

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

*Unedited transcript*

828<sup>th</sup> Meeting

Friday, 1 April 2011, 10 a.m.

Vienna

*Chairman: Mr. A. Talebzadeh (Islamic Republic of Iran)*

*The meeting was called to order at 10.13 a.m.*

**The CHAIRMAN** Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, good morning. I now declare open the 828th meeting of the Legal Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

I would first like to inform you of our programme of work for this morning. We will continue our consideration of agenda item 3, general exchange of views; agenda item 6(a) definition and delimitation of outer space and (b) the character and utilization of the geostationary orbit. We will also continue our consideration of agenda item 10, general exchange of information on national mechanisms relating to space debris mitigation measures. We will begin agenda item 12, proposals to the Committee for new agenda items, to discuss organizational matters of the work of this Subcommittee.

I would like to remind delegations to provide the Secretariat with possible corrections on the provisional list of participants which was distributed as Conference Room Paper 2, so that the Secretariat can finalize the list. Any corrections should be submitted in writing by Monday, 4 April.

Are there any questions or comments on this proposed schedule? I see none.

**General exchange of views** (agenda item 3)

The first speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of Spain. I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Spain.

**Mr. S. ANTÓN ZUZUNEGUI** (Spain) (*interpretation from Spanish*) Spain would like to say how very much satisfied it is to see you preside over this fiftieth session of the Legal Subcommittee of COPUOS, your experience and professional skills will be of the greatest use to make sure that this Subcommittee achieves the intended results. This delegation would like to congratulate Dr. Mazlan Othman for the work she has done at the head of the Office for Outer Space Affairs of the United Nations.

Spain would like to take this opportunity to express its condolences to the government and people of Japan because of the tragedy unleashed by the earthquake and subsequent tsunami.

Space has become a fundamental part and parcel of our lives and an essential engine of the global economy. The applications and spin-offs of space programmes have brought revolution to other strategic sectors such as security, meteorology, Earth observation, medicine, exploration and use of resources, navigation or new IT and communication technologies. The Spanish space sector, both in its own capacity and through active participation in a variety of international organizations, has demonstrated over the past decades both its ability and competitiveness in the most varied nature areas of space industry, such as space launching systems, satellites operations,

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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 D0771, United Nations Office at Vienna, P.O. Box 500, A-1400, Vienna, Austria. Corrections will be issued in a consolidated corrigendum.

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\_\_\_\_\_ (?) and a wide range of services based on space technology. This is a future-oriented area that is to play an essential role in our future lives which is why we believe that the development and use of outer space must go hand in hand with efficient and rational regulatory measures. Spain is firmly convinced that this Legal Subcommittee is, and should remain, the body in charge of the legal framework that would then benefit mankind as a whole.

We have focused our attentions and efforts on the space sector strategic plan covering 2007 to 2011. The most ambitious objective is the national satellite-based Earth observation programme. There is a framework agreement bringing together the Ministry of Industry and the Ministry of Defence, signed in July 2007, to develop two satellites, INGENIO and Paz. The optical INGENIO satellite is managed by the Industrial Technology Development Centre under the technical and programme based authority of the European Space Agency (ESA), it is to be launched in 2014. However, the radar satellite, Paz, comes under the leadership of HISDERSAT and the National Aerospace Technology Institute to be launched in 2013. The national observation programme will make Spain one of the few countries with optical and radar technology.

In July 2009, the first private Spanish satellite was launched, DEIMOS-1, also known as Spain-DMC 1. This satellite is part of the Spanish contribution to the disaster monitoring constellation intended to monitor disasters. With Hispasat, Spain has one of the communication systems with the best penetration rate in the Latin American market. It was set up in 1989 and at present has five satellites placed on geostationary orbit. Hispasat 1C/1D/1E located at the 30° West position over the Atlantic have all forms of civilian communication in Ku-band and the Spanish territory and large portions of Europe and over the American continent. It has a privileged position on the Atlantic and provides broadband internet access as well as interactive services and multimedia, such as digital technology, remote training, tele-medicine, distribution of content, on-call video and video conferencing of a high quality. Hispasat, with Amazon 1 and 2 satellites over the coast of Brazil, open up wider coverage of the American continent down to Patagonia and up to Canada as well as Ku and C wavelength communications with and from Spain.

Thanks to a bilateral convention with the United States, Spain participates in the Mars Science Laboratory, consisting of the Curiosity robot development by NASA. The Curiosity programme will take off in 2011 and will reach its destination in 2012.

It is very compact, 1.4 kilogram, it is known as a REMS and it is on top of the rover. With its space user capacities we have every interest in ensuring free and safe access and use of outer space that is a benefit to all mankind. We are in favour of reviewing the application in legal terms and fostering development of outer space. Spain is Party to the four first treaties that apply to outer space, these are the underpinnings of the legal structure that apply to outer space and we are in favour of universalization and full-fledged implementation.

As for training. In the University of Jaén last year, from 30 August to 10 September 2010, we held the 19th summer course of the European Space Law Centre with many students coming from institutions and universities throughout Europe and beyond. Then there is a workshop centred on protecting the environment of outer space. Among other issues we will be there discussing the protection of the environment, it is to be held between 7 and 9 November and there will be top grade lecturers available from throughout Europe. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of Spain for a very good statement.

The next speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of Kazakhstan. I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Kazakhstan.

**Ms. L. TLEPBERGENOVA** (Kazakhstan) (*interpretation from Russian*) The delegation of the Republic of Kazakhstan would like to thank you for this opportunity afforded to us to speak at the fiftieth session of the Legal Subcommittee. We would also like to thank you as well as OOSA and the Legal Subcommittee Secretariat for all the excellent work that has gone into organizing and conducting the current LSC session, which is aimed at the consideration of very important international matters relating to the development and refinement of international outer space law.

The delegation of Kazakhstan would like to express its solidarity with the other delegations which have expressed to you their most sincere condolences with regard to the hard times experienced by the peoples of Japan and New Zealand following the natural disasters befalling those countries.

The Republic of Kazakhstan fully supports the activities of the LSC of COPUOS and would like to express its position that it is highly necessary to develop the mechanisms of international legal regulation of all of the issues which may arise in the course of outer space activities. We advocate the

position that it is necessary to establish an order of use of the geostationary orbit ensuring equal opportunities of States to exploit this unique and limited natural resource.

We also support the adoption of decisions having to do with the definition and delimitation of outer space. We believe that the legal regulation of this issue will be of benefit to other States especially those of which the laws and interests might possibly be impinged upon during the conduct of space operations by other States and organizations. We recognize that these matters are all complex and the multifarious issues up for legal regulation are certainly not ambivalent. However, we do believe that the resolution of these for functionally practical reasons as well as for reasons which have to do with the heightening pace of outer space activities, the involvement of States and organizations and the increasing complexity and number of all the components involved certainly call for this sort of an approach. We believe that it is necessary for us to state that, since we are a member of the UN and of OOSA, we are fully seeking to implement all of the legal obligations which have been incumbent upon us as per the documents which we have agreed on.

For example, we would like to refer to the fact that in 1997 our Republic has ratified all of the five UN agreements on outer space. Here I am referring to the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies; the Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space; the Convention on International Liability; the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space; as well as the Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and other Celestial Bodies. As per these agreements we are fulfilling all the obligations incumbent upon us. We are informing, inter alia, the UN as for the launches of outer space vehicles, for example, in May there is going to the launch of the communications and broadcasting satellite, KazSat-2.

As regards the review of some of the positions of the agreements referred to above, that is part and parcel of the usual standard setting and developing process. In this regard the delegation of Republic of Kazakhstan positively considers the proposals presented by States such as the Russian Federation, Ukraine, China, as well as some other States, referring to a possible review of certain agreements on outer space, to optimize them and to possibly develop a universal comprehensive convention on international

outer space law which would involve also closing the lacunae which are in the present status of consideration of these issues. In particular this would affect the prevention of the militarization of outer space, ensuring equal and fair access to outer space, as well as various other issues referred to by delegations having taken the floor on these matters.

May I state here that the fiftieth anniversary of the first manned flight into outer space is being marked in our Republic of Kazakhstan as a very important historical event. Our government has already approved of a plan for activities to be undertaken to mark and duly celebrate this great event. Many of these events are going to be jointly run with the Russian Federation, inter alia, on the Baikonur facility which is in our territory and from where the historic launch of the first ever Earth satellite and the first cosmonaut, the USSR national Yuri Gagarin, travelled to outer space from Baikonur.

To date, our country is working on the national outer space sector with great attention. We have established relationships, partnerships, signed international agreements to work with other countries in order to pursue the peaceful exploitation of outer space. We have agreed such international agreements to cooperate with Russia, Ukraine, France and Israel. Furthermore, we have also signed agreements and memoranda between our National Space Agency and the space agencies of Germany, Japan, India, China and the Republic of Korea.

