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<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. RAMPHUL	(Mauritius)
<u>later:</u>	Mr. BISHARA (Vice Chairman)	(Kuwait)
<u>Rapporteur:</u>	Mr. SANTISO-GALVEZ	(Guatemala)

- .. International co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space: report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space /28/ (continued)
- .. Preparation of an international treaty concerning the Moon: report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space /29/ (continued)
- .. Preparation of an international convention on principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting /37/ (continued)
- Programme of work

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AGENDA ITEMS 28, 29 and 37 (continued)

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (A/8720; A/C.1/L.606)

PREPARATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL TREATY CONCERNING THE MOON: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (A/8720)

PREPARATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE USE BY STATES OF ARTIFICIAL EARTH SATELLITES FOR DIRECT TELEVISION BROADCASTING (A/8771; A/C.1/L.605)

Sir Colin CROWE (United Kingdom): Mr. Chairman, since this is the first occasion I have had to speak in this Committee, may I take the opportunity to congratulate you and our Vice-Chairmen upon your election. We have already begun to enjoy, and I know we shall increasingly appreciate, your wise, firm and impartial guidance of our affairs and we look forward to co-operating with you. I can assure you that on behalf of my delegation we will do our utmost to make your task as easy as we can.

We listened with great interest to the statements which have been made by representatives on this important subject. I should like to congratulate the representative of Austria in his capacity as Chairman of the Outer Space Committee for the excellent report which he introduced last Thursday. I think that that report clearly demonstrates what all of us here believe should be the case, that the Outer Space Committee is indeed the focal point of the United Nations for all matters relating to outer space.

I do not wish to devote too much time to the Committee's report which in any case stands on its own. But one or two remarks may still be in order. The Legal Sub-Committee has in its work maintained the high standard which we have come to expect from that body. It has made significant progress in negotiating the text of a moon treaty and also a convention on the registration of objects launched into outer space. It is true that important issues on both these treaties remain to be resolved. But it would be surprising if that were not the case. One year, which is in effect one session of the Legal Sub-Committee, is little enough time in which to conclude a treaty. My delegation hopes that the Legal Sub-Committee will continue to devote priority to both these treaties at its next session in March with a view to presenting agreed texts to the Outer Space Committee and the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

(Sir Colin Crowe, United Kingdom)

The Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee also has achievements to its credit. The Programme on Space Application has been singled out for praise by many representatives and my delegation too would agree as to its importance. The Working Group on Remote Sensing has had a preliminary meeting and will begin its substantive work in January. In this connexion, I should like to stress the importance of the successful launching of the ERTS-A satellite -- the Earth Resources Technology Satellite -- on 23 July.

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This is indeed a most important and significant development and my delegation would wish to offer its warmest congratulations to the United States Government and to NASA on this splendid achievement. The results from ERTS-A and the later ERTS-B will provide the raw data, the critical information, for the Working Group on Remote Sensing. Only when this information is available will the Working Group be able to make sensible recommendations for the future organization and how this important subject can be put to the best possible use for all countries in the world.

I should add in passing that one of the features of the ERTS programme of special interest is its co-operative nature which was fully emphasized by the representative of the United States in his statement on Thursday. In the case of the United Kingdom, no less than five groups are using data from the ERTS-A satellite programme and it is hoped that others will be able to participate in the use of data from ERTS-B and the earth resources experiment in the Skylab spacecraft later on.

I now turn to the item which the delegation of the Soviet Union has proposed, namely, the need for an international convention on principles governing direct satellite broadcasting. The representative of the Soviet Union has spoken at some length on this matter, has produced a draft convention and has, indeed, submitted a draft resolution. For my part, I do not want to go into any great detail on the matter and will certainly not indulge in a detailed critique of the draft convention. This is not the place to do so, especially since I believe that there is general agreement that this whole question should be referred to the Outer Space Committee. I should, however, like to make one or two general remarks in the form of what I hope will be regarded as constructive comment of the Soviet draft resolution.

The first point is the time-scale. As the representative of the United States has pointed out, it will be many years yet before it is technically possible to broadcast by television satellite direct into television receivers in people's homes on the ground. Therefore, although, I would agree, there are important issues which have to be considered, we do in this matter have time on our side. In this connexion, I wonder whether it is right for this session of the General Assembly to commit itself at this stage to the view

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that an international convention is necessarily the right or only way of dealing with the problems involved. It may well be so and it is always a possibility which should be borne in mind, but it may not be the only solution.

Secondly, in the time at our disposal before direct broadcasting becomes a technical reality, I think that we have to start by giving very careful consideration to the very principles involved. For my country the principle of the freedom of information, the free flow of ideas, is fundamental to our way of life and has been so for centuries. Certainly we do not advocate licence, and internationally as well as nationally some restriction may be necessary. But this must always be a falling away from the ideal of freedom. This positive aspect was well brought out in the fourth preambular paragraph of resolution 2733 A (XXV) of the twenty-fifth session which noted:

"... that the potential benefits of satellite broadcasting have particular significance with regard to better understanding among peoples, the expansion of the flow of information and the wider dissemination of knowledge in the world, and the promotion of cultural exchanges,".

We, of course, recognize that in international television broadcasting by satellite there are problems involved of sovereignty, of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, the possibility of television broadcasts being used to exacerbate international tensions, and so on. What concerns me about the Soviet draft resolution as it now stands, however -- and I would ask its authors to look at it again from this point of view -- is that it deals solely with these negative aspects, lends itself towards a restrictive treatment of the question and makes no mention of the positive benefits to be obtained from as free as possible an exchange of television programmes. We should look at this problem from an outgoing standpoint, from the standpoint of resolution 2733 A (XXV), to see what benefits the world can derive, not just what evils we should avoid. In my country we attach the greatest importance to the international use of television whether it be for cultural, scientific or educational purposes, or even, if we are not too stuffy or highbrow to admit it, for entertainment.

