

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The CHAIRMAN: As we agreed yesterday, the next stage of the work of this Committee is the adoption of our report, under agenda item 5. The draft report, with various amendments, has been distributed to members of the Committee by the Secretariat and by the Rapporteur respectively.

It is my intention, with the permission of the Committee, to adjourn now this formal meeting to give us a chance to look at the draft report in an informal round of consultations, which, in accordance with the procedure and customs of this Committee, will take place in a closed meeting limited to members of delegations represented on the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and to members of the Secretariat.

As there is no objection from members of the Committee to that procedure, this meeting is adjourned.

The meeting rose at 11.20 a.m.



UNITED NATIONS

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ENGLISH

COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND NINETEENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 15 September 1972, at 3.00 p.m.

Chairman:

Mr. JANKOWITSCH

(Austria)

- Report of the Committee to the General Assembly (continued)

This record is issued in final form pursuant to the decision taken by the Committee in September 1970 (see Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 20 (A/8020, para. 10)).

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (continued)

The CHAIRMAN: As agreed during our informal consultations of the past two days, the Committee will now proceed with the consideration of agenda item 5, "Report of the Committee to the General Assembly". I call on the Rapporteur to introduce the report.

Mr. SOUZA E SILVA (Brazil), Rapporteur: Before introducing the report, I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Committee to the revised document of 14 September distributed this morning in ditto form. I suggest that the Committee work first of all on this document, which incorporates all the amendments and it is therefore a final draft report in which there are only one or two editing corrections to be made. The Committee also has before it three documents numbered A/AC.105/XV/CRP.1, Add.1 and Add.2. They incorporate all the amendments made to the original draft report, with the exception of the few amendments agreed upon at our last informal meeting yesterday.

This new version of the draft report was therefore prepared according to the instructions of the Committee and with the structure that corresponds to the list of items approved by the Committee at the first meeting of this session.

As we are now coming to the fourth reading of the report, and as we have exhausted discussion on practically all the paragraphs in our debates at the informal meetings, I would suggest that we examine the report chapter by chapter, calling attention to any point members may wish to raise.

I therefore invite comments first on the Introduction to the report.

The CHAIRMAN: If there are no comments on the Introduction to the report, which comprises paragraphs 1-10, and if I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee approves that part of the report.

It was so decided.

Mr. SOUZA E SILVA (Brazil), Rapporteur: We come now to chapter I, Report of the Legal Sub-Committee, which is contained in the new paragraphs 11-18. I have no comments to make on it.

Mr. BRUCE (Canada): I should like to propose a minor editorial change. There are perhaps four references in the document to the draft convention on the registration of objects launched into space. That draft convention is referred to in the report as the "draft convention relating to the registration of objects launched into space for the exploration or use of outer space". I think that wording appears first in paragraph 13 A. My understanding is that the correct title is "draft convention on the registration of objects launched into space" and that it does not go on to say "for the exploration or use of outer space". I think the incorrect wording appears three or four times, and if the Rapporteur has no objection to making that change in all the references to the draft convention, we shall not have to raise the matter again.

The CHAIRMAN: The Rapporteur has taken note of the change proposed by the representative of Canada.

If there are no further comments, and if I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee approves chapter I of the report, consisting of paragraphs 11-18.

It was so decided.

Mr. SOUZA E SILVA (Brazil), Rapporteur: We come now to chapter II of the report, "Report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee". I should like the Committee to consider first paragraph 19, which is an introduction, and that part of section A, "Promotion of the application of space technology", which consists of paragraph 20-25.

The CHAIRMAN: If there are no comments, and if I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee approves that part of the report as it stands.

It was so decided.

Mr. SOUZA E SILVA (Brazil), Rapporteur: We come now to the section under the heading "Applications of space technology: specialized agencies and other international organizations". I should like to draw the attention of the Committee to paragraphs 29 and 30 which deal with 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, prepared by UNESCO. As agreed upon at the informal meetings, those two paragraphs should be included in chapter III, "Other matters", as its final paragraphs.