On the basis of the special agreements and the other instruments that I have referred to, in our Republic of Kazakhstan a very highly developed national system of communication and broadcasting capability, KazSat, is being developed together with Russia and a national system of Earth remote sensing is being developed in cooperation with France. At the Baikonur cosmodrome we are establishing a Baiterek complex on the basis of the Angara Russian carrier capability and we are working on various design and research projects to support all this work.

We have ratified the five UN outer space agreements as well as various bilateral and intergovernmental agreements and thus we have created and laid the basis for the development of a legal basis for outer space activity. Along with this, over the last couple of years, we are also developing a draft law on outer space activity and we intend to wind this work up by the end of 2011.

The purpose of the passing of this bill is to refine the legislation and to systematize the way in

which we ensure legal governance and regulation of outer space activities. This bill is focusing on adopting one single homogenous terminology in the outer space sector, we are focusing on establishing the principles of the way in which such activities are conducted in outer space, the thrusts, the types and the way all of these activities are going to be controlled and monitored. The regulation of the way in which the State is going to be going about regulation and control and monitoring of activities in outer space. The way in which licensing is going to be taking place for the purpose of those activities as well as ensuring the security aspects of such activities. The bill I am referring to will be determining international cooperation and the way that develops, it will be regulating the competence of the government of our Republic, the competence of the National Space Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan in the sector of outer space activities, issues having to do with the way sectoral expertise is going to be unfolding in this sector, the issue of the State registration of outer space objects, the rights over them and deals relating to the use of such objects and the government control of outer space activities.

The bill also contains measures having to do with ensuring the safety and security of outer space activities, how there is going to be environmental compliance, how there is going to be compliance with regard to agreed measures having to do with the conduct of launches, what approach is going to be adopted when incidents take place and monitoring control of environmental and health issues for the public at large. The provisions of this bill are based on the standards of international outer space law and lend a very good framework and ensure proper mechanisms to regulate and to expedite the development of outer space activity and thereby ensuring our proper international cooperation with the world at large. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of Kazakhstan for a very good statement.

The next speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of Romania. I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Romania, Ms. Popescu.

**Ms. A. POPESCU** (Romania) Let me express my delegation's satisfaction with your able chairmanship of this Subcommittee. Let me also express our appreciation for the work of the Office for Outer Space Affairs during this last year.

I would like to reaffirm Romania's commitment to international space law. Romania is a Party to three of the space agreements and supports a larger adherence to the treaties adopted under the auspices of the UN. In the process of drafting national legislation and policies as well as in performing space activities, the provisions of the UN treaties are duly respected in Romania.

The Romanian space programme has three main subprogrammes: space exploration, space applications and space technology. Currently a number of 32 projects are conducted in the following areas: contribution to international space exploration projects, nano-satellite technology, development of integrated space applications as, tele-medicine, environmental monitoring for land degradation, floods and water management and other activities. Particular attention is given to education and training thus, since October 2009, a master course in space technology is organized by the Faculty of Aerospace Engineering in Bucharest.

Romania pledges a great importance to international cooperation on all levels. On 20 January this year, Romania signed the agreement regarding accession to the European Space Agency Convention which will allow Romania to become an ESA member after its ratification by the Parliament.

I would also like to inform you that from 9-12 May 2011, the Romanian Space Agency will organize the International Academy of Astronautics Planetary Defense Conference. Also in the context of the fiftieth anniversary of the first human space flight and the thirtieth anniversary of the first Romanian space flight, several events are being organized. Among them it is worth mentioning that the Romanian postal company will issue an anniversary philatelic series that will also mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of Romania for a very good statement.

The next speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of Saudi Arabia. I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Saudi Arabia, Mr. Tarabzouni

**Mr. A. TARABZOUNI** (Saudi Arabia) (*interpretation from Arabic*) The delegation of Saudi Arabia has the pleasure of participating in the work of the Legal Subcommittee of COPUOS under your chairmanship. I am sure that with your wisdom and experience you will wisely guide us towards full success in the course of our deliberations and you can

certainly count on the full cooperation of my delegation as well as that of other delegations to that end. I would like to ask you to convey my appreciation to Dr. Othman for the good preparation of the work at hand.

In 2010-2011, our world has been subjected to a whole series of unpredicted natural events and I would like to take this opportunity to convey, on behalf of my delegation and people, our deepest condolences to the countries having suffered through these natural disasters. We hope that the peoples who have been subjected to so much hardship will be able to cope with this and this on the basis of the exploitation of space technologies, inter alia.

In our Subcommittee we are seeking to focus on all of the issues related to the conduct of outer space activities. There are States and commercial entities which are approaching and becoming involved in outer space activities at an ever greater pace and this is something which justifies our efforts to seek to regulate their activities and their attempts to draw spin-off benefits from outer space activities and technologies. We believe that we must always, when appropriate, think in terms of the possible revision of the important instruments of the UN relating to outer space activities. We believe that the members of our forum should always seek to ensure security as well as the predictability of outer space activities, to seek to prevent the arms race in outer space, to mitigate the possible effects arising from such activities and to make sure that we will further the peaceful exploitation of outer space.

You know that, just as the majority of States involved in this forum, we wish to see the most positive advantages to be drawn from the exploitation of outer space, to this end we have concluded agreements with NASA, India, Australia. There is increasing interest in the conduct of outer space activities and all the facets of interests involved and this requires closer interest on issues such as the definition and delimitation of outer space and air space, the definition of the GSO and ways and means to ensure fair and equitable access for developing countries to this GSO. Fifty years have elapsed since the first manned flight into outer space but the issue of the definition and delimitation is still pending. It is high time for us to usefully address this nexus of issues.

The European Space Agency has done very good work in this regard and we would encourage very intense exchange of views as well as innovative approaches to the way in which we broach this whole

nexus of issues. Of course matters are difficult but there is more and more interest in these matters as well, there is a broader range of activities involved, there is a heightened pace of the activities involved and the use of nuclear energy sources in outer space is also an issue. We would like to congratulate the chairman of the working group on this issue as well as the United States delegation and the other delegations have made very interesting presentations when the STSC met last February. We believe that the use made of nuclear power sources, the development of power issues should be properly exploited in such a fashion as to ensure power as well as the security and preservation of the environment as well as of humankind. There is a spectacular explosion of activities in outer space and of the protagonists in outer space which makes for a heightened risk of collision in outer space as well. This is why our efforts to usefully and effectively address the space debris mitigation nexus of issues is so important. We also stress the importance of international cooperation to create the appropriate strategies, to mitigate space debris formation and to mitigate the effect and risk thereof for present and future generations.

We would like to applaud the statements made by the Group of 77 and China as well as GRULAC presented under the agenda item having to do with the definition and delimitation of outer space and the character and utilization of the geostationary orbit including consideration of ways and means to ensure the rational and equitable use of the geostationary orbit without prejudice to the role of ITU. We believe that all of the input on these issues has been extremely interesting, we would like to thank and commend all those having made contributions to this matter. I believe that we must engage in and promote the free exchange of views and stances with regard to these issues at this present and future session. We wish us the best in the course of our discussions and to the member States involved in these issues and debate on legal considerations on outer space issues. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of Saudi Arabia for a very good statement.

No speakers on my list. Are there any other delegations wishing to make a statement under this agenda item? I see none.

We will continue our consideration of agenda item 3, general exchange of views, this afternoon.

**The definition and delimitation of outer space**  
(agenda item 6(a))

**The character and utilization of the geostationary orbit, including consideration of ways and means to ensure the rational and equitable use of the geostationary orbit without prejudice to the role of the International Telecommunication Union** (agenda item 6(b))

Distinguished delegates I would now like to continue our consideration of agenda item 6(a) the definition and delimitation of outer space and (b) the character and utilization of the geostationary orbit.

No speakers on my list. Are there any delegations wishing to make a statement under this agenda item?

I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Morocco.

**Mr. S. RIFFI TAMSAMANI** (Morocco) (*interpretation from French*) On behalf of our delegation I would like at the outset to thank the working group under this item and its chairman, Professor Filho, for the work that has been accomplished during the session of this group.

The delegation of Morocco has most attentively followed the debate on matters relating to the definition and delimitation of outer space and we have also tuned in with great interest to this workshop which has been organized by the two partner agencies. This has enabled us to get a better grasp of the issues underpinning this nexus of issues. As we have already pointed out when we spoke under item 3, Morocco believes that his could engender a non-application of the freedom of exploitation of outer space. We believe it would be important to start off by setting up and implementing adequate standards and norms which allow us to better manage and regulate outer space activities as Belgium has advocated. This would allow us to ensure measurable progress in the work of our Legal Subcommittee. Morocco would also wish to have this LSC pursue its examination of all aspects related to these matters in order to ensure proper rational and equitable use of the geostationary orbit and we are ready to support any proposals to this end in order to achieve consensus on our consideration and resolution of these issues. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of Morocco for a very good statement.

Are there any other delegations wishing to make a statement under this agenda item?