(Sir Colin Crowe, United Kingdom)

Thirdly, the problems involved in balancing up the principle of the free flow of information with the need for some form of mutual understanding and regulation are not confined to legal problems, as is for instance suggested in the fifth preambular paragraph of the Soviet draft resolution. For example, as the representative of the Soviet Union has himself pointed out, there are political considerations in that one of his very laudable purposes is to prevent exacerbation of international tension. There are social questions, questions of morality and good taste. There are technical questions, such as the possibility of beaming in a complicated or steeply contoured frontier area.

It is perhaps helpful in this regard to look at another analogous subject with which the Outer Space Committee is concerned. I refer to the remote sensing of the earth by satellites. Here, too, the aims are similar: the development of this important new technique offers great opportunities which should be exploited for the benefit of all mankind. The Working Group on Remote Sensing has been charged with the task of making an initial examination of the issues involved. When we have the results of that examination it will be for consideration how we should proceed: whether draft legal instruments are needed, and if so what form they should take. So in the case of direct broadcasting by satellite we must proceed in an orderly fashion, one step at a time. To gloss over the magnitude of the problems involved would be to do a disservice to the very real opportunities which direct broadcast by satellite can bring to all mankind for the spread of educational, cultural and other information.

These are my delegation's preliminary comments. I think it follows naturally from what I have said that, while we agree that this whole matter should be referred to the Outer Space Committee, we do think that it is for that Committee itself to decide how best to handle the matter and that we should not specifically direct it to the Legal Sub-Committee. Indeed, we ought to look at this question from the widest possible point of view and in a form which can take into account the many different disciplines involved. The Outer Space Committee has decided that the Working Group on Direct Broadcasting by Satellite should be reconvened next year. My delegation

(Sir Colin Crowe, United Kingdom)

welcomes this step and considers that this would be the best forum for discussion of the whole question. However, I do not think that any resolution should specify that Working Group any more than it should specify the Legal Sub-Committee. The Committee on Outer Space is competent -- very competent indeed -- to determine its own procedure and plan of work, and I believe that we should leave it at referring the question to the Outer Space Committee.

My delegation will be guided by these reflections when the time comes to consider the formulation of a resolution on the subject.

If the time-scale for satellite broadcasting is long, the tempo of the work of the Outer Space Committee seems to be speeding up. The Committee, including its sub-committees and working groups, will spend no less than 60 days in working session in the first seven months of 1973. The main committee is to meet at the end of June instead of in September as hitherto. This seems sensible to my delegation. It will provide better continuity. But we must recognize that it will inevitably throw an extra burden on the Secretariat.

(Sir Colin Crowe, United Kingdom)

In this connexion, while we in no way wish to detract from the admiration I believe we all feel for the Committee's hard pressed Secretariat staff, my delegation has for some time felt that some strengthening and reinforcement is needed; and this would appear to be underlined by next year's work load. I should like therefore to pose a question.

Paragraph 27 of the report states that the Committee noted that the Secretary-General in his report to the Committee at its fourteenth session had indicated that he would report to the General Assembly on measures being contemplated to enhance the effectiveness of the Division, as referred to in paragraph 37 of the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. The Committee looked forward to the submission of the Secretary-General's report to give effect to this recommendation. I wonder therefore, in the light of this paragraph, if the Secretariat can tell us when this report will be available. Ideally, I would have hoped that it would have been available during this debate. But as that seems unlikely, then perhaps the Secretariat could at least give us some indication of the way the Secretary-General's thoughts are moving.

Finally, we have listened with great attention to the remarks which the Foreign Minister of the Philippines addressed to the Committee this morning on the subject of the importance of learning more about the behaviour of tropical storms with a view to controlling these phenomena, recognizing their potential for damage and the creation of devastation to the homes and lives of millions. The draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/L.606, which his delegation, together with seven other delegations, have sponsored, is a timely and sensible resolution which exemplifies once more the practical benefits which we on this earth can obtain from a sensible and positive approach to the exploitation of outer space.

Mr. ZAHAWIE (Iraq): As this is the first time that my delegation is taking the floor in the Committee, allow me, first, Mr. Chairman, to extend to you and to the other officers of the Committee our most sincere congratulations on your unanimous election. We are confident that under your experienced

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guidance, the Committee will successfully carry out its task for the present session.

My delegation also extends its congratulations to Ambassador Jankowitsch of Austria, the Chairman of the Outer Space Committee, for his excellent presentation of the Committee's report.

During last year's consideration of the item on international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space, my delegation urged this Committee to give special and far-sighted consideration to the whole new field of the law of outer space. We, together with a number of other delegations, also voiced our deep concern over the possible ways in which artificial earth satellites might be misused. My delegation would therefore welcome the initiative taken by the Soviet Union in introducing the proposal for the preparation of an international convention on principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting.

Considering the length of time it took the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to agree on the draft convention on international liability, the proposal presented by the Soviet Union can in no way be regarded as premature. My delegation does not believe that the preparation of such a convention would constitute a restriction on freedom of information. We are all too aware of the fact that what is defended as the freedom of expression or information often turns out to be the freedom to distort, to abuse and to malign. A convention on the uses of artificial satellites for television broadcasting, setting down the rules of an acceptable code of behaviour, would forestall the excesses of a free-for-all in the dissemination of misinformation, blatant propaganda and heavy doses of violence, which so often pass for entertainment on so many television channels.