I invite the representatives to comment now on paragraphs 26-31.

Mr. MACRAE (United Kingdom): May I begin by complimenting our Rapporteur and thanking him for the very hard work he did in producing this report.

The only point I wish to make is whether the present paragraph 29 should not in fact stay in this section of the report, with paragraph 30 only being moved to the last part. I think there ought to be some reference in this part of the report to the UNESCO Draft Declaration of Guiding Principles, since they were considered the same as the ITU and COSPAR. The substantive discussion and the results of that discussion would then fall into place under the chapter headed "Other matters".

Mr. COCCA (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): The delegation of Argentina, which participated in the informal meetings on the wording of this paragraph, would also like to congratulate the Rapporteur and all those delegations which worked towards the achievement of this solution to a problem that seemed to be rather thorny, and we accept the present drafting. I should simply like to say that, in the opinion of the Argentine delegation, with this mention of the obligation to make comments on a given draft, we could create a precedent and the Committee in future would be compelled to consider and make comments on the work of other specialized agencies of the United Nations.

(Mr. Cocca, Argentina)

That is just a comment, but my delegation does not want to amend, correct or delete the present text, which was laboriously elaborated with the goodwill of many delegations here.

The CHAIRMAN: If there are no further comments, I shall take it that the Committee accepts the draft paragraphs as they stand. If I hear no objection, I shall take it also that the Committee accepts the suggestion made by the representative of the United Kingdom to have this part of the report appear under "Other matters".

Mr. MACRAE (United Kingdom): Perhaps I did not express my proposal quite clearly. I proposed that the present paragraph 29 should stay in this section and that the present paragraph 30 should appear under "Other matters". I could perhaps propose one small addition, that is, that at the end of the present paragraph 29 we add in brackets: "See also paragraph such and such in the section on "Other matters", inserting the new number of what is now paragraph 30.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for his suggestion.

Mr. SOUZA E SILVA (Brazil), Rapporteur: I should like to call attention to two corrections that have to be made to paragraph 29.

In the first line it should read "Draft Declaration of Guiding Principles" and not "on the Guiding Principles", and in the third line of the same paragraph it should read the "Spread of Education" and not "Spread of Information".

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Rapporteur and will take note of these corrections.

Mr. CHAKRAVARTY (India): Reverting to paragraph 30, I find that it begins with the words "As regards the above UNESCO draft...". The word "above" would not fit should we shift this paragraph to another place, so I would suggest that we either keep paragraphs 29 and 30 together or make a slight change so that the reference would not be inconsistent.

Mr. MACRAE (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland): I am sorry that when I spoke earlier I did not in fact have the text of paragraph 30 in front of me since the copy of this blue paper did not contain it. As I now have the advantage of it I would like to say that I certainly agree with the representative of India, and I think that the more satisfactory way of dealing with this point would be to make a consequential drafting amendment rather than to keep the paragraphs where they are. The paragraph might read something like this:

"As regards the UNESCO draft declaration of guiding principles on the use of satellite broadcasting for the free flow of information, spread of education and greater cultural exchange mentioned in paragraph 29" -- it would be mentioned in paragraph 29 as it now is -- "the Committee, having heard the views expressed by members...", and so forth.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom, and if that is agreeable also to the representative of India we will proceed accordingly.

Mr. SOUZA E SILVA (Brazil), Rapporteur: Mr. Chairman, still on paragraph 30, my idea was that were we to put that in chapter IV, "Other matters", we would have to insert a heading, which would consist of the title of the declaration, so that we would not have to take care of this amendment in the text already approved.

The CHAIRMAN: If that is agreeable we will have this heading under chapter IV.

Would members of the Committee now comment on paragraphs 32 to 37? Since there are no comments, I take it that the Committee agrees to these paragraphs.

It was so decided.