I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Saudi Arabia.

**Mr. A. TARABZOUNI** (Saudi Arabia) To start off with I support his proposal. Second, last year Saudi Arabia said that we can put the limit of 120 kilometres. From the symposium which was at the beginning of this, it was said between 70 and 150. If we take the average between 70 and 150 that is 120, or 110 exactly as the delegate of Russia said before. I think it is the time now we have to really define this on the basis of consensus because there is now more commercial space than governmental space. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of Saudi Arabia for a very good statement.

Are there any other delegations wishing to make a statement under this agenda item?

I give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Russian Federation.

**Ms. L. KASATKINA** (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*) I would like to concisely confirm the position of the Russian Federation on this matter. We have not changed this, we believe it is necessary to both delimit and define outer space, this is of prime importance to enable us to properly understand and perceive the limits of States' conduct of activities in outer space. This is of practical importance given all of the activities taking place out there. This has a legal effect as well because the way in which this is regulated is different and if we were to inject some order into all of this diversification of approaches applied it would inject a little bit of order in the way in which we broach all of these matters. In this fashion we would be able to avoid collision with dispute resolution concepts as per articles 2 and 3. We believe that this work could usefully be done within the LSC here. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of the Russian Federation for a very good statement.

Are there any other delegations wishing to make a statement under this agenda item? I see none.

We will therefore suspend our consideration of agenda item 6(a) definition and delimitation of outer space pending adoption of the report of the working group and conclude agenda item 6(b) the character and utilization of the geostationary orbit, this afternoon.

**General exchange of information on national mechanisms relating to space debris mitigation measures** (agenda item 10)

Distinguished delegates, I would now like to continue our consideration of agenda item 10, general exchange of information on national mechanisms relating to space debris mitigation measures.

The first speaker on my list is the distinguished delegate of Colombia, on behalf of GRULAC. I give the floor to His Excellency, Ambassador de León, Ambassador of Colombia on behalf of GRULAC.

**Mr. F. PADILLA DE LEÓN** (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*) On the agenda item that refers to national mechanisms to reduce space debris, GRULAC believes it is important for States to implement the guidelines to reduce space debris bearing in mind that the future of space activities rests, to a great extent, on reducing space debris.

Having said that, GRULAC calls on the Subcommittee to give more in-depth attention to this topic in its deliberations in particular to give greater attention to debris from nuclear power sourced platforms in outer space and then collisions with space objects and space debris and other resulting aspects such as an improving of technology to monitor space debris. Furthermore, GRULAC encourages States to inform this Subcommittee and to disseminate information on all activities to reduce the generation of space debris in particular those States that, to a great extent, are responsible for the present situation and those that have the ability to adopt mitigation measures. All of this in keeping with resolution 68/97 of the General Assembly. To that effect, GRULAC recommends a legal analysis as in the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank His Excellency, Ambassador de León, Ambassador of Colombia, on behalf of GRULAC for a very good statement.

The next speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of the Czech Republic. I give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Czech Republic, Mr. Vladimír Kopal.

**Mr. V. KOPAL** (Czech Republic) Thank you very much for giving me the floor and thus the opportunity to introduce our working paper that the Czech Republic submitted to this session of the Subcommittee well in advance and that was published under A/AC.105/C2/L.283 in all official languages of the United Nations.

At its forty-ninth session last year the Legal Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space noted the proposal of the delegation of the Czech Republic that the Subcommittee should include on its agenda a new item to review the legal aspects of the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space with a view to transforming the Guidelines into a set of principles on space debris and that those principles should be elaborated by the Legal Subcommittee and adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution.

As is generally known, during the past several decades man-made space debris has become one of the most discussed issues relating to the further development of outer space activities. Effective protection of astronauts, functional space objects and the space and Earth environment against the proliferation of space debris has become one of the recognized objectives of the world space community.

The General Assembly in its resolution 48/39 allocated this item first to the agenda of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee which started to consider the item in 1994. The technical report on space debris resulted from those discussions and was made available to Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, UNISPACE III, in 1999. The Committee then agreed that, owing to the complexity of the space debris issue, discussions in the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee should continue under a new workplan with the goal of elaborating voluntary debris mitigation measures. These efforts led to the preparation of the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines adopted by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and endorsed by the Committee and finally approved by the United Nations General Assembly. The General Assembly invited member States to implement those Guidelines through relevant national mechanisms.

The Guidelines are generally conceived as a list of specific measures that curtail the generation of potentially harmful space debris in the near term and that limit their generation over the longer term. The Guidelines, however, do not mention the protection of the environment as one of their aims. The protection of the space and Earth environment against pollution by

space debris also became a subject of concern of the world's space law community at the non-governmental level.

It was the International Law Association in particular, one of the oldest organizations dealing with the qualification of international law and founded in 1873, which directed its interest to that issue. As an important international non-governmental organization ILA, through its Space Law Committee, worked out a draft international instrument on the protection of the environment from damage caused by space debris which was adopted as early as the sixty-sixth conference of that organization which was held Buenos Aires in August 1994.

Several delegations to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its Legal Subcommittee were also aware of the need to explore the legal aspects relating to space debris. They suggested, both before and after the adoption of the technical report, appropriate items relating to space debris for possible inclusion in the agenda of the Legal Subcommittee. However, a consensus on those initiatives was not reached within the Committee and its Legal Subcommittee at that time. The progress in the consideration of the issue of space debris in the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee particularly the adoption of the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines, as well as some events in outer space activities, have again raised the question of whether the time is right for the Legal Subcommittee to join the efforts of the STSC with respect to introducing universally accepted and effective measures for space debris mitigation and thus also against the pollution of the environment by space debris. It must be taken into consideration that the application of the present Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines, notwithstanding their significance, remains voluntary and that the Guidelines are to be implemented by States and international organizations through their own space debris mitigation practices as decided by themselves. It is explicitly stated in the second paragraph of section III of the Guidelines that they are not legally binding under international law, therefore they cannot give rise to a feeling of duty to comply with them and any international sense of responsibility and liability for their violation will not emerge. In addition, their unilateral applications on a voluntary basis may result in inconsistencies at the international level.

For these reasons, the delegation of the Czech Republic proposed at the fifty-third session of the Committee in 2010 the inclusion of the above-mentioned new item in the agenda of the Legal Subcommittee. Its consideration under a workplan

should result in the elaboration of a set of principles based on the Guidelines of the Committee to be enacted in a special resolution of the General Assembly. Such principles would belong to the series of United Nations principles relating to outer space activities that were adopted during the 1980s and 1990s, all are printed in the brochure published by the United Nations Office.

The operative part of the draft resolutions on space debris should be based on those sections of the text of the Guidelines of the Committee which have a normative character. It is in the first paragraph of each of the Guidelines. In addition to the provisions based on the text of the Guidelines the principles, as a legal document, should establish some definitions in particular the definition of space debris and fix the conditions for when a space object, as defined in the Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects and the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space, becomes a non-functional, useless and even harmful piece of space debris. The principles should also declare the responsibility of States for national space activities in the sense of article VI of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and other Celestial Bodies, with special regard to space debris and the principle of liability for damage caused by space debris.

Finally, a system for the peaceful settlement of disputes which would arise from the interpretation and application of the principles should not be left out. In this respect a solution of this problem, similar to the solution in the instrument adopted by the International Law Association, could be usefully considered. In the light of the long-time practice of the United Nations, a set of principles developed by the Legal Subcommittee in close cooperation with the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee endorsed by the Committee and adopted by the General Assembly in a resolution would be a satisfactory form of an international instrument on space debris for the present time and the near future. This is the opinion of our delegation. The compliance of States and international organizations with such principles and the supervision of the activities of non-governmental entities by relevant States would lead to a unified practice in this field and to the creation of a conviction among all legal persons involved that it is necessary to fully honour such principles.

The work on the set of United Nations principles relevant to space debris could become a new core item on the agenda of the Legal Subcommittee to be considered during the coming years under a



workplan. A positive outcome would have the potential to contribute to broad international cooperation in the scientific as well as the legal aspects of the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes which is the fourth preambular paragraph of the Outer Space Treaty. If adopted by consensus such principles would enrich the current body of the law governing outer space activities. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of the Czech Republic, Mr. Kopal, for a very good statement.

The next speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of Venezuela. I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Venezuela, Ms. Campos.

**Ms. A. CAMPOS** (Venezuela) (*interpretation from Spanish*) On environmental management the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has historically featured the implementation of policies intended to protect and maintain the internal and external environment of our planet for the benefit of present and future generations. On this understanding, the national constitution establishes in its preamble that among the values to be promoted by our society we find compliance with the environmental balance and protection of natural resources as the common heritage of mankind to which we cannot renounce. Furthermore, the chapter devoted to environmental matters enshrines the constitutional text that is developed in content of the rights and duties of each generation pointing to the need to have effective development with environmental safety in the general industrial activities.

