

**Committee on the Peaceful
Uses of Outer Space
Legal Subcommittee**

Unedited transcript

718th Meeting

Thursday, 7 April 2005, 3 p.m.

Vienna

Chairman: Mr. S. Marchisio (Italy)

The meeting was called to order at 3.19 p.m.

The CHAIRMAN: *(First part of meeting has not been recorded and goes straight into the statement by Ecuador).*

(agenda item 5 missing) – (not recorded)

Matters relating to (a) the definition and delimitation of outer space and (b) the character and utilization of the geostationary orbit (agenda item 6)

Ms. R. VÁSQUEZ DE MESSMER (Ecuador) *(interpretation from Spanish): (first part of statement) ...* Since this is the first time that my delegation is making an intervention, I would like to express on behalf of Ecuador our congratulations for your chairmanship of this Subcommittee. We wish you much success. We are sure that under your experience and ability, the conducting of this forty-fourth session of the Legal Subcommittee will conclude in valuable and concrete results for the international community, particularly for the developing countries to reach their aspiration to integrate in a more effective way to the benefits of the peaceful uses of outer space through an appropriate legal regime.

I would also like to congratulate members of the Bureaux and I would like particularly to thank Dr. Sergio Camacho for his efficient work in the Office for Outer Space Affairs and you can be sure that my delegation will support his proposal to bolster the work of the Office.

We would also like to congratulate the Secretariat on its excellent work by way of preparing for this current set of sessions.

I would also take this opportunity to indicate that my delegation subscribes entirely to the statement made by the Bolivian Ambassador on behalf of the GRULAC Group.

Mr. Chairman, my country has been a fully-fledged member of COPUOS since 1983 and has fully participated in the work of this Committee. In this way, it has made a positive contribution to the development of international space law with the proposal to bring about a legal regime, a special regime, which regulates activities in outer space and to make sure that the benefits of exploration and space activities are felt in the quality of life for humanity and, thus, guarantee equal prosperity and welfare for present and future generations.

In keeping with these principles, my country supports the maintaining and analyzing of the theme of the definition and delimitation of outer space and it was in this spirit that Ecuador led the Working Group last year set up for this purpose demonstrating its openness to contributing the examination of such an important theme and in this way we congratulate those countries which have sent their replies to the questionnaire on possible legal issues with regards to space objects.

My delegation considers that the compilation of such replies, as well as the analytical summary of them, carried out by the Secretariat, will be of great use and will mean that we will be able to have technical

In its resolution 50/27 of 6 December 1995, the General Assembly endorsed the recommendation of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space that, beginning with its thirty-ninth session, the Committee would be provided with unedited transcripts in lieu of verbatim records. This record contains the texts of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages as transcribed from taped recordings. The transcripts have not been edited or revised.

Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, within one week of the date of publication, to the Chief, Conference Management Service, Room D0708, United Nations Office at Vienna, P.O. Box 500, A-1400, Vienna, Austria. Corrections will be issued in a consolidated corrigendum.



and legal bases or foundations for a thorough and appropriate examination of this particular theme and we hope that the implementation of the groups who work under theme 6 will lead to conclusions of broad general benefit.

Mr. Chairman, my delegation considers it is vital to use outer space correctly and properly in a way that is based on an active and unconditional international cooperation, taking account of the particular needs of developing countries.

In keeping with these proposals, Ecuador's ongoing policy with regards to the theme of access and equal use of the geostationary orbit has been to reiterate that this limited natural resource must be accessible and priority for all countries, especially developing countries, and with a particular geographical location requiring use of outer space for matters of a common interest.

Ecuador advocates that we should continue the debate on the use of the geostationary orbit and we should seek new areas of consensus in keeping with the *sui generis* nature of this natural resource which, in keeping with what was stated by the ITU, is a limited natural resource and which, ultimately should guarantee all States equitable access to it.