Perhaps a free-for-all is not quite the right term to be used in this context at least not as far as the small and the developing countries are concerned. They would certainly be placed only at the receiving end of this barrage, at the mercy of the technically developed States, and would remain vulnerably exposed to exploitation, interference or worse. It is most

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unlikely that these small States would have the wherewithal to take effective countermeasures, while the few advanced ones would remain the sole arbiters of such broadcasts.

It is for these considerations that my delegation endorses the Soviet draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/L.605.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Iraq for the kind words that he addressed to the Chairman.

Mr. GREGORIADES (Greece): Mr. Chairman, at the outset, I wish to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of this very important Committee of the United Nations. I also wish to extend my congratulations to the two Vice-Chairmen, as well as to the Rapporteur.

Both our Organization and international public opinion have always regarded, and are rightly regarding, this body as the senior one among the Committees of the General Assembly. The questions we are now examining provide a proof of this importance, for though we are dealing with outer space, our interest has very much been on earth. Indeed, infinite as space is, the initial possibilities of its uses may have immeasurable beneficial effects for the welfare of humanity, for the fellow countrymen we have the honour to represent in this body, as it may have imponderable catastrophic consequences. The magnitude of good or evil are impressively multiplied.

The problems to which we are turning our attention, therefore, are of very real, very earthly, very direct concern to us. Indeed, when Heraclitus, in ancient times, was dealing with the questions of space, of the cosmos, his mind was beamed on us; his attention was directed to the relationship of man to space.

In this respect, I should like to express our vivid interest in the matters which the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space is examining and, very particularly, in the matters referred to in the third part of the Committee's report now before us.

(Mr. Gregoriades, Greece)

I mean thereby the possibilities and the programmes of the application of space technology in the field of development, and that of the preservation of the environment. I am also referring to the educational programmes and the fellowships in the domain of the peaceful uses of outer space.

Believe me, my country can very well understand and appreciate the importance of the peaceful uses of space for developing countries. We would like to see more and more international programmes in this domain, for these countries, and we ourselves in Greece, can always make good use of these programmes in our own country.

May I, on this occasion, on behalf of my delegation, pay a deserved tribute to all those Member States which have co-operated in international programmes related to space. I think it would be only fair to say that the United States of America comes first among them, and we cannot but commend the Soviet Union and the United States for having concluded the May agreement on space co-operation.

(Mr. Gregoriades, Greece)

We fully appreciate the importance of this step, and we rejoice at it. In the legal field, the Legal Sub-Committee has before it unresolved issues the importance of which is only too evident. In this respect may I reiterate the position which the representative of Greece expressed last year before this Committee: that is, that we believe that the use of space offers the opportunity of a promising beginning in a virgin area of international law, an opportunity which we have the right to expect that the Members of the United Nations will grasp, an opportunity to display boldness, a chance to realize the importance and the beneficial repercussions of recognizing and treating outer space as a res communis usus.

On the question of an international convention on the principles to govern the use of artificial satellites for direct television broadcasts, my delegation has paid all due attention to the important statements made in this Committee. I must say that the statement made on this issue by the representative of France has attracted our very particular attention. As has been remarked, the prospects of technical progress towards what could be called real, direct, intra-State broadcasts -- that is, television broadcasts directly to the home viewers -- are still distant. We can, however, appreciate the validity of the general concept that factual situations must not precede the law.

That being so, we should like to proceed on this question with an open mind, ready to examine as and when technical developments evolve, the principles and the framework which will render direct home reception, when technically achieved, most beneficial so as to avoid causes of international friction.

It is in that spirit that we shall examine whatever draft convention or set of principles may emerge from the work of the Legal Sub-Committee of the Outer Space Committee or of the Working Group on Direct Broadcast Satellites -- both of them being appropriate forums on the matter -- of course reserving our position until then, depending on the draft or set of principles.

(Mr. Gregoriades, Greece)

Before concluding, I should like to present our congratulations to the members of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and of its two Sub-Committees, and wish them well in their important continuing work. We also wish to pay the tribute justly deserved by the former Chairman of the Committee and at present our most able Secretary-General, Mr. Waldheim, as well as by his distinguished successor, Ambassador Jankovitsch. Indeed, both of these outstanding diplomats add to and again justify the great diplomatic tradition of their country, Austria.

The CHAIRMAN: I have been informed by the co-sponsors of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/L.606 that Iceland has become a co-sponsor of that draft resolution.

Mr. VAN USSEL (Belgium) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, the Belgian delegation wishes first of all to congratulate you most sincerely on your election to preside over the work of the Committee, and also to assure you of our full support and our eagerness to collaborate with you. We are convinced that you will guide our debates competently and with a firm hand and that, thanks to your diplomatic ability, our work will lead to positive results. May I also congratulate the representatives of Romania and Kuwait on their election as Vice-Chairmen of our Committee and also Ambassador Santiso-Galvez on his election to the very delicate post of Rapporteur.

Since last year's debate in the First Committee on the problems relating to the peaceful uses of outer space, the two main space Powers have made further technical and scientific progress. Moreover, we have noted with satisfaction that other countries, such as France, the United Kingdom and Canada have implemented programmes of space applications and have given an impetus to manifestations of co-operation in this field. For their part, Argentina, Brazil and India have become even more determined to place space techniques at the service of their economic development goals. The efforts made by those countries in the field of natural resources, communications and meteorology

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deserve the highest praise of our Committee and should lead and encourage other countries to make use of the opportunities being offered by Governments and the specialized agencies in the field of training, research and application of space techniques, in order to speed up the development process.