In view of this, and in connection with the national mechanisms that relate to measures to mitigate space debris, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has in a responsible fashion during the design phase of the satellite platform VeneSat-1, satellite Simón Bolívar, required sufficient fuel to do all the operations as required by the satellite, to then remove the satellite from its orbit position after its useful life thus avoiding that the platform be turned into space debris. Subsequently, the delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela believes that we achieved progress in terms of the guidelines for space debris mitigation and the fact that the General Assembly refers to this in resolution 62/217. However, this is one phase and only one phase of the technical and legal phase that the States must embark on to eradicate debris.

At this point in time we have a world trend which is generated by the need to promote sustainable development of all people. It requires that standards in this area, including guidelines for space debris mitigation, be in response to the environmental policies that are broad-based and that are part of international treaties that cover environmental issues to protect the environment and the biosphere of the planet, to ensure social, cultural and economic development in tune with our overall environment whether use of environmental resources by present generations should not call into question the heritage of future generations. For this very reason, the delegation is of the view that we need to improve and further perfect the existing guidelines for space debris mitigation and to do the required legal analysis in this Subcommittee. A lack of clear guidelines or a vacuum of binding norms would then become an area where countries that have traditionally used the technological resource in an uncontrolled fashion and that called for restrictions on other States merely aspiring in a legitimate manner to have access to technology as a mechanism to improve the living conditions of their people.

Finally, we think it is indispensable for this Subcommittee to step up interaction with the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee the purpose of which is to promote international binding norms to cover such topics. Bearing in mind that one of the main responsibilities of the United Nations in the legal area is to bring about the progressive development of international law and standard setting in this context as it relates to the environment of outer space. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished delegate of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela for a very good statement.

Are there any other delegations wishing to make a statement under this agenda item?

The next speaker is the distinguished representative of Brazil. I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Brazil, Mr. Filho.

**Mr. J. FILHO** (Brazil) (*interpretation from Spanish*) My statement will be very brief. First, I would like to convey our words of support for the initiative put forward by the Czech Republic in the form of a working paper on the possibility of converting the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines into a set of principles that might be adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations. In our opinion, this is a very positive initiative, it represents an effort to bolster the legal framework moving us in the direction of fostering the overall framework that we have in

place on these very topical issues that are tied to space activities and especially the space activities of our times. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of Brazil for a very good statement.

The next speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of Germany. I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Germany, Mr. Schmidt-Tedd.

**Mr. B. SCHMIDT-TEDD** (Germany) Germany would also like to thank the Czech delegation for this very substantive proposal, if there is one subject of practical relevance then it is this item. The upgrading of the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines to a General Assembly resolution could give the consensus reached on this matter visibility adequate to the subject. Germany welcomes the proposal of this new agenda item, it could be an adequate item under our workplan following the similar relevant item of national space legislation. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of Germany for a very good statement.

Are there any other delegations wishing to make a statement?

**Mr. R. LEFEBER** (Netherlands) Good morning to all of you. We also would like to thank the Czech Republic for their proposal. We agree with the Czech Republic that the issue of space debris is one of the most pertinent issues relating to outer space activities at this point in time. We also agree that the time is ripe, perhaps overripe, to address this issue in a legal instrument. The proposal was circulated well in advance of this meeting so we have been able to have a look at it in our capital and we are happy to express our full support for it. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of The Netherlands for a very good statement.

The next speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of Italy. I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Italy.

**Ms. A. PASTORELLI** (Italy) Italy also would like to support the proposal made by the Czech Republic of having a new agenda item on the agenda of the session on this very important subject which is space debris. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of Italy for a very good statement.

Are there any other delegations wishing to make a statement under this agenda item?

The next speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of Portugal. I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Portugal.

**Mr. A. CORDEIRO** (Portugal) Good morning to you all. Portugal would like to inform that we are ready to support the Czech proposal at this stage. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of Portugal for a very good statement.

I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Belgium.

**Mr. J-F. MAYENCE** (Belgium) (*interpretation from French*) If I have understood this right we are not yet discussing the agenda of the next Subcommittee, we are in fact addressing the issue of space debris. So obviously my statement will have nothing to do with the agenda of our forthcoming session or will it preclude this?

Belgium supported the Czech suggestion, it is not a new one but it is today very convincing. Professor Kopal has made a very convincing case for this and we would like to thank the Czech delegation for that.

We are willing and ready to look into the legal and regulatory aspects of norms intended to prevent and mitigate space debris in the Legal Subcommittee. However, we would like to draw the attention of the Subcommittee to the fact that on the one hand we would not want to call into question, because of this consideration or exercise, what has already been achieved in the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. The technical content of the norms, besides I do not think that was intended by the Czech proposal but we nevertheless have to be cautious, should not be called into question since the Guidelines adopted by COPUOS are valid and were adopted properly. What we need to do is give some attention to the legal and regulatory aspects.

For the time being we would not want to prejudge the legal form and the legal force which we would give them. Here we are not perhaps in step with the Czech delegation since we think there are other

ways of making these norms mandatory in practice in particular by applying the concept of fault in the context of the 1972 text.

There is another aspect that we think is important. This work should come about, in one or the other way, in close cooperation with the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee to the extent that a very similar subject is considered in its working group on the long-term viability of space activities. There should be no duplication while giving recognition to the fact that the Legal Subcommittee does have authority to deal with items of this sort.

By way of conclusion, the Czech proposal does respond to a major concern which is that of a small State active in space activities. It is to avoid any breakdown in terms of the competitive nature of activities between the State and business environments and to distinguish between those making efforts in terms of mitigation and those not making efforts. We cannot avoid addressing the issue of the cost, this exercise has a price tag already attached to and it would be unfair for countries that do make such efforts to have to shoulder the burden and others not to go by the rules. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of Belgium for a very good statement.

I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Saudi Arabia.

**Mr. A. TARABZOUNI** (Saudi Arabia) On behalf of the Arab countries as they could not come over here due to their, what we call freedom. Myself, I would like to support the proposal of the Czech Republic.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of Saudi Arabia, on behalf of Arab countries, for a very good statement.

I give the floor to the distinguished representative of China.

**Ms. L. ZHOU** (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*) The Chinese delegation believes the discussion on the measures concerning space debris mitigation is very important. We are also thankful to the efforts made by the Czech Republic which has made a very positive and constructive proposal on this issue.

However, at this point in time, we understand that we are discussing agenda item 10 which concerns the general exchange of information on national mechanisms relating to space debris mitigation measures. Whether we should include the Czech proposal into our agenda for the next meeting should be discussed under agenda item 12. Therefore, we reserve the right to make further comments on this issue under agenda item 12. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of China for a very good statement.

The next speaker on my list is the distinguished representative of Morocco. I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Morocco.

**Mr. S. RIFFI TAMSAMANI** (Morocco) (*interpretation from French*) As pointed out earlier on, Morocco is perfectly ready to support any suggestion that could help us make headway. Morocco very much supports the position adopted by the Czech Republic, this could certainly have us progress in this area. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of Morocco for a very good statement.

Are there any other delegations wishing to make a statement under this agenda item?

I give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Czech Republic.

**Mr. V. KOPAL** (Czech Republic) On behalf of my delegation I would like only to thank all those delegations that brought their views because this was for us a certain encouragement for further efforts in this respect and we certainly do not push a decision on this issue. We feel that every delegation must have the time to consider this question very seriously and to consult with their own authorities, etc.

I would like to assure the delegation that raised here a certain concern about the Guidelines adopted in the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and that the work that has been done by the Subcommittee. I made it abundantly clear in my introduction to our paper that the normative part of the guidelines, because there are also some parts that are rather explicative that explain what is said in the normative part would remain untouched and, on the contrary, would create the basis of the substantive part of the principles if they are really elaborated and adopted. This is one thing.

The other thing, of course our initiative should be developed in close cooperation with the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee as it was done, for example, during the consideration of the 1992 principles of NPS. There was first a certain background for this consideration from the part of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and then the elaboration of the draft resolutions for the General Assembly was still under close cooperation of both subcommittees this is at least my own proposal to be very closely in contact with the Scientific and Technical Committee.

I believe that is all that I wanted to say in reply for the time being. Of course we will very carefully watch any other opinion that might be pronounced at this session of the Legal Subcommittee or in June during the consideration of the work of the Legal Subcommittee in the Main Committee of COPUOS and next year at the session of both these bodies. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of the Czech Republic, Mr. Kopal, for a very good statement.

Are there any other delegations wishing to make a statement under this agenda item? I see none.

We will conclude our consideration of agenda item 10, general exchange of information on national mechanisms relating to space debris mitigation measures, this afternoon.

**Proposals to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space for new items to be considered by the Legal Subcommittee at its fifty-first session (agenda item 12)**

I would now like to give the floor to the Secretariat to begin agenda item 12, proposal to the Committee for new agenda items to discuss organizational matters of the work of this Subcommittee.

