interested countries and broadcasters in matters of programme production and contents was given preference over a more restrictive, legalistic approach not likely to command general rapport.

The third report of the Group also stressed the need for the United Nations and the outer-space Committee to serve as a focal point and co-ordinator of international discussion concerning broadcasting satellites at a time when these are receiving increased attention in some specialized agencies, notably UNESCO and ITU.

The General Assembly, in its resolution 2733 A (XXV), which was adopted unanimously, endorsed the conclusions reached by the Working Group and invited ITU and UNESCO to continue work on those aspects of broadcasting satellites falling within their respective mandates. The Assembly also requested the outer-space Committee to keep under review the question of reconvening the Working Group at such time as additional material or substance might become available.

During the last two years action has been taken by concerned international organizations on various aspects of broadcasting from satellites, some of which are of direct relevance to the work of the outer-space Committee. They are:



(Mr. Rydbeck, Sweden)

First, the decisions and recommendations adopted by the ITU at the World Administrative Radio Conference for Space Telecommunications in Geneva last year. These decisions, which upon ratification will enter into force on 1 January 1973, deal with the allocation of frequencies for all kinds of space communications including satellite broadcasting as well as with the technical and administrative regulation concerning the establishment and operation of satellite communication systems;

Secondly, the draft declaration of guiding principles on the use of satellite broadcasting for the free flow of information, the spread of education and greater cultural exchange transmitted by the Director-General of UNESCO to the Secretary-General (A/AC.105/L.104);

Thirdly, the on-going work performed by UNESCO and WIPO with regard to the protection of television signals transmitted via satellites.

On 11 August 1972 the USSR requested the inclusion on the agenda of the 27th session of the United Nations General Assembly of the question of the elaboration of an international convention on the principles of the use of artificial earth satellites by States for direct television broadcasting. Presumably, this new item will be referred to the outer-space Committee and its Legal Sub-Committee.

In the light of these developments it seems advisable that the Working Group, in view of its interdisciplinary character and its co-ordinating functions, should be reconvened to study the new substantive material now available. In particular, the Working Group should be requested to assess the results of the World Administrative Radio Conference and their implications for the future work of the United Nations and the specialized agencies with regard to international agreements in the political and legal areas.

It is a fact that the detailed regulation proposed at the ITU Radio Conference concerning frequency registration, avoidance of interference, prior consultation, and so on, with respect to broadcast satellites seem to go a long way towards diminishing certain fears of a legal and political character. But, again, the matter is very complex and needs thorough examination. This could best be done by the Working Group.

(Mr. Rydbeck, Sweden)

As mentioned, UNESCO has drafted a declaration on satellite broadcasting to be submitted to the UNESCO General Conference in October this year. My own country initially had doubts about that declaration from the point of view of both content and procedure. In the process of drafting, the text has become less objectionable and could probably be accepted in the form of a non-binding declaration. From the point of view of procedure, however, we find it somewhat difficult to see why UNESCO got involved in a matter which seems to fit exactly into the mandate of the United Nations Working Group. Without wanting to start any inter-agency feud, we feel bound to declare that, in our opinion at least, it would be most appropriate that the United Nations Working Group, considering its central, co-ordinating role in the broadcast-satellite field, should review the UNESCO draft before it is finally adopted by the General Conference. Whether this course is followed or not, there is a definite reason to call upon the Working Group to study the text for its own purposes.



(Mr. Rydbeck, Sweden)

As we see it, a decision to reconvene the Group would not run counter to the new Soviet proposal to draft a convention on the use of direct broadcasting. On the contrary, the Working Group would be eminently placed to highlight those aspects of decisions of ITU and UNESCO which are particularly relevant for a legal discussion and could also provide some comments on the Soviet draft. We are convinced that discussion in the Legal Sub-Committee stands to gain from the procedure I have just outlined.

The Swedish delegation has circulated a memorandum to all members of the Outer Space Committee, in which the reconvening of the Working Group is proposed. We hope that the reasons given there as well as here today will convince representatives that a decision to this effect is warranted. We are, of course, at members' disposal for further explanations.