Mr. SOUZA E SILVA (Brazil), Rapporteur: Turning to the next heading, Space technology and the environment, I should like to draw the attention of members of the Committee to paragraph 41, in which a small change was made yesterday that is not included in this text. It is in the fifth line. The words "to consult, as appropriate" should read "to establish appropriate contacts with the proposed organizations" and so on. That was the text finally approved yesterday.

Also, some delegations have suggested to me that paragraph 42 could read better. It was thought that in the sixth line there were too many commas and very few words, and that it should read "the possibility of preparing, if possible in 1973, a pamphlet of several pages unless in order to meet that need and" and so forth, so that the same words are just put in a different arrangement.

I invite comments on paragraphs 38 to 45.

Mr. SKALA (Sweden): Just a minor point. I notice that in two paragraphs we use the word "potential" in the plural. I wonder whether my English-speaking colleagues would say if that is a proper use of the word. I would have preferred it in the singular. I refer to the second line of paragraph 38 and to the third line of paragraph 42.

The CHAIRMAN: Would either the representative of the United Kingdom or the representative of the United States care to comment on this? I realize that there are representatives of other English speaking States among us and I hope that they will not take exception, but since the representative of Sweden has made this express appeal could we perhaps ask one of them to comment.

Mr. BLACK (United States of America): Mr. Chairman, I defer to the mother tongue.

Mr. MACRAE (United Kingdom): I entirely agree with the helpful comment of my colleague.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representatives of the United States and United Kingdom for their valuable advice.

If there are no further comments on these paragraphs I shall take it that the Committee agrees to these paragraphs of the report as they now stand, with the amendments mentioned by the Rapporteur.

It was so decided.

Mr. SOUZA E SILVA (Brazil), Rapporteur: We come now so section C "The Working Group on Remote Sensing of the Earth by Satellites". I invite comments on paragraphs 46 to 48.

The CHAIRMAN: Since no representative wishes to comment on paragraphs 46 to 48 I take it that the Committee accepts this portion of the report.

It was so decided.

Mr. SOUZA E SILVA (Brazil), Rapporteur: We come now to chapter III, "Other matters", which comprises paragraphs 49 to 54. I have no comments to make, Mr. Chairman, but perhaps you would invite comments by members of the Committee.

Mr. COCCA (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): This relates only to the Spanish text. In the fourth line of paragraph 51 of the Spanish text there is mention of direct broadcast satellites. At the third session of the Working Group on Direct Broadcasts the Spanish-speaking delegations stated that the correct term in Spanish was "radiodifusión directa". Moreover at the beginning of this session a booklet of the International Telecommunication Union on telecommunications in the peaceful uses of outer space was distributed, and in that document it was pointed out that the last ITU conference, held from 7 June to 17 July last year, had amended article 1 relating to definitions and 84 AP defining the "servicio de radiodifusión por satélite".

So in the Spanish text we should change "transmisión directa" to "radiodifusión directa" for the reasons stated and because of the recent amendment of definitions by the ITU.

The CHAIRMAN: The Rapporteur will, of course, take note of the representative of Argentina's observations, which will be reflected in the final version of the Spanish text.

Mr. MACRAE (United Kingdom): It is a very small point, but I believe that it would be more correct if the last word but two in paragraph 54 were changed from "its" to "their".

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for that valuable point.

If there are no other comments on paragraphs 49 to 54, I shall take it that the Committee accepts this portion of the report.

It was so decided.

Mr. SOUZA E SILVA (Brazil), Rapporteur: There are no changes to be made in the last chapter of the report, "Future work of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies". I therefore invite comments on it.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the only change needed is in the numbering of the paragraphs: they are now numbered 51, 52 and 53, but they should be renumbered 55, 56 and 57.

I call on the Rapporteur.

Mr. SOUZA E SILVA (Brazil), Rapporteur: The Chairman of the Legal Sub-Committee wishes to recall the amendment which he proposed but which is not included here. The second line of paragraph 56 should read: "... that all its meetings at the forthcoming session...".

The CHAIRMAN: It was indeed so agreed and it should stand now in that form.