Nor can we pass over in silence the co-operation in the form of exchanges of information between scientific organizations such as COSPAR AND IAF.

As far as the United Nations itself is concerned, we must pay a tribute to the Division of Outer Space Affairs, headed by Mr. Abdel-Ghani, and to the Expert on Space Applications for their untiring efforts. Professor Ricciardi has left us to take on other responsibilities, but we should like to express to him all our appreciation for the remarkable work he did.

While the over-all achievements and efforts of States and organs of the international community could be described as encouraging and impressive, that is not necessarily true of the balance sheet of the work done by the Committee on Outer Space in 1972. We believe that the results of the Committee's work must have been somewhat meagre. It is true that the Legal Sub-Committee cannot each year produce a new treaty or convention to round out and complete the 1967 outer space Treaty. The Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee also cannot at each session launch an original draft or a new idea. It is nevertheless regrettable that, on the one hand, Member States constantly state that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space is the central directive body of the international community in the co-ordination of efforts to solve the scientific and legal problems relating to outer space and, on the other hand, that Committee almost never seems to be able to give specific directives to its subordinate bodies, and therefore the latter find it difficult to establish priorities, with the result that negotiations on one draft or another are delayed and no progress is achieved.

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We are, however, convinced that under the competent and active guidance of its new Chairman, Ambassador Jankowitsch, the Outer Space Committee will have new life breathed into it and that it will then meet the obligations the General Assembly has assigned to it.

As I said before, we have witnessed a multiplication of efforts and projects in the field of space, and, more than ever before, we believe that our Organization should, on the one hand, play a role of co-ordination, and on the other, one of creation, principally in juridical matters. Last year we supported the initiative of the Soviet Union aimed at negotiating a treaty relating to the moon. We did so because we were convinced that that idea would provide an opportunity for defining more clearly the general provisions contained in the 1967 treaty relating to international co-operation, to the régime for outer space and celestial bodies, to the exchange of information on outer space missions, to scientific research, and to the right of surveillance by the international community over penetration into what has been declared the heritage of mankind.

We are bound to state that it is extremely difficult to go beyond a repetitive formulation of the 1967 principles, and that it will require a great deal of good-will to resolve the numerous differences that have arisen in the course of negotiations. My country does not believe there is much point in drafting a treaty concerning the moon alone; on the contrary, we believe the scope of such a treaty should be extended, even on a provisional basis, to include the other celestial bodies of our solar system, adapting its terms later on, should it be necessary, to the particular requirements of each of those celestial bodies. Though it is true that the moon is at this time the only celestial body open for exploration from the earth, to act otherwise would but create doubts regarding the applicability of principles valid for the exploration of the moon to other celestial bodies, at the very time when expeditions to Mars and Venus are already on the drawing-board.

In this regard we share the view expressed here by various representatives, particularly those of France and Canada, which does not exclude the possibility of a compromise under which the other celestial bodies might also be included in the field of application of the treaty, pending specific agreements to govern the conditions for their exploitation. My delegation likewise feels

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that the treaty should affirm the principle that the natural resources of the moon and other celestial bodies are a common heritage of mankind. We certainly see none whatsoever of the difficulties that certain delegations seem to have discovered in this concept, which, in our view, does not exclude recognition of the legitimate interests of those who have exerted the efforts and made the necessary investments in the discovery and physical exploitation of those resources. We also believe that the future treaty should clearly stipulate the obligation to provide advance information of a very general nature concerning each expedition planned to the moon or other celestial body. The announcement of an expedition and general details concerning its duration and purpose are what matters most here. Such information would make it possible to avoid the mistakes and misunderstandings that could have occurred, for example, a few years ago when the two great space Powers at almost the same time landed vehicles on the moon.

It is not very convincing to claim that it is difficult to give advance notice of a launching, since it is well known that the launching of vehicles to the moon or to other celestial bodies depends upon the position of the body in question with regard to the earth, and that that ideal position lasts for only a short time each month.

Regarding the draft convention on the registration of objects launched into outer space, my delegation is more than ever convinced that there exists an urgent need for this, because the present system of registration provides only a very partial basis for the international régime to act in space activities. We were surprised that certain speakers still go on confusing the problem of registration with those of marking, identification and tracking of space vehicles. We grant that there is a certain interdependence among all these problems, but the question of registration is far broader and of much greater priority, first of all because only registration can provide the framework to make the other operations possible, and in the second place, because only registration will enable the international community to exercise its right of surveillance in determining how effectively outer space is being used and how launching States are discharging their international obligations. As an illustration of this view, it is perhaps sufficient to mention that, according to a recent

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census -- not necessarily complete -- about 2,750 vehicles or parts of vehicles are at present orbiting the earth; and though in general we know their origin, very often we know nothing about their characteristics or the purposes for which they were launched.

The Belgian delegation therefore very much hopes that the Outer Space Committee, with the assistance of its Legal Sub-Committee, will come to some agreement in 1973 on the treaty covering the moon and the other celestial bodies and on the treaty for the registry of vehicles launched into outer space, both of which are matters of the highest priority. Other equally urgent problems must also be solved without too much delay, problems such as the definition of outer space and space activities, procedures for implementing potentially dangerous space programmes, and the legal régime of orbiting stations and space shuttles.

