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COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND FORTY-SIXTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 11 June 1975, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. JANKOWITSCH

(Austria)

- General debate (continued)

India
Brazil
Australia
Egypt
US
GDR

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GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

Mr. VELLODI (India): Mr. Chairman, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space is meeting once again under your very able leadership, and my delegation is confident that as on previous occasions you will guide us to make this a productive session.

I should like to join you, Mr. Chairman, and those representatives who have spoken before me in conveying our profound condolences to the delegations of the Soviet Union, France and Italy on the demise of Academician Blagonravov, Mr. Chavet and Mr. Florio, all of whom had made very significant contributions to the work of this Committee.

It is customary during the general debate for delegations to make general remarks on the substantive items on the agenda. Some delegations use this occasion also to refer to the highlights in their respective national programmes. I shall be very brief in this respect. I shall defer stating my delegation's views on the substantive issues before us until we consider agenda item 4, covering the reports of our two Sub-Committees.

As regards the highlights of the Indian space programme, I wish to place on record our deep appreciation to the Government of the Soviet Union and to the Soviet Academy of Sciences in particular for the assistance they provided us for the successful launching of our first satellite in April this year. I must thank you also, Mr. Chairman, for the very generous sentiments about our satellite launch that you expressed during your opening statement. I wish also to report to the Committee that final preparations are currently under way for the satellite instructional television experiment which we are planning to conduct for one year with the help of the ATSF satellite launched by NASA last May and which is at present being moved to the position at 35 degrees east longitude from where it will operate during the experiment. This major experiment, which could have far-reaching implications not only for my country but elsewhere in the world, would not have been possible without the generous assistance of NASA, and I wish to place on record our deep gratitude in this regard. The two major items in our space programme that I have just mentioned are in a sense true examples of international co-operation in the area of the peaceful uses of outer space.

(Mr. Velloidi, India)

With your permission, Mr. Chairman, and with the indulgence of my fellow representatives, I should like to devote the rest of my statement to taking stock, in a sense, of where we find ourselves today, more than 15 years after this Committee was established. We believe that this is a useful and even necessary exercise which can assist us significantly in understanding our role in the correct perspective and in planning our future programme of work in a manner that will produce maximum results.

We believe that this is a very opportune and possibly the right time to undertake this exercise, for reasons I shall explain.

First, we are fast approaching the end of the second decade of space exploration. Our Committee has been in existence for more than 15 years. During this period it has dealt with so many aspects of outer space that it should now be possible for us to identify areas and problems which relate specifically to our mandate and to pursue them in a more meaningful manner.

Secondly, we believe that this is the right time to engage in such stocktaking because of the very significant change that has taken place from the competitive world of the fifties and the early sixties to the co-operative society of the seventies. Whereas in the fifties and in the early sixties we were witnessing a race for supremacy in technology relating to and achievements in space exploration, we are today witnessing the final stages of the preparations for the Apollo-Soyuz test project, a truly remarkable co-operative effort, scheduled for next month.

Another significant change which has taken place over the years is that where there were no treaties, conventions or even guiding principles to govern the conduct of activities in outer space, we find today a series of excellent legal instruments which will significantly assist us in considering in a rational and correct perspective the problems covered in our mandate.

Yet another striking change is the fact that whereas in 1959 the operative interest in space activities was confined essentially to two countries, today with the advent of space applications all countries are interested and in one form or another even involved in activities relating to the peaceful uses of outer space.

(Mr. Vellodi, India)

Perhaps the most important reason why stocktaking or review is called for at this stage is this: My delegation is somewhat concerned at the fact that there does not appear to be a sufficient meeting of minds even among the members of this Committee about the exact rôle and functions of our Committee, or for that matter of the United Nations, in this extremely important area of activity. More than 13 years ago the General Assembly, in resolution 1721 B (XVI), expressed the belief that the United Nations should provide the focal point for international co-operation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space. That sentiment has been reiterated a number of times since then, and in those cases the term "focal point" has been applied sometimes to the United Nations itself, sometimes to the main Committee, and at other times even to the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. My delegation, however, is not sure whether all of us understand and interpret this sentiment in the same way. While in several areas our Committee, the Sub-Committees and the various working groups set up to consider specific fields have made very significant contributions, it is perhaps equally true that in certain other and equally important areas we still appear to be uncertain about our objectives, and at times the United Nations seems to be no more than a spectator watching activities taking place outside, when in keeping with its focal rôle the United Nations should be involved in such activities.

Finally, we believe that this is the right time for such stocktaking because bilateral and multilateral co-operation have been proceeding at an increasing tempo during the past several years and we are of the view that such co-operative efforts have succeeded in preparing the ground for global co-operation under United Nations auspices.

The review or stocktaking of the functioning of our Committee must essentially be carried out on the basis of three questions: What has been our mandate? Have we adequately fulfilled our mandate? How do we view the future of our Committee? I should like to elaborate on those three approaches.

(Mr. Vellodi, India)

The first question is, what has been our mandate? To answer this question one must go back to the origins of this Committee, because, although successive resolutions of the General Assembly -- and there have been almost 30 of them -- may show differences in the relative priorities accorded the various issues connected with the peaceful uses of outer space, we do not believe that any disagreement exists today regarding the principal theme of international co-operation, a phrase that appeared in the titles of the two items whose inclusion on the agenda of the thirteenth session was sought by the Soviet Union and the United States. The concept of the exclusive use of outer space for peaceful purposes -- a concept contained in the letter President Eisenhower addressed to Chairman Bulganin in January 1958, which in a sense brought the issue of outer space before the United Nations -- was abandoned within a year, obviously because of strategic considerations. But the concept of international co-operation has been reflected in one form or another in every one of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, almost all of them unanimously, on the question of outer space.