Mr. Chairman, we are particularly concerned in keeping with statistics published by the ITU that there are about 320 fixed satellite stations currently in orbit, 95 per cent of which belong to industrialized countries. This situation very much requires that our interest and the interests and concerns of those countries, I am thinking of the social, political and the legal interest, should be properly dealt with in order to avoid discriminatory practices which safeguard solely the interests of technologically advanced countries.

Ecuador sees itself as a country with special interests, despite the fact that it does not have the technical capabilities in order to be able to enjoy the advantages of this natural resource and this is why we, in this forum, we urge the international community to commit to industrialized countries, promoting the means and the technological conditions so that developing countries can have equal access to the geostationary orbit. And for this we require firm will to implement this practice and this commitment and to make sure that this commitment does not just remain empty words. And it is, therefore, clear that the legal regulation by the United Nations must make sure that this is available to countries in development and that they must have an equal voice and say in the process of reconciling orbital positions, especially in cases which

are of interest to them, we need a set of orbital positions for the time when our capacity means that we can launch a satellite.

Mr. Chairman, on the other hand, my delegation considers that this is the right moment to underline the effective work that was done by Colombia, as the Temporary Secretary of the Fourth Conference of the Americas. Its achievements under its management, without any doubt, have been a significant contribution to consolidating legal mechanisms as well as mechanisms of cooperation and coordination when it comes to space activities in the region.

Mr. Chairman, my country is delighted to reiterate before this august body what we announced at the last most recent meeting of the Scientific and Technical Committee of COPUOS, namely that the Ecuadorian Government have accepted that Quito should be the location for the Fifth Space Conference of the Americas in July 2006 and we are encouraged here by the firm proposal to contribute to the institutionalization of this important regional forum which would confirm its vocation as a forum for the legal defence and maintenance of its legitimate interests in developing countries.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*): I would like to thank you very much Madam for your congratulations and I would ask that you convey best wishes to your Ambassador for his quick recovery.

(*Continued in English*) Are there any other delegations wishing to speak on this agenda item at this afternoon's meeting.?

I see none.

We will, therefore, continue our consideration of agenda item 6, Matters Relating to (a) the Definition and Delimitation and Delimitation of Outer Space and (b) the Character and Utilization of the Geostationary Orbit, tomorrow morning.

Review and possible revision of the Principles Relevant to the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space (agenda item 7)

Distinguished delegates, I would now like to continue our consideration of agenda item 7, Review and Possible Revision of the Principles Relevant to the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space.

Are there any delegations wishing to take the floor on this agenda item at this afternoon's meeting?

I see none.

We will, therefore, continue our consideration of agenda item 7, Review and Possible Revision of the Principles Relevant to the use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space, tomorrow morning.

Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished delegates, I will shortly adjourn this meeting of the Subcommittee so that the Working Group on the Definition and Delimitation of Outer Space can hold its third meeting and so that the preliminary exchange of views on the report of the open-ended ad hoc Working Group on the Preliminary Draft Protocol on Matters Specific to Space Assets can continue.

Before doing so, however, I would like to inform delegates of our schedule of work for tomorrow morning. We will reconvene here tomorrow morning at 10.00 a.m. At that time, we will continue our consideration of agenda item 6, Matters Relating to the Definition and Delimitation of Outer Space and the Character and Utilization of the Geostationary Orbit, and item 7, Review and Possible Revision of the Principles Relevant to the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space.

I then intend to adjourn the plenary meeting so that the preliminary exchange of views on the report of the open-ended ad hoc Working Group on the Preliminary Draft Protocol on Matters Specific to Space Assets can continue and the Working Group on Agenda Item 6(a) can hold its fourth meeting.

If there is still time remaining, I would propose that we continue our informal discussion on new agenda items for the forty-fifth session of the Subcommittee in 2006.

Are there any questions or comments on this proposed schedule?

I see none.

I now invite Mr. Monserrat Filho to assume the Chair for the Working Group on the Definition and Delimitation of Outer Space.

This meeting is now adjourned until 10.00 a.m. tomorrow morning.

The meeting closed at 3.35 p.m.