**Mr. N. HEDMAN** (Secretariat) Distinguished delegates, the Secretariat of the Subcommittee has brought colleagues here today in order for you to be able to ask questions directly to the most concerned in the UN system with the issues that we brought up and started discussing during informal consultations held earlier this week on organizational matters, methods of work of the Subcommittee. I have here Mr. Imre Karbuczky who is Chief of Conference Management Service here in Vienna and also Ms. Catherine Perret who is Chief of the UNODC Budget Unit.

Just to introduce for the benefit of our guests to this particular session. Delegations will recall that at our informal consultations earlier this week there were a lot of issues, concerns and also questions raised by delegations regarding the organizational work of the Legal Subcommittee. There was a need for some clarification in particular on the budget mechanism for the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its two subcommittees. The appropriate allocation of budget, which office in the UN system that actually have the budget and controls the budget for our session, including interpretation services and documentation.

There were also questions raised as to the division of costs under the budget, how much is catered for interpretation of our sessions and how much for documentation for the Committee and its two subcommittees.

There were questions raised as to if there would be a decision on making any change to the length of the Subcommittee session by means of cutting down days, time etc. If there would be savings then that could be transferred to the budget of the Office for Outer Space Affairs in order to support activities being undertaken by the Office.

There was also an issue raised that if any decision would be made as to cutting down time of the Legal Subcommittee or reallocating days and time from the Subcommittee to COPUOS, whether that would be at all possible. There are two issues there in that regard. First of all, if there should be decided a cut in the length of the Subcommittee would that mean that that time is gone forever, if I put it that way, or would it be possible to reinstitute that time at a given moment. If there is a reallocation of time from the Legal Subcommittee to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which means the Main Committee, would that then be without any budget implications as it would only be within the overall time attributed to the Committee and its two subcommittees.

These are the questions that relate to the organizational matters that we discussed in the informal consultations earlier this week. While we are having our guests here today, we will also provide delegations with some further explanations to the document A/AC.105/C2/L.282 which is entitled: Review of the use of transcripts of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its Legal Subcommittee, working paper submitted by the Secretariat which contains a proposal for the temporary discontinuance of unedited transcripts. Delegations will see on the second page, last paragraph, the proposal

made in this regard. This particular matter on the transcripts will be dealt with after the first matter that I just outlined.

Mr. Chairman, with your permission, the Secretariat would now like to relate to these questions that I have already outlined here in my introduction and after that delegations are welcome to ask any more specific questions, any additional questions to Mr. Karbuczky and Ms. Perret.

Mr. Chairman, I will now, with your permission, give the floor to my colleagues.

**Mr. I. KARBUCZKY** (Chief, Conference Management Service) Thank you Mr. Chairman, thank you Niklas for the introduction.

It is a pleasure for me to be with you because normally I bring bad news but this time I hope to be bringing you something more positive on both issues, giving up the transcripts in favour of digital recordings and also on the possible reallocation of meeting entitlements between OOSA bodies.

If I may address both issues in one batch because in many ways they are connected. First of all, I would like to congratulate you and thank you for the initiative of member States, and also our colleagues in OOSA, for your willingness to be the first in Vienna and one of the very first in the UN system to experiment with digital recordings. It is especially heartening your willingness because the General Assembly has been calling on intergovernmental and expert bodies for a very long time to reconsider their meeting record entitlements, which are extremely expensive, and give them up entirely or in favour of, among things, digital recordings.

OOSA was the first, the only actually, that gave up its written meeting records some time ago and it chose to use unedited transcripts which are, while still quite expensive as you can see in the document, processing them for the two bodies costs about \$80,000 a year but they are far less costly and far less labour intensive than summary records or verbatim records. So again, COPUOS is taking the lead by embracing new technology which will have to be developed because it is, to a large extent, non-existent or not in use. FAO and the European Union have some solutions and the Human Rights Council in Geneva but those are rather expensive and very complex solutions. We are suggesting something simpler at this stage. Based on your experience with digital recordings, as we are proposing to make available for you, further development is just a matter of resources again. To

develop this digital recording is a challenge for my department, the Department for General Assembly Affairs and Conference Management but we do have ideas as I mentioned and there are examples that are already in practice.

A little bit more background for you on the whole issue of entitlements and reallocating meeting time between bodies. The member States and the General Assembly entrusted my department, Department for General Assembly Affairs and Conference Management, to provide conference services which include meeting services, interpretation and documentation services but of course we have the responsibility to control and limit this documentation to the extent possible and come up with cost saving measures. This is why it is especially welcoming that your idea of giving up unedited transcripts and choose digital recordings is actually a saving for the organization, for member States, for you. It would be a saving under section 2 of the budget which is conference management and that is a very welcome development since, as you know, conference management has been having zero growth budget for a long time. This time around, for the next 2012/2013 budget, the overall resources will be reduced so any savings coming out of initiative from member States or from the Secretariat is very welcome. As is, we have a significant gap between capacities that we have in both documentation and interpretation and the demand that member States and the Vienna-based organizations that we service put to us. Given the overall budget climate, this gap between available resources and the demand is likely to increase in the next budget. We will have far less resources than member States would require to provide all the meetings with interpretation and documentation, that is why I am saying this saving will be very welcome under section 2 of the budget.

Coming to the idea of reallocating between COPUOS and its subsidiaries. As long as the overall number of meetings with interpretation would not change, this is no problem. You, COPUOS in general, have an entitlement of x number of meetings with interpretation, how you use it is really within your jurisdiction. Give up entitlements of course would be very much welcome if the overall number of meetings with interpretation could be reduced. However, if you at one point in the future find that the reduced entitlements are insufficient, to reinstate those entitlements could be rather difficult as we do not expect that the overall budget climate would improve in the next couple of years. So, if I were to give you honest advice I would say hold on to your overall entitlement but reallocate them as you see fit.

Interpretation is very expensive, only documentation is more expensive. I would hold on to the interpretation entitlement and go ahead with digital recordings and savings on documentation which is a true savings and hopefully will not result in any loss of service or information to you because the recordings would be available and will be searchable so would serve the same purpose as the unedited transcripts currently.

I will stop here, Catherine can add on the budget side. Thank you.

**Ms. C. PERRET** (Chief, UNODC Budget Unit) As a representative from the Financial Service I would like to clarify for the Legal Subcommittee what would be the implication of any decisions that you make.

There is in the United Nations a budget process whereby the budget of the United Nations is being approved by the General Assembly in New York after review by the Fifth Committee, which is the committee responsible for administrative and financial matters, as well as after review by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ). The process would be, if a decision was made by the Legal Subcommittee to reallocate resources between budget sections, because here we are talking about two different budget sections of the United Nations, there is what we call section 2, the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Management and section 6, which is peaceful use of outer space.

In that respect, we have a very clear financial regulation which is Financial Regulation 5.6 which states that, no transfer between appropriation sections may be made without authorization by the General Assembly. It is stated very clearly in the financial rules of the United Nations that any decision you would recommend would need to go to the General Assembly for approval. The process for that would be to follow the route of what we call a PBI process whereby no council or competent organ should make a decision without having been informed of the budget implication of such decision. This means that at the time you would make a decision we would have to request clearance from New York and get a clearance from New York on the financial implication of that decision but, since you are a subcommittee of COPUOS, the decision would then need to be endorsed by COPUOS and from COPUOS it would go to the Fourth Committee which is the committee of the General Assembly responsible for the review of matters related to the peaceful use of outer space. From

there, if the Fourth Committee recommends the decision for adoption, the decision on reallocation of resources would be made by the Fifth Committee, after recommendation by ACABQ. So, it is a very long route and it is not simply because a decision is made here in Vienna that funds will be automatically transferred. What is very important is that at every stage of the route the Secretariat will inform you of the cost implications of the decision.

Now, on the negative side, the Chief, Conference Service has informed you about the current situation of the budget. The problem is that the decision that you will make will have an impact on the 2010/2011 budget as well as an impact on the 2012/2013 budget. Currently, the budget \_\_\_\_ (?) in New York is very negative, the Secretary-General has been asked to identify cuts of 3 per cent in all his budgets around the world. What is very likely to happen is that while on the one hand New York may welcome the decision to reduce the budget of Conference Service it is not guaranteed that the transfer of the funds to section 6, which is OOSA, will be approved by the General Assembly. This is something that we cannot guarantee and it is something that is not within our hands because that decision will be taken by the Fifth Committee and ACABQ at the very end of the process.

On the other hand, what I would like to mention is that, as already highlighted by the Chief of Conference Service, the General Assembly has requested the Secretary-General, on repeated occasions and in every resolution on the budget, to identify efficiency measures whereby we could show that we are doing more with less resources. In that sense, the decision to move to a different process would be very welcome but it is not likely that it would result in an increase in resources for OOSA. There is also one element that the colleagues of OOSA might not be aware is that our budget, the budget in general for Conference Management Service, has been in deficit for the last two years. This deficit was absorbed by the UN budget as a whole because there were other budget sections which were having unspent balances at the end of the biennium but the budget of the Conference Management Service in Vienna is currently in deficit. What is very likely to happen is that the efficiency measures would be very welcome but it is not likely that there would be any change in the budget as a result of the adoption of that resolution.