The work of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee has been aimed, basically, on promotion of the application of space technology. There can be no doubt that the practical applications of space technology are becoming more and more numerous and are exerting their influence on the orientation and evolution of a whole series of human activities. Since the possibilities opened up by space technology are not always available to the developing countries and are at times simply not known to them, my delegation entirely approves the recommendations made by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee with regard to the United Nations programme for applications of space technology, which will henceforth be regarded as being on a biennial basis.

(Mr. Van Ussel, Belgium)

My delegation welcomes the reconvening of the Working Group on Remote Sensing of the Earth by Satellites, the importance of which has been highlighted by the recent launchings of the ERTS-1 satellites. Many scientific and practical problems must still be examined in this field before the information gained from this new technique can be of use in the discovery of the features and resources of our planet.

My delegation will thus participate fully in the activities of that Working Group, which will probably centre for a long time to come on consideration of the potential uses of different remote sensing systems.

Because Belgium is a small country and because of the density of its population and the detailed way in which our exploration has been carried out for several decades, it may at first sight appear that remote sensing by satellites would not have the specific importance for us that it is acknowledged to have in other regions of the world. But Belgium is interested in these techniques both from the scientific standpoint within the framework of observing phenomena regarding the whole of the geographical area where it is located and from the standpoint of the possibilities the techniques open to larger and less densely populated countries.

In any case, Belgium is directly interested in the possibilities that remote sensing seems to offer in studying the protection of the environment; thus my delegation welcomes with satisfaction the Canadian suggestion concerning the study of the possible uses of space technology for the surveillance of the environment.

With regard to the Working Group on Direct Broadcast Satellites, which also is to meet in 1973, my delegation believes that it should carry out an interdisciplinary assessment of the developments that have taken place in the field since its last session, which was held in 1970. The Working Group on Direct Broadcast Satellites should guide the future work of the United Nations and its specialized agencies in such matters as the dissemination of technical knowledge and inventions, international co-operation, and the legal and political repercussions of direct broadcasting by satellites.

(Mr. Van Ussel, Belgium)

The draft convention submitted by the delegation of the Soviet Union (A/8771), to which I shall briefly refer later is part of the documentation that we believe the Working Group could usefully consider.

At the beginning of my statement, I ventured to formulate a judgement on the way in which the Outer Space Committee had carried out and was carrying out its terms of reference. I said that there had always been a large gap between the reality and the desire to see that Committee function as the international community's central organ in the field of international co-operation in the peaceful use of outer space. As a member of the Outer Space Committee, however, Belgium, thinking out loud, must put the question whether it is not high time carefully to re-examine all the Committee's terms of reference. Its very name indicates that it must deal with peaceful uses of outer space, but we know full well that it is extremely difficult to distinguish between the category of peaceful uses and the category of military, or even non-peaceful, uses. We all know that ballistic missile launching devices and artificial satellites, which can be used for civil purposes, can also be used for military purposes which are not thereby necessarily non-peaceful purposes, as it is evident from some important treaties which are necessary to the maintenance of peace and recognized as such and which lay down that satellites are to be regarded as national means of detection. Hence, there is necessarily some ambiguity in the Committee's terms of reference. There can be little doubt that that ambiguity has had a paralysing influence on the Committee's work and that it has prevented the Committee from playing the central role it was intended to play -- even more than the simple fact that space technology was the monopoly of the two super-Powers, which for many, many years were engaged in an arms race.

Thus, we believe that we must express gratification at two recent important events. The first is that those two great Powers have reached an agreement for a quantitative limitation of their arsenals of weapons of mass destruction. The second is that those Powers also managed to conclude various agreements on space co-operation that can definitely encourage the development of confidence between the two countries directly concerned. Ambassador Bush of the United States referred to this in his statement. Those agreements, we hope, will also contribute

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to ending a sterile and costly competition in the conquest of outer space and will thereby enable those two States to be a little more generous in disseminating information on the techniques and practical applications of outer space exploration. We are perhaps at the beginning of a new era and if, as we ardently hope, the development initiated by these agreements continues, we shall perhaps one day see the realization of the suggestion made by three scientists of the California Institute of Technology that the United Nations should be entrusted with controlling inspection satellites within the framework of a disarmament agreement.

I now come to the Soviet proposal for the preparation of an international convention on principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting. I do not wish in any way to hide my delegation's hesitation about this initiative. In the first place, it does not meet any urgent need, for the simple reason that the reception of direct broadcasts by private sets is only a distant prospect--something which, according to the conclusions of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, will probably not be achieved until about 1985. Thus there is no immediate danger. It is certainly wise to plan in time for the future, but in this case a too hasty study of the Soviet proposal could be prejudicial to the consideration of outstanding questions before the Outer Space Committee which really have priority and to which I referred at the beginning of this statement.

But what disturbs us most in the proposal is that it approaches the problem in a very restrictive, and even negative, way. We were surprised to note that nowhere in the Soviet proposal is the sacred principle of freedom of information affirmed. It is true that the exercise of any freedom requires some regulation, in the interests of all, but not to mention freedom of information at all can lead to excessive abuse that is contrary to the principles laid down in the Charter and can negate the efforts at co-operation and mutual understanding, both on the world and on the regional level.

(Mr. Van Ussel, Belgium)

We cannot help fearing that the Soviet draft resolution as worded at present, far from wiping out barriers that stand in the way of the free flow of ideas and information, would increase those barriers and seal them even tighter.

It is of course our duty to stress here the real danger of an invasion of immoral or politically undesirable programmes. But we know that that is not the problem. It lies in the responsible attitude that is adopted regarding freedom as such. As far as my country is concerned, in the light of the geographical situation of Europe and the progress that has been made in receiving broadcasts, Belgian territory is covered by broadcasts from five neighbouring countries. We have found that, without undue regulation, we have been able to accept these television programmes without any fear and without any harm to our people.

