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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 4 December 1973, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. BORCH (Denmark)
Rapporteur: Mr. de SOTO (Peru)

- Programme of work
- International co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space:
report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space /30/
- Preparation of an international convention on principles governing
the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television
broadcasting: report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer
Space /31/

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PROGRAMME OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: Before we turn to the business before us, I should like to make a few brief remarks on the programme of work.

We are about to begin this afternoon the debate on items 30 and 31, relating to outer space, one meeting earlier than had been foreseen. The discussion of those items had been expected to last until the end of the day on 11 December, the date on which the First Committee has to conclude its deliberations.

There are two pieces of business outstanding, namely, item 32 on a World Disarmament Conference, and the debate and voting on a draft resolution relating to the item on the strengthening of international security. I intend to allow the sponsors of that draft resolution to introduce it as soon as it is ready, even during the course of our discussion of items 30 and 31. In that way we shall give members time to seek advice and obtain instructions. Similarly, if the draft resolution on a World Disarmament Conference should be ready some time this week, I think we should allow for an interruption for the purpose of having that introduced also. If it should not be ready this week it will have to be introduced on Monday or Tuesday next, since the last day for voting on it will be Tuesday.

Given this situation, I feel that we would do well to close the list of speakers on items 30 and 31 at an early stage -- I suggest at the end of tomorrow afternoon's meeting. Moreover, I would propose that we try to conclude the general debate on those items by the end of Thursday afternoon, leaving Friday as a possibility for dealing with issues relating to and voting on the draft resolution on outer space if we should not be able to do that also on Thursday.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that, in the light of this explanation, the Committee decides to adopt my suggestion that the list of speakers on items 30 and 31 should be closed at the end of tomorrow afternoon's meeting.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: I take it also that the Committee agrees to the programme I have outlined for the last few days of our work. We shall, accordingly, aim at concluding the general debate on items 30 and 31 by the end of Thursday, or possibly on Friday morning, and would expect to conclude the debate and the voting on the draft resolution relating to them by Friday evening, leaving Monday and Tuesday for the other items I have mentioned if we have not been able to deal with them before.

AGENDA ITEMS 30 and 31

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (A/9020)

PREPARATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE USE BY STATES OF ARTIFICIAL EARTH SATELLITES FOR DIRECT TELEVISION BROADCASTING: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (A/9020)

The CHAIRMAN: Following the practice of previous years, the Committee may wish to consider these two items jointly, on the understanding that those delegations that desire to do so may make separate statements on either item. As I hear no objection, the Committee will proceed on that basis.

I call now on the Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Ambassador Jankowitsch of Austria, to introduce the report of that Committee.

Mr. JANKOWITSCH (Austria) (Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space): It is my privilege, as Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, to introduce the report of the Committee on the work of its sixteenth session, contained in document A/9020.

The activity of the Committee during this period concentrated on the consideration of the reports of three of its subsidiary bodies, namely, the Legal Sub-Committee, the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee and the Working Group on Direct Broadcast Satellites.

In the legal area -- covered by paragraphs 16 to 29 in the report -- it will be recalled that, as a result of the request of the General Assembly at its twenty-seventh session, the Legal Sub-Committee had given priority in its April 1973 session to matters relating to the draft treaty on the moon and the draft convention on registration of objects launched into space. Through the Working Groups it had established to deal with them and in its private consultations, as well as in its plenary meetings, the Sub-Committee made vigorous efforts to complete the two international draft instruments with a view to submitting them to the present session of the General Assembly. While considerable progress had been

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achieved in reconciling the main differences with regard to these two draft international instruments, some questions remained outstanding which the Sub-Committee had requested the parent Committee to help solve during its sixteenth session. These questions related principally to the legal régime to govern natural resources of the moon, and, in so far as the draft convention on registration was concerned, revolved around the "marking" of objects launched into outer space. In response to the request of the Legal Sub-Committee, the Committee, at its sixteenth session in June and July of this year, had established an informal Working Group of the Whole with a view to achieving progress towards the finalization of those two draft international instruments. As a result of a thorough discussion and of sincere efforts on the part of the members of the Committee, further results were achieved, although not yet sufficient to make the completion of the two draft instruments possible. The Committee, accordingly, agreed to request the Legal Sub-Committee to exert its best efforts to complete the draft treaty relating to the moon and the draft convention on registration at its next session, as a matter of the highest priority.