If I hear no further comments on paragraphs 55 to 57 I shall take it that the Committee adopts this part of the report and, therefore, the report as a whole.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak on item 5.

Mr. MOTT (Australia): On 13 September, at our last formal meeting, we had a most interesting discussion under agenda item 4 of the proposal to reconvene the Working Group on Direct Broadcast Satellites. My delegation did not speak then since at the time we preferred to hear the views of other delegations on this subject. We refer, however, to the Chairman's statement then that delegations wishing to speak further could do so under item 5, consideration of the report, at an appropriate point, and would therefore like to offer a few brief comments.

First, we should like to express our gratitude to the representative of Sweden for putting this proposal before the Committee. We welcome this action and strongly support the reconvening of the Working Group, with a broad mandate to consider legal and technical aspects of the subject of direct broadcast satellites. We understand that the wording of the report which we have just approved is directed to such an outcome.

The aspect of this proposition that attracted most attention during the discussion was the question whether it would be desirable for UNESCO to defer the final adoption of its 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, pending a study of that document by the Working Group and the submission of comments to UNESCO. My delegation realizes, of course, that it is not for this Committee to give instructions or directives to UNESCO. Nevertheless, since our Committee is the central body for space questions in the United Nations family, my delegation believes that we have a duty to comment to UNESCO on the draft declaration and we consider too that our Committee's comments could result in valuable improvements in the draft declaration. It is our view, therefore, that approval of the declaration by UNESCO should be deferred, pending consideration by the Working Group which we have agreed to reconvene, and perhaps by the Legal Sub-Committee.

(Mr. Mott, Australia)

In saying this we recognize, however, that this was not the unanimous position of all representatives in the Committee and we have listened with care and interest to statements by delegations on this problem. The wording on this subject in our report, as we all know, represents a welcome, but at the same time hard-won, compromise. My delegation would like to congratulate our Rapporteur and those delegations which were prepared to yield a little of their firmly held positions to make possible this agreement to reconvene the Working Group.

While I have the floor, I should like to say once again that my delegation very much appreciates the work once again put into this subject by our Rapporteur. This year, as in past years, he has given us notable service both of drafting and negotiation in bringing our report to the stage of final approval with what I may say is so little pain.

Mr. COCCA (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): The delegation of Argentina would simply like to recall that, in its first statement in the plenary Committee, it spoke of the need to increase the number of States members comprising our Committee. From the time of the creation of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to date there have been many new States Members admitted to the United Nations; on the other hand, there have been tremendous developments and remarkable progress in the fields of science and technology, with correspondingly increased legal developments. All States have an interest in collaborating very closely in the work of this Committee, whose fundamental task is, precisely, international co-operation. We must also take into account the need to include the various legal systems of the world in a more comprehensive way than at present. For this reason, the proposal to increase the membership of the Committee-- which was supported by the representative of Austria and other delegations here and which led to a draft proposal -- is one of concern to my delegation, and we should like to have other delegations take part. This will be in the records of the Committee's proceedings, not in the report which we have adopted.

I should like to express my gratitude for the Rapporteur's work on this difficult matter. While I shall not now mention all the others who have collaborated, I would congratulate the Chairman and say that we appreciate the decision regarding the question of Mar del Plata in Argentina and will continue in the same spirit to work towards the goal of international co-operation channelled through the United Nations.

Mr. CHAKRAVARTY (India): My delegation had occasion to express a divergent view, rather informally, in respect of one of the items, namely, the UNESCO declaration. I should therefore like with your permission, Mr. Chairman, to make a few brief and very general observations in this regard.

The use of outer space for direct television broadcasting through satellites is a matter of colossal importance to the world community as a whole, and to developing countries in particular. Such broadcasts will make several positive contributions towards informing and educating the masses, promoting economic and social development, modernizing communities, and developing friendly relations among States.

Such broadcasts can, however, also have the negative consequence of generating and aggravating conflicts by indulging in harmful propaganda and interfering in the internal affairs of States.