Those preliminary comments are certainly not intended to challenge the need for the Outer Space Committee to consider the Soviet proposal and, above all, its merits, in view of the fact that it raises a problem to which the international community cannot remain indifferent.

With regard to the draft convention on principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting, my delegation will make its comments when the matter is discussed in the Outer Space Committee. However, I should like now to enter the reservations of my delegation regarding article VI, which enumerates in a completely subjective fashion the transmissions which are regarded as illegal and which are open to such an interpretation that the responsibility of States might be involved at any moment.

Article VIII provides for a clearly restricted right to interfere in legislation governing television broadcasting from other States -- and this is on the basis of a presumption. We have also been surprised to note that article IX of the draft convention recognizes the protection of copyrights, whereas the Soviet Union is not a party to any international convention on the matter.

The draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/L.605 also raises difficulties for my delegation. Apart from the fact that the preamble does not guarantee either

(Mr. Van Ussel, Belgium)

the right or the principle of the free flow of information, we believe that it is premature at this time to recommend the adoption of a convention on this subject. In our opinion, it would be wiser to entrust the Outer Space Committee with the task of drafting general principles governing the activities of States in the use of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting. My delegation very much hopes that the Soviet Union will give favourable attention to the suggestion to combine the two operative paragraphs and to limit the operative part to requesting the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to draft principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting and to report to the General Assembly. The text of the operative part as it reads at present is not, in our opinion, very realistic. First of all, there is a problem of translation. Indeed, I note that the word "necessary", which appears in the English text, has been erroneously translated into French as "indispensable". Secondly, I do not believe that at this time the First Committee or even the General Assembly is entitled and authorized to declare that only a convention can solve the problem of direct television broadcasting by satellite.

Thirdly, it is undeniably premature to make an appeal, as operative paragraph 1 does, to States to become parties to a convention that does not even exist. Finally, my delegation is convinced that the Soviet proposal should first of all be considered in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and then that Committee could refer all the documents which it had before it to a sub-committee or an ad hoc working group for more detailed examination.

Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia): In view of the fact that there is a dearth of speakers, I should like to take this opportunity to make a few remarks, having mentioned before that I was preparing some amendments to the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.605) of the Soviet Union -- leaving aside the draft convention on direct television broadcasting between States.

I referred in my last statement to the draft convention on freedom of information, and inasmuch as the world situation has changed since we formulated four articles of that draft convention in the Third Committee, and as the crux of the whole question revolves around television rather than radio broadcasting -- and, as I mentioned, "television" implies the visual and the auditory together -- I believe there should be some norms which will guide us in future. And it is not too early now to be seized of the problems that may be created by any Member State which has the facility of international satellites and which might think that its programmes are in the nature of freedom of information and not licence or propaganda.

We feel more than ever the need, not of censorship and control by Governments, but rather of a moral code, especially in the field of films, which no doubt will be the subject-matter of television broadcasting. We should think in terms of various cultures and not of a single culture -- whether Western, Eastern, Asian or African. We must beware of touching the susceptibilities of the peoples -- not the Governments -- of the States Members of the United Nations. For one thing, I must say that in so far as news is concerned I believe that any Member State will still be free to use the printed word as well as radio broadcasting to disseminate ideas -- whether in the form of opinion or propaganda or anything that is really concrete. For, as we all know, information may indeed be factual or notional. The factual is something that we can see and that cannot be refuted. For example, if a car hits a pedestrian and the reporter says: "I saw a car hit a pedestrian", that is factual information.

(Mr. Baroody, Saudi Arabia)

But if the reporter says that the driver of the car seemed to harbour hatred for the pedestrian and that it looked as if he went out of his way to hit the pedestrian, that may be either opinion based on fact which he may not disclose or it may be malicious propaganda. This is the notional. On the other hand, we know that in the realm of the notional we have opinion and we have propaganda, and it is very difficult to draw a line between opinion as such and propaganda. Everybody is entitled to his opinion, but when I mentioned at the beginning of my statement the definition of norms I meant that the notional should never be calculated to injure another State, whether maliciously or for certain interests. Then the notional becomes propagandist.

I do not see anything wrong in having adopted a draft resolution which, like that submitted by the Soviet Union, shows due regard for the preamble of the Outer Space documents. I will deal further with this when my amendments are complete and are submitted. There is reference to freedom of information in the preamble to the outer space document, and why should we say that it is too early to discuss these matters? Why do we not utilize the draft instruments that are already available and with which we have been seized for over 25 years? For that matter, let the Third Committee, on a recommendation from this Committee, embark again on finishing the draft convention on freedom of information, four articles of which were completed many years ago. Then, even if we did not finish the draft convention because of controversy, we might perhaps ask the Committee on Outer Space to think what could be done in that direction inasmuch as the preamble refers to the freedom of information convention. That, I believe, would narrow the gap between those who say we should have no control whatsoever and those who say that of course we should know what will be broadcast by international television. It is not too early to broach the subject now because the Outer Space Committee would then have something to work on intelligently, whereas if we just relegate the question to another session that will mean shelving it. It will mean that we are not serious about trying to draw a line of demarcation between freedom of information and licence.