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In the course of the deliberations of the Committee views were also expressed in regard to the question of elaborating principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting. No detailed consideration could be given to the matter or to other legal questions which had been before the Legal Sub-Committee but which could not be considered by it because of lack of time. The Committee, however, noting the importance of these subjects, suggested that the Legal Sub-Committee consider the question of the elaboration of principles on direct television broadcasting with a view to concluding an international agreement or agreements in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2916 (XXVII) of 9 November 1972, taking due account of the results of the work of the Working Group on Direct Broadcast Satellites as referred to in section IV of the Committee's report.

It further requested that the Legal Sub-Committee should devote part of its next session to responding to the request of the Working Group on Remote Sensing of the Earth by Satellites for its views on the legal implications of earth resources surveys by remote sensing satellites, and to consider, as time permits, matters relating to the definition and/or delimitation of outer space and outer space activities.

In the area of scientific and technical co-operation --- and in this connexion please note paragraphs 30 to 60 of the report --- the Committee devoted its attention primarily to the activities of the Working Group on Remote Sensing of the Earth by Satellites, which had met early in the year and whose report had been considered by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee during its May session. Recognizing the importance of work done in this area, the Committee endorsed the recommendation that a number of measures be pursued in this respect by the Working Group on Remote Sensing as well as by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. These measures include the preparation of a second survey on the potential uses of remote sensing, to be addressed to Member States, as well as the collection by the Secretary-General of additional and current information from all specialized agencies and other competent United Nations bodies and international organizations represented on the Sub-Committee as observers on their activities related to remote sensing; and the establishment by the Working Group of a task force of the whole to study data dissemination and

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utilization. In the light of the potential of remote sensing by satellites, the question of data dissemination and utilization has gained increasing importance as a main feature of international co-operation in this area. The task force is expected to meet during the early part of February and to submit its report for consideration by the Working Group on Remote Sensing of the Earth by Satellites, scheduled to meet during the latter part of February and early March.

The Committee also considered the United Nations activity in the area of promoting co-operation in practical applications of space technology, and approved the United Nations Programme for Space Applications for 1974. This programme consists of the holding of technical panels on various aspects of practical applications of space technology in various regions of the world, visits by the Expert on Space Applications to developing countries with a view to promoting international co-operation in this field, and administration of fellowships offered by Governments in the area of space applications.

I wish to point out in this connexion the importance being attached to these technical panels by members attending them, especially those from developing countries. Since the United Nations Applications Programme was initiated in 1970, six such panels have been organized, mostly on a regional basis. Two of these panels dealt with remote sensing -- one held in the United States in May 1971, and another in Brazil in December 1971; two were on satellite instructional and educational television programmes -- one in India in December 1972, and one in Ethiopia recently; and, finally, one was on satellite meteorological data -- it was held in Mexico in November-December 1972. One other panel on remote sensing is being held in Argentina at the moment. For 1974, two other panels are being planned, one on satellite broadcasting systems for education, to be held in Japan, and the other on remote sensing for the benefit of countries in the Middle East.

The Committee also gave its attention to the question of the need for the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee to concentrate its future activity on some selected areas of space applications to enable consideration in depth of various measures that could be taken to enhance further international co-operation in this field. Consequently the Committee endorsed the Sub-Committee's conclusion that among the priority items to be considered at the Sub-Committee's next session should be remote sensing of the earth by satellites in all its aspects, including

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the contribution of satellites to the solution of environmental problems and the United Nations programme on space applications.