REQUESTS BY THE EUROPEAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANISATION AND THE EUROPEAN SPACE VEHICLE LAUNCHER DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATION FOR OBSERVER STATUS

The CHAIRMAN: There are no further names on the list of speakers for this meeting. I should therefore like to take this opportunity to bring to the attention of the Committee letters I have received from two organizations in which they request the granting of observer status.

The first letter is from the European Space Research Organisation (ESRO). The letter is in French, and I shall therefore read it out in French.

(interpretation from French)

"Neuilly, 29 August 1972,

"Mr. Chairman,

"The European Space Research Organisation has already had the opportunity on several occasions to interest itself in the work of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

"Furthermore, each year a report on the activities of the organisation has been sent to the United Nations for publication, and various communications have been made in order to meet requests by members of your Committee.

(The Chairman)

"In view of the similarity of the subjects of interest to your Committee and ESRO, I have the honour to request that our organisation be granted observer status in your Committee.

"It would be of great interest to our organisation to follow the development of the activities of your Committee and its Sub-Committees, and perhaps your work could benefit in certain areas from the experience of ESRO.

"I would be grateful if you would submit this request to the appropriate bodies of your Committee and inform me of any action that may be taken on it.

"In order to make it possible to send an observer to the session of your Committee which begins on 5 September, I should like to ask you to send us the Committee's reply as soon as possible.

"Accept, Mr. Chairman, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) A. Hocker"

(continued in English)

The second letter which I have received is from the European Space Vehicle Launcher Development Organisation (ELDO). This letter is also in French, and I shall therefore read it out in French.

(interpretation from French)

"Neuilly, 30 August 1972,

"Mr. Chairman,

"The European Space Vehicle Launcher Development Organisation has already had several opportunities of interesting itself in the work of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

"Furthermore, each year a report on the activities of the organisation has been sent to the United Nations for publication, and various communications have been made in reply to requests by your Committee.

"In view of the similarity of the subjects of interest to your Committee and ELDO, I have the honour to request you to grant our organisation observer status in your Committee.

"It would be of great interest to our organisation to follow the development of the activities of your Committee and its Sub-Committees, and perhaps your work could benefit in certain areas from the experience of ELDO.



(The Chairman)

"I would be grateful to you if you would submit this request to the appropriate bodies of your Committee and to inform me of any action taken on it.

"In order to enable us to send an observer to the session of your Committee which begins on 5 September, I should like to ask you to send us the Committee's reply as soon as possible.

"Accept, Mr. Chairman, the assurance of my highest consideration.

(Signed) R. Aubinière"

(continued in English)

I should like to give members some information on the present status of those two organizations with respect to the various bodies concerned.

It appears that at the request of the Secretary-General and in accordance with the recommendations of the Committee, ESRO and ELDO submit annual reports on their activities. Those two reports are included in the periodic report entitled "Activities and Resources of the United Nations, the Specialized Agencies and other Competent International Bodies", a report which is placed at the disposal of all delegations. Both ESRO and ELDO were invited to attend the outer space conference in Vienna in 1968 as observers and presented papers on their respective activities. ESRO in particular has been given observer status in the Working Group on Remote Sensing of the Earth by Satellites in accordance with the recommendation of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, endorsed by the parent Committee, which reads as follows:

"18. Participation in the Working Group will be open to members of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and authorized observers.

"19. The Working Group should solicit the views of the Legal Sub-Committee, appropriate specialized agencies and other international organizations and agencies and other bodies, particularly the Committee on Natural Resources. These views should be received as early as possible."

In this connexion, there was a formal request from ESRO for observer status, which was brought to the attention of the members of the Working Group by its Chairman. In the absence of objection, ESRO was given observer status and participated in the 1972 session of the Working Group.

(The Chairman)

I therefore bring these two requests to the attention of the Committee and ask members to reflect on them and to inform the Chairman at the appropriate time of their views, bearing in mind the wish expressed in both letters to send observers to our present session. That wish would seem to suggest that whatever reaction the Committee might have should be transmitted to the organizations at an early date.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.