(Mr. Baroody, Saudi Arabia)

I will give an example which has to do with the Press. It is relevant to international television broadcasting. We know very well that scissors are used by the Press everywhere -- not by the correspondents; on the whole the correspondents are an honest lot; they usually report what they see and what they think should be written about a certain subject; there may be some unethical correspondents but I think that on the whole they do their duty admirably in all countries and even endanger their lives by going to battlefields to report what they see. But the editors have special interests, whether they are the editors of State-owned media or the editors of the so-called free enterprise media. That is where the scissors come in. An editor applies the scissors to the articles that the correspondents write or the news that they transmit. After 40 years of observation I have found that the scissors are applied in a sort of conspiracy against the reader. The news is either slanted or omitted -- and this is when the scissors are applied to cut out certain passages. Then there is the conspiracy of complete silence: nobody mentions anything; either a part or the whole version is not reported. The three "S's" -- slanting the news, scissors, and silence -- that is what we have called them for many years, and we have been subjected to them in every country. We know very well that in the free enterprise countries the motivation of newspaper men or broadcasting companies, privately owned, is gain and profit; so they pander to the cheap -- or perhaps "sensual" is the word rather than "cheap". They pander to the sensual and give people the things they like to read about, peddling sex, sex motion pictures or sex programmes.

I was told recently that there was a programme -- and I am not going to mention where because it is obvious, and you can reach your own conclusion -- which, owing to the fact that in a certain country the teenagers have become promiscuous, in school and out of school, and are contracting venereal diseases, was about using the condom. I do not have a television set, radio is enough for me, but this was a programme for parents and teenaged children. Now, if such a programme, which is deemed by a certain country to be educational, were broadcast to a country where such things are not shown on television, what would happen?

(Mr. Baroody, Saudi Arabia)

I give this as a recent example of what is going on in certain highly developed countries. It is shocking, perhaps, to cite such an example but we are here to grapple with facts rather than to say that freedom of information is a blanket in which no hole should be made through which to peep at anything. There is nothing to peep at.

(Mr. Baroody, Saudi Arabia)

The peep shows will be on television, and they are, what shall I say, sex films. There is nothing wrong with sex, it is a healthy instinct, but sex used for those who are allegedly over 21 -- certain films marked X -- this will be the substance of television in the future. I have seen men over 21 who are less mature than teenagers when it comes to sex. There is an Arab proverb which in translation tells about an old man getting so romantic that he loses his mind. So there is susceptibility about these matters. I picked on sex because sex preoccupies many societies in the West. I do not know about the Soviet Union, not having been there or in the socialist countries. It depends on their programmes. I do not know about them. I do not see English programmes on television, but I know what goes on. That would be the subject matter of television, international or national, and it is said that it would be in the name of freedom of information, the free flow of information. But it would mean licence, and licence means pornography, pornography means promiscuity and promiscuity means subverting society and weakening the family, destroying certain institutions, certain traditions that have taken thousands of years to come into being, doing away with values that had been tested not throughout the centuries but throughout thousands of years, in the name of freedom of information.

I know what my good friends the Americans mean when they say "The free flow of information". In other words, they do not want anyone to interfere with anyone's saying what he wants to say in their country and they seem astonished, because they feel that what is good for the goose is good for the gander, that what is good for the Americans should be good for those who are abroad. Perhaps it is not out of cupidity. Why should I suspect them of intending to brainwash other countries? I think everybody knows now that they should be very very careful about preserving their own culture and not try to borrow from a culture if it is deleterious to their way of life.

But there are fields in freedom of information other than just political news, saying that "My way of life is better than yours, my ideology is superior to the other ideology". They are only thinking in political terms.

(Mr. Baroodi, Saudi Arabia)

On the other hand, the mores of peoples change and we know that in certain countries when somebody sees a friend whom he has not seen for a long time he will say, "It is so nice to see you, you old bastard," in a nice way. But in my country if he calls you a bastard, you can kill him. You can see that people use language in good faith which may be acceptable to some whereas to others it is a great insult.

I will give another example so that it will not be thought that I am talking in generalities. I am old enough to have seen what goes on in life. There are certain countries where they have institutionalized democracy. I say "institutionalized" because democracy, I believe, is in the spirit and in the way a person behaves towards his fellow man rather than the machine, a party machine or whatever you have.

I do not watch what they call election campaigns here or elsewhere, because the contestants for office in certain countries call their opponents corrupt, panderers --- I do not have to go through the gamut of insults that are used. After they have finished the contest they wine and dine together; this is unthinkable. It does not even redound to the reputation of a developed country if they want to show how their political institutions are run since it is not in their interests because people have other ideas. All this is done under the guise of freedom of information.

Now we come to the privately-owned media. In the privately-owned media they have advertisers. Members know very well that were it not for the advertisers they would not be in business. They are not all like the BBC or French television --- which are I think, although I am not sure, semi-independent of their Governments, and run by charter, so to speak. These people who own the mass media may be influenced by certain factions to keep certain news from the public and to highlight other news or even propaganda --- not in news only, but in films and in various programmes that need not be what you would call literary, but are meant to influence people in a certain direction. So why do we shy away from trying to regulate -- not censor -- information, not by way of control

(Mr. Baroodi, Saudi Arabia)

exercised by Governments but, as I mentioned during my last intervention, by the association of the mass media on an international scale, thus paving the way through certain studies which would be made for us by the Outer Space Committee, so that we might conduct ourselves intelligently in the future when international television becomes a reality?

I read Ambassador Bush's statements and it seems that it is a few years too early to put into practice what many people here are afraid of in regard to television broadcasts. On the other hand, some have said that the Soviet Union was acting prematurely in submitting a convention. I am not going to tamper with the convention. I read it and I have my own ideas about the draft convention of the Soviet Union. I do not think that it is too early to refer that draft convention to the Outer Space Committee for study. But on the other hand I think that the draft resolution of the Soviet Union should be taken into serious consideration, with certain amendments which I thought I would submit after having studied all the facets of the situation or as many facets as I could ponder --- and I believe that it would be a good start. Nobody --- I do not think even the Soviet Union --- expects that a convention can be worked out in this Committee or in any other Committee, knowing the diversity of views on freedom of information.