It is therefore necessary to regulate this use of outer space through an appropriate legal framework, and in order to be able to have this legal framework it is necessary to know the technical capabilities -- for example, how to handle the question of the spill-over of broadcasts. Unless we knew these technical limitations and capabilities it would be very difficult to set up the legal framework, so a composite effort is necessary.

Although direct television broadcasting through satellites can be regulated by several existing rules of international law, including those embodied in the United Nations Charter, Conventions concerning outer space, the Declaration on Friendly Relations, resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, technical regulations adopted by the ITU and so on, it would be desirable to have a single, comprehensive declaration or convention embodying principles applicable to this specific use of outer space.

We welcome this opportunity to express our appreciation of the Soviet initiative in proposing the draft convention on the use of satellites for direct television broadcasting. We also congratulate UNESCO for the efforts it has made and the initiative it has taken in drafting its declaration of guiding principles for the use of satellite broadcasting embodied in its document which has been distributed. We also express our appreciation of the very good work done by ITU in 1971.

(Mr. Chakravarty, India)

While I have the floor may I also take this opportunity to express our gratitude and appreciation to the Chairman for the skill and ability with which he has conducted the deliberations of this Committee. We have been very impressed by his patience and impartiality and his ability to persuade delegations holding diametrically opposite views to reach a compromise.

I also thank the Rapporteur for his very good, hard work. I have no doubt that he had to spend his evenings working on these drafts, and anybody having the experience of being a Rapporteur will appreciate how much work he had to put in in order to prepare his report, which is a very good report, and to put it out on time.

I should also like to express my gratitude and appreciation to the other delegations which, despite differing views and instructions were always willing to make an honest effort to come to a compromise. It was that spirit of co-operation that enabled us to achieve what we did.

I also take this opportunity to thank the officers of the Committee and the interpreters, translators and other members of the Secretariat for their hard work. Without their efforts it would not have been possible to achieve a full measure of success.

Before I conclude I should also like to thank Mr. Ricciardi once again for his very good work. We wish him well in his new assignment.

Mr. ZAHRAN (Egypt) (interpretation from French): I should like to express the position of my delegation on the subject mentioned by the representative of Argentina, namely, the membership of this Committee. Indeed, I have closely studied the opinions expressed during the general debate by the representatives of Argentina and Austria regarding the possibility of enlarging the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

My delegation has noted for some time now that there are Members of the United Nations which are interested in the work of this Committee but are not members of it. Other Members are carrying out activities in outer space, and we cannot profit from their experience.

Furthermore, since the establishment of this Committee in 1959 the membership of the United Nations has increased steadily, without that increase being reflected even relatively in the composition of this Committee. There are also

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

developing countries which are particularly interested in the work of this Committee, particularly in the application of space technology to the field of development.

That is how matters stand. Is it not time, therefore, to invite other countries which, for one reason or another, are interested in the activities of our Committee to become members of the Committee so that we may have an opportunity to benefit from their experience in our future work?

I would not conclude without emphasizing the fact that a limit should nevertheless be placed on such an enlargement of the Committee. We should not revise the composition of this Committee to such an extent that its work would in any way be impeded or retarded. Accordingly, my delegation is in favour of a qualified revision of the composition of the membership of this Committee.

(Mr. Zahran, Egypt)

I wish to take advantage of this opportunity to express to you, Mr. Chairman, my delegation's thanks for the efforts you have made and the talent you have displayed in conducting our work. At the same time I would express gratitude to the officers of the Committee, to the Rapporteur, to Mr. Ricciardi and to the Outer Space Affairs Division. Their contributions facilitated our task and helped us successfully to conclude the mission of this Committee.

We would express the wish that in this spirit of co-operation the members of the Committee will in the near future be able to conclude the draft treaties submitted to this Committee on the moon, on the registration of objects launched into outer space, and so on.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from French): I thank the representative Egypt for his kind remarks.