To answer the last part of the question with regard to reallocation of resources between COPUOS and the subcommittees. The current entitlement for the subcommittees are clearly spelled out in the budget of

OOSA. The Scientific and Technical Subcommittee has a provision for substantive secretariat services to the plenary and working groups of the Subcommittee for a total of 60 meetings. The Legal Subcommittee has an entitlement for plenary and working groups of the Subcommittee servicing for a total of 56 meetings. COPUOS itself has a provision of substantive secretariat services for plenary meetings of the Committee for a total of 32 meetings. Thank you. If you have any questions on the budgetary process I would be happy to answer.

**The CHAIRMAN** Now the floor is open for member States who have questions or comments.

**Mr. M. OUZEROUHANE** (Algeria) I did not catch what she said about the number of decisions. Madame if you could repeat the figures regarding the .. you said 32 meetings for the Committee but I did not catch what you said before that.

**Ms. C. PERRET** (Chief, UNODC Budget Unit) I am sorry if I read it too quickly. The entitlement for COPUOS is for 32 plenary meetings of the Committee. The entitlement for the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee is for 60 plenary and working groups of the Subcommittee. The entitlement of the Legal Subcommittee is for 56 plenary and working groups of the Subcommittee. This entitlement is for two years and one meeting is counted as half a day. So half a day meeting is one meeting.

**The CHAIRMAN** Thank you very much for your comment.

Distinguished representative of Belgium.

**Mr. J-F. MAYENCE** (Belgium) (*interpretation from French*) I would like to thank the two staff colleagues for their very clear and transparent presentation of the details at hand here. I would like to say here that it is quite normal to make the distinction between savings and reallocation. If we are talking about savings we are talking about really cutting something otherwise it is not really cutting. My delegation is perfectly aware of that and once again I would like to thank the Head of the Financial Service for having duly informed us as to the financial climate of the United Nations.

In the figures that have been referred to for the LSC I think that the LSC is slightly deprived as compared to the STSC. I also note that the focus on the reform is on us, on the LSC, and possibly could be more fairly distributed on the two subcommittees. We are making this point because we have already

explained that for us the balance of the two subcommittees is very important.

To technical matters. Sound recordings have been mentioned. Could I get a little bit more information on these recordings and how they are rendered public? I am sorry if I have missed this somehow in writing or orally, if I have been given the information I seem to have missed it. The question being is as follows. Are these recordings published? Who has access to these recordings? Are there any ways to rectify or amend these recordings once they have been published and made accessible?

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of Belgium.

Next speaker is the distinguished representative of USA.

**Mr. S. McDONALD** (United States of America) First I would like to thank our distinguished guests from Conference Service and Financial Service sections for coming here and providing us with what I think is some very enlightening information. I just want to note that COPUOS and its subcommittees have been leaders within the UN system in implementing cost-saving measures. In 1997 we implemented a number of measures that resulted in close to a million dollars in savings per biennium. In fact, the OOSA Committee was cited in the UN report dealing with administrative matters as being a model for reform. Secondly, we introduced some very innovative approaches to hosting the Third UN Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and those measures are reflected in the report to the General Assembly that was dated 1999 or 2000. Just so that everyone realizes that in fact not only do we look at the substance of our work but we also look at ways of using our resources much better.

My first question was where would the savings go? It is clear that it would be very difficult if we implement measures concerning the use of transcripts, I think it would be very difficult for that money to be transferred from section 2 of the budget to OOSA. I expect that somewhere along the line in those series of approvals from either ACABQ or the Fifth Committee someone would gobble that money up very quickly. That does not mean we should not move forward in any case.

The second question that I had is regarding the reallocation of meetings. Can we reallocate the meetings yearly or does it have to be part of the biennial budget cycle? That is, if we wanted to

reallocate meetings of the Legal Subcommittee to the full Committee, when would be the earliest that that could be done? Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of USA.

The next speaker is the distinguished representative of The Netherlands.

**Mr. R. LEFEBER** (Netherlands) Thanks to the Secretariat for providing us with this opportunity to ask questions to Conference Services and Financial Services. It is very useful as was our informal consultation on this issue earlier this week.

My question follows up on one of the questions of the delegate from Belgium and relates to the reference to digital recordings. I was wondering what that actually means, whether that is only audio recordings or video recordings or both. In relation to that, I was wondering what the additional, technical requirements and budgetary implications would be of netcasting our meetings or making them otherwise available on the Internet for the public at large. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of The Netherlands.

I give the floor to Conference Management Service to answer the questions of delegates.

**Mr. I. KARBUCZKY** (Chief, Conference Management Service) Thank you for the questions and the general support again to the idea of choosing this new technology and realize savings as a result of it.

The distinguished delegate of Belgium is asking more about the digital recordings. The digital recordings are actually currently also being made, this is for archival purposes, it is part of the service that we provide. We record all languages, so the interpretation that you hear or the floor that I am taking now are recorded and can be retrieved and, on request, can be provided to member States. This would be made easier by the application that we propose and that is in paragraph 5 of L.282 that you have for your consideration. Basically there would be a dedicated website where the language versions and the original language would be available. We would make this searchable to some extent so you would be able to find a particular statement that was made in a given meeting. Meetings, morning and afternoon, are identified by a file and within the file you would have to search for the statement. This would be for open

meetings, public meetings like this would be available to the public. We would imagine placing this on the OOSA website where you would be able to access it. To rectify statements is not possible because once the words are uttered they are recorded and they stay there. I am not aware of any practice where, for example, summary records or verbatim records, or unedited transcripts that you have currently, there is a grace period within which one could notify the Secretariat and then a correction is made. Technically, one could come up with some idea of how to make a statement disappear or alter it, that is not the case with the recording that we have at the moment and we do not foresee such a twist to the recording that we would provide you.

Again, a lot of things are possible but what we anticipated to do would require about \$40,000 development. It would be a rather short development which could be ready by your next session for you to try out. Again, that would be an additional investment this year under section 2 of my budget which is indeed already under very serious strain but we are working with our colleagues in New York and see who can afford investing that \$40,000 in anticipation of the savings that would start happening next year, at least the next budget.

Here I come to the distinguished delegate of the USA. As I also mentioned, OOSA and COPUOS is a leader in coming up with cost-saving ideas and this is why it was extremely good to hear that you are willing to consider this digital recording idea. The transfer between budget sections is not just complicated procedurally but, because of the budget climate, it is something that is unlikely to happen if it is a reduction in one section and an increase in another.

As the distinguished delegate from the US was asking about the reallocation whether it is yearly or biennial. The UN has a biennial calendar of conferences and meetings which is prepared for the Committee on Conferences. The Committee on Conferences reviews it and okays it, sends it to the GA and then the Fifth Committee looks at it. Basically, the schedule and the number of meetings included in a biennial calendar which the next one will be the 2012-13 calendar. However within this year, for example, which is part of the 2010-11 calendar which has been approved two years ago, one can make a change, as long as the change does not entail a budgetary administrative cost that is an even exchange between the parent body and the subsidiary that really should not be a problem, we would have to send it still to the Committee on Conferences but as there are no budgetary implications the Fifth Committee will not be



involved so this is something that the Secretariat with member States can somewhat easily do. Of course, a question of timing of the sessions would have to be looked at because we have very limited free meeting times available that could be utilized without running into additional costs but it is entirely possible. Ideally, you would make this reallocation between the bodies for the next biennial calendar 2012-13, we have all sorts of scenarios in one year. In an even numbered year you can have this split between the bodies and an odd numbered year can have a different split between bodies this is entirely your call, whatever fits your purposes as long as it is within the overall number of meetings with interpretation, that Catherine read out, and as long as there are no additional documentation requirements, and we assume there would not be, then this should be something of a simple exercise.

The distinguished delegate from The Netherlands asked about what these recordings would be, as I said this would be the audio that you hear, the floor and five other channels that you can flip through. Video and webcasting is of course gaining popularity but it is extremely expensive. It is being used currently, but we do not know how long, by the Human Rights Council in Geneva. The Council gave up I believe \$6 million worth of summary records in favour of this webcasting and there was a very generous donation by a member State to facilitate this webcasting but once the donation runs out our colleagues will likely not be able to continue with this webcasting which is extremely expensive. Then again this is an entitlement that an intergovernmental or expert body could request. I would advise strongly against it because of the cost implications. We would be delighted of course to do something like this but because of the costs it would likely not fly. This is why the solution that we are proposing, this rather simple and implementable digital archiving and digital recording, which is again searchable but not rectifiable as we anticipate, would be a true saving. Thank you.