(Mr. Baroodv. Saudi Arabia)

But there is a catalytic agent which is, I submit, the draft convention on freedom of information, which can be completed by the Third Committee, though not necessarily this year. In the meantime, whether or not it is completed by the Third Committee, it should be referred to the Committee on Outer Space for consideration. The Committee need not examine it article by article, but could consider whatever in that draft convention was relevant to international television broadcasts. The Committee has put in a lot of time and effort at several sessions of the General Assembly to find a meeting of minds. And let me state that France at that time was represented by a very, very fine journalist, whose name I have forgotten -- he died in 1952 -- who came to the conclusion that certain regulations should be provided for by the convention. The other day I mentioned how the late Father Beaufort felt at the beginning, as a Westerner, coming from Holland. Members know how nations especially in the 1950s -- and I hope less so now -- acted in groups. They sometimes acted on the basis of what was called solidarity rather than on the basis of the merits of the question. He made that admission to me and then he finally participated with us in the preparation of one of the articles of the draft convention which at that time, in the early 1950s, was meant to curb not only salacious literature, but also the onslaught of pornography. At that time it was nothing compared to what it is now. In some countries now they think nothing of pornography. They say that it is all right -- "let us expose the young and the old to it and they will get tired of it". But what about the susceptibilities of other States with certain traditions? Those that believe so are a minority -- they may be 10, 15 or 20. There are 132 Members of the United Nations and there must be another 20 countries that are not Members of the United Nations. Do they not count?

I ask representatives to think objectively and dispassionately, without emphasizing their special interests in the preparation of news or television broadcasts, whether or not it is in their interests, because some of those broadcasts emanate from privately owned mass media. That is the question. It is not a question of "either you are with me or you are against me". There should be a meeting of minds. There should be give and take. And where can that be done?

(Mr. Baroodv. Saudi Arabia)

Can it be done here? But the Committee does not have enough speakers, otherwise I would not be speaking now. Everybody sings his song, praises the virtues of his own Leila -- sings the praises of his pet ideas -- and then we are stymied. Next year we shall come here with the same problem and with the same approach, and all that the Soviet Union is asking us is to see that the ball gets rolling. I believe it is time that it should start rolling, but on condition that the draft convention will not be submitted during this session for any practical action, because that would be humanly impossible. Therefore, it could become a working paper perhaps of the Committee on Outer Space. But the draft resolution can also serve as a basis. I intend to submit amendments to it and I hope that then we shall not each one of us sing on his own side of the valley without heeding the tune from the other side of the valley.

That is all I have to say for the time being. I trust that I will be given the necessary time to present my amendments to the Soviet draft resolution in due course.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank Ambassador Baroodv, the representative of Saudi Arabia, for, inter alia, his knowledgeable views on sex in the space age.

As there are no further speakers, I wish to remind the members of the Committee at this stage that, in accordance with the decision taken by this Committee this morning, the list of speakers on the items under consideration will be closed this afternoon at 6 o'clock.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: Before adjourning the meeting, I should like to outline to the Committee the provisional time-table under which the Committee should operate during this session.

As members will recall, at its 1860th meeting the Committee agreed on the order in which it would examine the items allocated to it as shown in document A/C.1/1022. If members of the Committee would kindly turn to this document, I shall proceed to outline the proposed time-table for our work.

(The Chairman)

For the items listed under I, we would reserve seven working days, that is to say, from Thursday, 12 October, when we began the consideration of these items, to Friday of this week, 20 October, inclusive.

For the items listed under II, III and IV, we would allot 20 working days, that is to say, from Monday, 23 October, to Friday, 17 November.

With regard to the items listed under V and VI respectively, the members of the Committee will recall that at the 1860th meeting of the Committee, when I proposed the order of consideration of items allocated to the Committee, I suggested that immediately after the conclusion of the debate on the disarmament items we could be in the debate on item V, "Implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security", and that after four working days, which would cover the period from Monday, 20 November, to Thursday, 23 November, the Committee could proceed to the debate on item VI concerning the sea-bed, to which we could devote five working days, that is to say from Friday 24 November, to Thursday, 30 November. The Committee could then take up again item V on international security, and alternate its discussion with the discussion on item VI on the sea-bed, during six further working days, that is to say, from Friday, 1 December, to Friday, 8 December.

The specific scheduling of these meetings would, of course, be arranged as the circumstances required. This would leave us with a reserve of one week, that is five full working days, from Monday, 11 December, to Friday, 15 December.

(The Chairman)

I believe that this kind of time-table would best suit our needs. It seems to be a realistic time-table and if we are able to keep to it we shall be in a position to conclude our work in time. I have had consultations on this time-table with a number of delegations and I have the impression that the proposals that I have just made would meet the wishes of most delegations.

I do not think it is necessary for the Committee to take a formal decision on the matter. However, it should be clearly understood that the Chairman will operate henceforth under this schedule, and I hope that in so doing, I will have the full co-operation of the Committee. The time-table can be adjusted, if necessary, in order to cope with any exceptional situations that might arise at some point during the course of our work in the future. Therefore, as I hear no objection, I will have the time-table issued as a document of the Committee, bearing in mind what I have said by way of explanation.

The meeting rose at 5.5 p.m.