Mr. MACRAE (United Kingdom): Mr. Chairman, in your opening statement you referred to the important task with which we were faced and expressed the hope that there would be fruitful, effective and cordial co-operation among all delegations present with a view to a very fruitful session. If I may speak on behalf of all the Western European delegations I would say that that aim has certainly been achieved. We may not perhaps have achieved as much as we had hoped. I know that at the outset we had hopes of possibly completing the negotiations on the treaty on the moon. Nevertheless, we have substantial progress to show, and I think that this is in no little measure due to the most able leadership we have had from you, Sir. I speak on behalf of others here also when I say that we look forward to a long and fruitful association with you in your present commanding role.

I should also like to say -- as I have already said in a personal capacity today -- that we are very fortunate in our Rapporteur and the masterly way in which he assimilated, absorbed and provided the bewildering variety of texts. We are all most grateful to him.

We are also very grateful to the Secretariat and, of course, to the hard-working translators, reporters and others who made the rapid compilations of the different versions of the reports available to us.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for the kind words he has expressed on behalf of the Western European delegations.

Mr. PIRADOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): On behalf of the Soviet delegation and the delegations of the other socialist countries participating in this Committee, I should like to join in the expressions of gratitude to you, Mr. Chairman, and to your colleagues, for the very valuable work you have carried out.

It may have been assumed that our Committee could proceed at cosmic speed, but we must remember that cosmic speeds are of great magnitude. Perhaps in the future the Committee will meet on some other planet and examine problems at a considerably greater speed than at present. However, all these problems are of keen interest to us, and the volume of the work done here is beyond all doubt, and it was extremely complex.

For the first time, you, Sir, have taken over guidance of our Committee. We should like to express our deep thanks to you for having successfully carried out your task. We should also like to thank the Rapporteur, Ambassador Souza e Silva, whom we have known for many years as a man with a vast cultural and legal background. We have seen how he has been able to present our reports to us in the shortest possible time.

I also wish to express thanks to the observers that are present here and to all those who have assisted you, Mr. Chairman. I am referring to the personnel of the United Nations Secretariat, your Vice-Chairman and the interpreters who were able to do everything necessary to facilitate the successful conclusion of our session.

Once again, thank you, Sir.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of the Soviet Union for the words he has addressed to me on behalf of the socialist members of the Committee.

Mr. COCCA (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): I am speaking on behalf of the Latin American delegations and the delegation of Morocco, which has been kind enough to request us to include it, in expressing congratulations to the officers of the Committee and particularly to the Chairman, who for the first time

(Mr. Cocca, Argentina)

was given such a delicate role and filled it in the manner we all expected of him -- with much prudence, great tact and knowledge, awareness of his responsibilities and the intent of making this Committee progress in its work.

I would reiterate our congratulations to the Rapporteur on his work, which was so burdensome and complex. We know that the report he submitted was the target at which we all directed criticism, but we have also had the opportunity of speaking of its merits.

The co-operation extended to this Committee by the Division of Outer-Space Affairs has been extremely important, and the entire work of the team has been considerable and has helped make this a successful session.

As regards the Expert on Space Applications, we congratulate him on his useful contribution to the success of our work.

The members of the Secretariat are in no way excluded from these thanks, and we wish to express our gratitude to them.

We are convinced that the future work of the Committee on Outer-Space will be increasingly fruitful. That is the wish of the Latin-American and Moroccan delegations.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Spanish): I appreciate the kind words expressed by the representative of Argentina on behalf of the Latin-American and Moroccan delegations.

(spoke in English)

Does any other member wish to speak? If not, I shall now call upon the representative of UNESCO.

Mr. SOMMERLAD (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization): With regard to the UNESCO declaration, I should like to thank the Committee for having reached such a satisfactory formulation on what I regret became a controversial issue. It is of course for the member States of UNESCO to decide what steps should now be taken, but I hope that it may be possible for our General Conference to find a way of complying with the Committee's wishes while not losing the benefits of the work that has already been accomplished.