In accordance with the recommendation of the Outer Space Committee as endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 2915 (XXVII), the Working Group on Direct Broadcast Satellites met in June this year to study substantive material which had become available in the area of direct broadcasting since the Working Group's last session in 1970. Having considered the various technical aspects as well as the basic political, legal and organizational problems involved in direct broadcast by satellites, the Working Group concluded that it was necessary to give its primary attention to the relevant legal and political problems while continuing to study new developments in satellite broadcasting technology and relevant economic factors. The Working Group recommended in this connexion that another session should be convened before the session of the Legal Sub-Committee in 1974, in the course of which it should consider and discuss principles on the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2916 (XXVII), with a view to making specific recommendations for the work of the Legal Sub-Committee in this field. This procedure was thought desirable in order to permit the legal Sub-Committee to discharge more effectively such responsibilities in this field as might be conferred upon it. In so doing the Working Group felt that it should take into account basic legal and operational assumptions on both global and regional levels, as well as the implications of appropriate international instruments, including decisions of the 1971 World Administrative Radio Conference for Space Telecommunications. The Working Group felt that it should also study ways to enhance international co-operation with a view to deriving maximum benefit from broadcast satellite technology -- in particular in the developing countries.

The Committee, in reviewing those recommendations and conclusions of the Working Group, decided to reconvene it and endorsed its recommendations to that end as set out in paragraphs 61 to 66 of the Committee's report.

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In the course of its sixteenth session the Committee also considered the question of the enlargement of the membership of the Committee. As will be seen from paragraph 67 of its report, views were expressed in regard to the possibility of such an enlargement and several suggestions were made in this connexion. An opinion frequently expressed by many delegations was that the General Assembly might wish to request the Committee to undertake a study and formulate concrete proposals concerning the enlargement of the membership of the Committee, and report to the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly, which could then take the final decision. Other delegations held views that were slightly different.

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Other matters considered by the Committee during this session included the question of exchange of information, education and training, international sounding rocket launching facilities, United Nations registry of launching of space objects and measures for enhancing the effectiveness of the Outer Space Affairs Division. The discussion on this last point is covered by paragraph 68 of the report. In mentioning this particular item, I think it is appropriate for me to place on the record of this Assembly the Committee members' deep appreciation to the head of the Outer Space Affairs Division of the Secretariat and to all his staff for the splendid work they have again performed and for their dedication to this important field in our Organization's activities. Despite the enormous workload of that Division, the documents prepared for the various meetings of the Committee and its sub-bodies, as well as the servicing of the meetings, were always excellent. I personally fully endorse and welcome any steps with regard to any further enhancing of the effectiveness of that Division.

I have now dealt briefly with the main points covered in the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on its sixteenth session. It will be noted from the various questions of international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space dealt with in this report that the activity of the Committee has considerably increased during the past year or so, especially in the light of the work of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee in the area of remote sensing of the earth by satellites and in the light of the heavy load of legal matters considered by the Legal Sub-Committee. The question of the need for elaborating general principles governing the conduct of States in the area of direct broadcast satellites has added a further load of work for the Committee. Its calendar of meetings for next year will already occupy the Committee and its subsidiary bodies through the first half of the year, with more work probably programmed for the months to follow.

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In the circumstances, I believe I am reflecting the view of members of the Committee in saying that they all look forward to the full and continued support of Member States to enable the Committee even better to discharge its responsibility as the focal point in promoting international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space in the family of United Nations organizations.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank Mr. Jankowitsch for the full report he has given the First Committee on the manifold activities of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its various subsidiary bodies.

There are no further speakers for this meeting. There are six names on the list of speakers for the meeting tomorrow morning and none for the meeting tomorrow afternoon. I would urge members wishing to address the Committee to inscribe their names on the list of speakers as soon as possible.

I understand that a draft resolution is being drawn up. I hope that it will be ready to be introduced in the Committee tomorrow, since it will facilitate our work to have that text before us as soon as possible.

I wish to make one further remark concerning our programme of work. On Thursday afternoon the plenary Assembly is scheduled to consider items emanating from the First Committee. It is not expected that that will take long, and it may therefore be possible for this Committee to meet on Thursday afternoon after the Assembly has concluded its consideration of those items.

The meeting rose at 3.35 p.m.