I am not sure if I will have the floor again so let me use this opportunity. Conference Management Service I will be meeting with member States at 1:30 today in Conference Room II just around the corner where I will speak more about the services that we provide and the restraints that we are experiencing so if any one of you would be inclined to get more information from us please join us there. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** Distinguished delegate of Italy and then United States.

I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Italy.

**Ms. A. PASTORELLI** (Italy) I would like to thank the Secretariat for inviting here the responsible officers for conference services and financial services.

I would just have an additional question. Approximately, if it is possible to know the exact figures of the expenses involved in running the costs for two subcommittees and COPUOS in June on a biennial basis or annual basis, I do not know how you can clarify that. This could be interesting for us in order to take our decisions later on. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** Thank you very much for your question.

Distinguished representative of the United States of America.

**Mr. S. McDONALD** (United States of America) I will be brief. I do have a question and I do not want to keep our colleagues from having lunch and I do appreciate the clarification. I did have one other question and that is, if you could give us an idea of what it costs to produce the documentation. We know we have tried to limit the number of pages per report that we produce but I think it would be instructive if we had an idea of what it does cost to produce the reports of the subcommittees and the other documents that are released as official UN documents that are produced during the course of our work. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** Thanks to the distinguished representative of USA. I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Belgium.

**Mr. J-F. MAYENCE** (Belgium) (*interpretation from French*) Very briefly, I would like to thank the Secretariat and the competent head of unit for these reports on the recordings.

We need to give this more attention. Not that we can go without written reports, I do understand of course that we wish to save in this regard and my delegation agrees but rather that the recordings should be made accessible this is of course fine for general debate. For other instances and particularly the working group proceedings there may be "informal" exchanges that we might have and I do not know whether this is a wise decision to make that type of exchange publicly available in an unedited version. Of course I admire the interpreters and I must say that they work very well indeed but it is not always possible to be 100 per cent accurate in simultaneous interpretation, you ought to have a chance to edit subsequently, to read and to do that in writing. I must confess that we have some questions in our minds, in my delegation

when we were wondering whether this might not in fact restrict free exchange in certain meetings of the Legal Subcommittee. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of Belgium. I give the floor to the distinguished representative of The Netherlands.

**Mr. R. LEFEBER** (Netherlands) I would like to go back to the number of meetings with interpretation that are available for COPUOS, the Legal Committee and the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. The numbers that I put down were 32 for COPUOS, 60 for the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and 56 for the Legal Subcommittee for a period of two years. The Main Committee, 32, they meet 2 x 8 days so they have a sufficient number of meetings with interpretation to meet during the day and not in the evening if necessary. However, if I take the Legal Subcommittee, 56, we meet 10 days, 2 years, 2 sessions a day brings me to 40. So the number of 56 basically has already a reserve in it and we are normally using two sessions a day so there is a reserve of 60 meetings in the current biennium for that. I think is not bad by itself because if we are not using it I suppose we are not paying for it, it is just that we have the reservation there. If we would shorten the duration of the Legal Subcommittee to 8 days then still we can maintain these 56 meetings with interpretation in the budget but we are simply not using it. Am I correct in that regard?

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of The Netherlands.

I give the floor to the Conference Management Service.

**Mr. I. KARBUCZKY** (Chief, Conference Management Service) The distinguished delegate from Italy and also from the US asked about the cost of meetings and translation. I can give you unit rates so that you can have an idea from the unit rates what the actual meeting costs but for an actual meeting the cost is more notional, it is more indicative and it is difficult to tell you because the interpreters, like you see up there, are mostly staff but many times when we have parallel meetings we have to boost our capacity by freelance so a cost of a meeting could vary depending on the composition of staff servicing the meeting.

The figure I will give you is a composite figure which takes into account, on a yearly basis, our recruitment and overall capacity and overall output that we produce. That figure is an interpreter a day is \$1,126 currently. For a week session, that is 10

meetings that you have in five days you would require 20 interpreters x 5 days, so you multiply \$1,126 x 100 and that gives you an idea how much one week's meeting costs with interpretation, it is over \$100,000. That is not the most expensive part of the operation.

Documentation and again I am not able to give you the documentation cost for this particular session but if you have all your documents in front of you and look at the total page count - calculate that a page of translation costs \$246 currently, that is translation, interpretation and distribution, so the full processing is \$246. That is why any savings in meetings and that comes to the distinguished delegate of Belgium. We have a reserve, yes, you are not using it, it is within your entitlement but it is a very welcome situation that you are not using your entitlement up to its limits because clearly Conference Management Service here in Vienna is already overspending. As is so with CND and the Crime Commission not using all their entitlements, they went down from 8 days to 5 days a few years ago. COPUOS is not using its entitlements and still we do not have sufficient funds to service everything, even with these limited requirements.

The distinguished delegate from Belgium was asking. In the UN we have open meetings and closed meetings. Recordings of closed meetings are not publicly available and we would not anticipate making them publicly available. Informal consultations normally are closed meetings and while a recording is made that is not made available publicly. Plenary sessions are open meetings so recordings of plenary sessions are available. Again, depending on the body there could be all sorts of scenarios, what you get and what you make publicly available. There are certain bodies that use summary records for example only for their decision making sessions. That is one option to have the recordings made public for plenary sessions or for decision making sessions and informal is kept unavailable to the public. If you want to make it available to member States or expert bodies for the experts themselves that is a possibility, that can be done on an ad hoc request or can be made in future in a password protected site. All sorts of scenarios are available, the technology behind it would have to be developed and as it mentions here in the L document that would be about \$40,000 to develop it.

The running costs, it was a question from Italy, we anticipate it being very minimum once the technology is there the archiving is done by the sound engineer who is present any way so it is just a posting on the dedicated website so it would not be too costly. These websites can be made much richer with

additional information that one might consider. CND, for example, have no such entitlement like you have, the transcripts. So, CND is considering having summaries prepared by the Secretariat but it is English only summaries to put on a website and the same site and the same meeting file on the site could include written statements made available by delegations or presentations by the Secretariat, so in a way the electronic media would give you a chance to make the information richer, not just digital recordings but obviously it would be more work for the substantive secretariat to archive additional information that was provided at the meeting, PowerPoint presentation work or a scientific presentation also available in addition to the digital recording of the meeting. Ideas can be further explored but at this stage we would just do the recordings, put them on a dedicated site again it is only for public meetings and will be searchable by anybody basically. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank Conference Management Service.

I give the floor to the distinguished representative of the Czech Republic, then Colombia.

**Mr. V. KOPAL** (Czech Republic) As the other delegations that already gave their opinions we are very grateful to the representatives of the Conference Service and of the Financial Service being with us and explained to us all the details of this reform. We are also grateful to the Secretariat that provided for us the very concise and useful document L.282. I would now like to turn the attention to part 6 of this particular document where the conclusions of the up to date discussion on it and possible way out of the problem are recorded.

First of all, as to the current practice of unedited transcripts. I would like to say that the value of such transcripts has been low because they are unedited you cannot rely on something that is not edited when you argue about it, when you study these texts and when you wish to make a research or draft articles or other publications with reference to such unedited transcripts. We therefore, if these transcripts should be cancelled at least temporarily for the time being, would not oppose it. At the same time, we do not have any experience with digital recordings in practice, at least I do not have such a practice.

I would like to put a question in relation to subparagraph (c) of paragraph 6. There is stated in addition to the digital recordings a written script in English will be provided. This I would like clarified. What is meant by a written script in English? How will

it be available? It may be very useful, at least for those who understand English, for assistance in servicing in the sessions and particularly for research purposes. What access could we have to such a written script in English? Should it be only through the website? Or should it be available somewhere, distributed and so on? Please, I beg the Secretariat to clarify that. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of the Czech Republic for your comment and questions.

The next speaker is the distinguished representative of Colombia.

**Mr. H. QUIMBAYA MORALES** (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*) My delegation can fully support all of the efforts being made to make the most out of the available resources. We do not agree with what has been said here i.e. to cut down on interpretation and translation services because we believe all of that would necessarily have a negative impact on delegation participation. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of Colombia for your comments.

I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Brazil.

**Mr. J. FILHO** (Brazil) (*interpretation from Spanish*) We have listened with due attention to everything that has been said. We would like to thank the members of the Secretariat for all of the elements of information that have been dispensed. We would like to thank the Conference Service as well as the Financial Service for having presented this information for our benefit. This is of essential importance for the future of our work.

A question if I might. Have we already made provision for the development of a plan to effect savings? Do we more or less know what is going to be crystallizing in the future? It would be very important to know, in practical terms, exactly what sort of strategies have already been set up because this would allow us to refer back to capital about this, to our authorities, it would allow us to elicit extra information as well and to better grasp the situation at hand. For countries such as mine we wish to practically contribute to this effort which is being undertaken to effect savings, to streamline, to rationalize, to enhance services. We must also remember that our country, as well as other countries, have the same position we

quite agree with what has been said. We must streamline services, rationalize but not cut down on the time made available to us. We just have to make the most out of the time that we have made available to us. We are in the twenty-first century, the century of outer space, and we have ever so many problems that we must address in the legal sphere. Consequently, I do believe that we need the number of sessions that we have available to us at present. That must not be cut down on. That does not mean that we should not seek to make the utmost out of the available resources. What we have to do is to try to modernize, to update the services, this is precisely what is being intended and provided for. This is an initiative that we can do nothing but commend. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of Brazil for your comment.