The CHAIRMAN: I understand that no other representative wishes to speak, and therefore we come to the concluding part of our meeting.

This is a very difficult task for the Chairman and the other officers of the Committee. It would be fascinating at this stage to try to sum up what our Committee has achieved over the past two weeks, but I will not do so in view of all that has been said by representatives in such an appropriate and precise way and especially in view of the report now before us, which we adopted a few moments ago and which reflects, I think, in a very true manner and in a way satisfactory to all of us what we have done over the past two weeks. A new and significant period of work now lies before us, and a quick look at the calendar of meetings for the next half-year suffices to show how immense a task lies ahead of us and how great is the number of important subjects this Committee will have to deal with. I think that in preparing this report -- that is, in preparing the future work of this Committee and of our Sub-Committees and Working Groups and thus the work of the United Nations dedicated to outer space -- we have to a highly satisfactory degree managed to create momentum. I think we have provided guidance and direction in various fields. I would not point to any specific fields, because there are many of these fields in which our Committee has shown the way our work should proceed. And while, as the representative of the Soviet Union has pointed out, the speed with which we were able to proceed was perhaps not exactly cosmic, I think we are all agreed that we should like to proceed as quickly as possible in approaching these distant ideals. It is good to have these ideals before us, and we can try to approach them in the future.

(The Chairman)

It has been said on many occasions that this is the focal point of United Nations activities in the field of outer space, and I think that many of the decisions and recommendations contained in our report assert this role, a role which we should not wish to see collide with the tasks of other bodies and other agencies but which at the same time should be a firm basis from which to direct our work.

At this moment it might be appropriate for the Chairman to thank all representatives for the most constructive and co-operative spirit in which we have worked together over the past two weeks. It is most gratifying for the Chairman and I am sure all of us, that it was largely in a spirit of co-operation, of working together and not against each other, that we tackled the work before us. I am sure that we should not have been able to come to such a rapid and satisfactory conclusion to our work had it been otherwise. Therefore it is the sincere hope of all of us -- if I may sum it up in this way -- that we might be able in future periods of our work to continue in this spirit and to come even closer together and become something like a team which can work together for the tasks we have set ourselves. In saying so, I wish once again, as the Chairman who has your confidence and hopes to keep it, to thank all of you who made so valuable a contribution to our work and who have provided so much inspiration and guidance to us all and have thus helped the Chairman to achieve what small measure of success he was able to secure. These thanks are due to all delegations and to my fellow officers, to the Vice-Chairman and to the Rapporteur who has borne the brunt of our labours over recent days and has done work that has I know been highly appreciated by all the members. I should like also to thank the members for the expressions of thanks they have directed to the Chairman of the Legal Sub-Committee, who has been with us over these past two weeks and has been of valuable help to all of us. In particular I wish to thank members for what they have said about the work of Mr. Ricciardi, our Expert on Space Applications, who has been deeply gratified by all the expressions of appreciation and thanks he has received from delegations for the work he has contributed towards the objectives of our Committee.

(The Chairman)

Last but not least, I think we have greatly profited, as in past years, from the valuable assistance given to us by the Secretariat of the United Nations and in particular by the Outer Space Affairs Division, under the guidance of Mr. Abdel-Ghani and his team, who have greatly contributed to the smooth and rapid conclusion of our work. We have also had a most valuable team of collaborators and assistants sometimes unseen: all those from the Secretariat who were helping with the interpretation and with the providing of our records and all the members of the Secretariat who have helped us to conclude our work. I wish to include all of them in the expression of our sincere thanks for the work we have now completed.

I am very happy that I can conclude this statement on a note of optimism, a note of hope, because, after all, even if the optimism I expressed at the beginning has not been completely justified, it has been justified to a very large extent. On this hopeful note -- with the hope of greater achievements on the part of our Committee, especially during next year, when such a rich calendar of events lies before us -- I wish now to thank all members again and thus to conclude the resumed fifteenth session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The session of the Committee is now closed.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.