Are there any comments or suggestions?

I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Argentina.

**Ms. G. HUARTE** (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*) My delegation would like to state that we subscribe to what has been said by Brazil. We are not able to accept any proposal intended to cut down on the number of meetings or of the number of days allotted to the Legal Subcommittee. Yes we can try to save, try to make the most out of what we have but we certainly have to do our best with the resources that we have. It is true that sometimes we have certain stretches that are free within our meetings but streamlining and rationalizing does not mean that necessarily this is tantamount to cutting down of the number of meetings, the number of days. If we cut down on the number of meetings, how are we going to manage when it comes to doing our work and meeting the challenges before us? There are ever so many challenges just as the Czech Republic has said. Before the Legal Subcommittee used to meet for five weeks, let us remember that we just meet once a year for two weeks every time. That is not the case for the other bodies of the United Nations. We have to think through carefully, clearly, about what is taking place but we must not lose sight of the importance of the work that we have on our plates here and that we are doing here. I do not think that cutting down on the number of meetings would be the right way to go about this. We really have to have in mind the interests of the developing countries. The Legal Subcommittee is talking about a legal regime which is adapted to technology and we have kept a balance and that balance is very important for developing countries. Those countries just do not have the means, the

resources of developed countries. There is a technological progress underfoot and we have problems in hand so we have to meet the challenges of technologies and face the future bravely and effectively and well. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of Argentina for your comments.

Are there any other comments or questions?

I give the floor to Conference Management Service. We have time limitation, this is the last comment for you.

**Mr. I. KARBUCZKY** (Chief, Conference Management Service) Thank you for the questions. From the distinguished representative of the Czech Republic concerning the written script referred to in paragraph 6(c). My understanding is that this is not a transcript, this would be a script to facilitate the search of the digital recording. So there would be a script similar to notes for the chair and the speakers list, a combination of those, which would make it easier to find a given moment of the meeting on the recording so you do not have to listen from the beginning the whole thing but give you an idea of where the statement that you are looking to listen is located.

The distinguished delegate of Brazil asked about a plan to save and a strategy. I would limit myself only to this digital recording issue because as I said before reallocating meeting time among different bodies this is entirely within your purview. We, the Secretariat, are in your hands, if you want to use one and a half weeks here and two weeks there instead of two weeks here and one and a half weeks there this is your call, as long as the overall numbers are within the entitlements and do not represent an increase in the number of meetings in your entitlement, it is your call how to use them. For the digital recording, the plan is that we would develop this tool this year, as I said it would have about \$40,000 development cost which, unless we have a donation, Conference Management would have to absorb and again, as I said, we are under extreme financial constraints but we hope to work with our colleagues in New York and see if funding can be made available for this development. This would be available for you to use as of next year and the savings would arise next year. Beyond that we do not have any strategy, we prepared this proposal because you had this initiative at the previous session and we just try to accommodate that request. This would not have an impact on your overall meetings entitlement or documentation entitlements, this is simply dealing with the transcripts that would be discontinued and replaced

by the digital recording and that would be the first step. You will have a trial period within which you would evaluate the use of the new tool. With experience gained we would be able to give you ideas how the tool can be improved on, how the site can be made more informative, this again is going to be a collaborative process between the Secretariat and member States. At the end of the day or even before that if you decided this is not sufficiently meeting your expectations, return to the transcripts would always be an option for you to consider. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished friend from Conference Management Service.

I give the floor to the Secretariat, Mr. Niklas Hedman.

**Mr. N. HEDMAN** (Secretariat) Just some additional remarks to what Mr. Karbuczky said about the proposed use of digital recordings. The reason why this proposal in paragraph 6 in this particular paper is put forward and has a time limit is that if we decide so we are going to enter into a complete new way of serving this body which means that it would be wise not to do it for eternity, if I can put it that way, but to have a trial period. We estimated that, in order to really see the consequences, to look into this and member States would also gather experience, it could be for two biennia and then, in 2015, it would be reviewed, then with the understanding and qualification in the decision that we could go back to the use of unedited transcripts that we have presently.

Just one clarification for paragraph 6(c). The whole issue here also relates to the work of the substantive secretariat, the Office for Outer Space Affairs, and for us in the Committee Services and Research Section, we need a printout of the English recordings, that means the unedited transcript that we have today, the English version is essential for the Office for Outer Space Affairs to be able to, in the forthcoming year, service properly the respective subcommittee and committee of course.

Our intention is to have a script, a typed out version of the English recording in paper format and put that also on the website. So it would look more or less like the unedited transcript that is now presently available on the website and also being sent out through the appropriate channels to member States. We would have still a typed out version of the recording, which means that it is not only a list of speakers but it is also what actually was said but it is entirely unedited. Just to clarify that this is what the Secretariat would need. You are aware when you have read the

unedited transcripts that the typing process, that is the biggest one, because they are typed out in all official six languages so this is the situation to clarify that. That is it in a nutshell the proposal that is being put forward.

From the collective secretariat, we have provided what we can at this moment for delegations at this session and agenda item 12 will continue in the afternoon with a continued debate on item 12 on organizational matters. With regard to the part of agenda 12 relating to proposals for new items that would be brought up next week. We will not have the benefit of having the colleagues from CMS and Budget Division this afternoon. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank Mr. Niklas Hedman of the Secretariat.

The distinguished representative of The Netherlands.

**Mr. R. LEFEBER** (Netherlands) This has been a very useful and enlightening discussion and I have come to the conclusion that COPUOS, the three committees, are in a very luxurious position in view of the entitlements that we have and there is no reason to give those up, we should keep the entitlements that we have. However, within the framework as a whole, I note that the Main Committee, the policy body of COPUOS the most important body, is pressed for time because it has 8 days not more than that, I never knew that and I always wondered why the subcommittees have 10 days and the Main Committee only 8 days but that is because of this allotment of meetings with interpretation, they only have 32. I think it is quite difficult for delegations to understand how this works exactly. It would be very useful to have a short paper, like the one you did on the transcripts, of one or two pages for our consideration that sets out the system with entitlements that we have, how the entitlements have been allocated to the three committees and how then that works in relation to the number of meeting days so that we can have an informed discussion next week on this issue. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of The Netherlands for your comments.

Distinguished representative of France. I give the floor to the distinguished representative of France.

**Mr. M. HUCTEAU** (France) (*interpretation from French*) Thank you to the representative of conference and financial services who have shed light on the organizational logistic details we needed

clarified. My delegation spoke about organizational matters during plenary and we believe that these points could also be gone into in subcommittee sessions. We would like to say that this is possibly the issue that has mobilized most delegations on which we are talking about most, when a body is speaking more about the way its going to be going about organizing its work rather than to the substance, this is already very indicative and very interesting in and of itself, is it not. We do want this discussion to be pursued in the next couple of days so that we will be able to craft recommendations to suit the needs of this Subcommittee and COPUOS as a general committee as well. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of France for your comment.

Italy is the last comment, we can continue our discussion this afternoon.

**Ms. A. PASTORELLI** (Italy) Thank you very much for this very useful information on briefings from the Secretariat. I would just like to say that, considering the importance of the work carried out by the Legal Subcommittee and with a view of preserving its value for the future, we would like to continue our discussion in a constructive way looking at possible savings now we know the amount of savings we could have and reflecting what the work presently of this session has been which I would like here to remind has been closed yesterday at 3:30 in the afternoon, the day before yesterday at 4:30 in the afternoon. Every morning it was closed at least half an hour earlier than the scheduled time. This is in answer to the point raised by my distinguished colleague from Argentina. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN** I thank the distinguished representative of Italy, I think we can continue our discussion in the afternoon.

Distinguished delegates I will shortly adjourn this meeting but before doing so I would like to remind delegates of our schedule of work for this afternoon.

We will meet promptly at 3 p.m. At that time we will continue our consideration of agenda item 3, general exchange of views. We will hopefully suspend our consideration of agenda item 6(a) the definition and delimitation of outer space, pending the adoption of the report of the working group and conclude our consideration of agenda item 6 (b) the character and utilization of the geostationary orbit. We will also continue and hopefully conclude our consideration of agenda item 10, general exchange of information on

national mechanisms relating to space debris mitigation measures. We will continue our consideration of agenda item 12, proposals to the Committee for new agenda item to discuss organizational matters of the work of this Subcommittee.

Are there any questions or comments on this proposed schedule? I see none.

This meeting is adjourned until 3 p.m. today.

*The meeting closed at 12.57 p.m.*