Resolution 1348 (XIII), adopted in December 1958, which established the Ad Hoc Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, recognized

"the great importance of international co-operation in the study and utilization of outer space"

and expressed the belief that

"the development of ... international and scientific co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space should be vigorously pursued".

That resolution asked the Ad Hoc Committee to report to the General Assembly on

"The area of international co-operation and programmes in the peaceful uses of outer space which could appropriately be undertaken under United Nations auspices to the benefit of States irrespective of the state of their economic or scientific development",

taking into account, among other things, the proposals for

"Co-ordination of national research programmes for the study of outer space, and the rendering of all possible assistance and help towards their realization". (General Assembly resolution 1348 (XIII))

(Mr. Vellodi, India)

General Assembly resolution 1472 (XIV), which was adopted unanimously the following year and which formally established our Committee, specifically stated that the United Nations should promote international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space and asked our Committee to

"review, as appropriate, the area of international co-operation, and to study practical and feasible means for giving effect to programmes in the peaceful uses of outer space which could appropriately be undertaken under United Nations auspices"

including, inter alia, the

"Organization of the mutual exchange and dissemination of information on outer space ..." and the

"Encouragement of national research programmes for the study of outer space, and the rendering of all possible assistance and help towards their realization". (General Assembly resolution 1472 (XIV))

I have dealt with this aspect of our mandate in some detail because, in my delegation's view, it is by far the most important aspect.

Another area explicitly covered in our mandate relates to the legal implications of outer space activities. General Assembly resolutions 1348 (XIII) and 1472 (XIV) asked our Committee "to study the nature of legal problems which may arise from the exploration of outer space". Later the General Assembly identified specific problems and indicated their inter se priorities.

Other areas included in our mandate which are in a sense linked with the concept of international co-operation, relate to the granting of technical and financial assistance to Member States which require such assistance and the provision of adequate facilities for education and training. References to these issues can be found in resolutions adopted by the General Assembly as early as 1962 and 1963.

Having indicated what in my delegation's view are the major aspects of our mandate, I shall now attempt to state my delegation's answer to the second question I asked earlier in this statement -- namely, have we succeeded in adequately implementing our mandate and have the results achieved so far been commensurate with our initial objectives? It is difficult to find a generally acceptable answer to this question because, as I indicated earlier in this statement, I am

(Mr. Vellodi, India)

not sure if there is a meeting of minds within this Committee as to the precise role of the United Nations in this important area of activity. My delegation believes that, while our record so far has not been on the whole an unimpressive one, the time has come when we should conduct a serious review of what has been done and, perhaps even more important, examine whether the developments during the past several years, particularly in the area of space applications, call for any changes in our approach or in the consideration of the problems we are dealing with.

I said a moment ago that my delegation is of the view that in the implementation of our mandate our record has not been an unimpressive one. That is particularly so on the legal side, and I should like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the successive chairmen and members of the Legal Sub-Committees for their truly remarkable achievements. On the other hand, the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee has to some extent been handicapped by the fact that, unlike the Legal Sub-Committee, it did not even have very clear objectives or goals to work towards. Yet over the years the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, under its very able chairmen -- initially Mr. Martin and later Mr. Carver -- has done excellent work largely of an exploratory nature which in our opinion needs to be pursued. In this connexion, my delegation is of the view that we should seriously consider the reconvening of the Working Groups on Remote Sensing and on Direct Broadcast Satellites in order that the fruits of the excellent preparatory work carried out by these two Working Groups under the very able chairmanship of the late Mr. Fiorio and Ambassador Rydbeck should not be wasted, particularly in view of the great importance of these two areas of space applications and the vast benefits that can accrue from them.

After having referred to the positive side of the implementation of our mandate, let me very briefly refer to some areas where my delegation feels we could and should have done better. To do this, let me once again return to General Assembly resolution 1348 (XIII), adopted in 1958. It asked us to report on the

"area of international co-operation and programmes in the peaceful uses of outer space which could appropriately be undertaken under United Nations auspices for the benefit of States irrespective of the state of their economic or scientific development." (General Assembly resolution 1348 (XIII))

(Mr. Vellodi, India)

I am reasonably familiar with the documentation of this Committee ever since its inception, but I do not remember seeing any report or recommendation from this Committee dealing comprehensively with this question. At the Vienna Conference of 1968 a serious attempt was made in the right direction, but unfortunately there was no direct or meaningful follow-up in this Committee of the many positive and constructive suggestions made at the Conference.

Resolution 2453 (XXIII) of the General Assembly, which relates to the Vienna Conference, while commending the results of the Conference, noted the intention of the Committee to consider all proposals arising from the discussions at the Conference.

(Mr. Vellodi, India)

But this intention, even assuming it was a serious one, was never followed up. Even the modest proposal made by my own delegation at that time, to set up an expert group to advise the Committee on the best manner in which to promote space applications for the benefit of those countries not advanced in space research, was not accepted. The proposal made at Vienna by the Government of Sierra Leone for the setting up of a United Nations centre for information and consultation was, according to resolution 2453 (XXIII), to be examined by the Committee, but that examination did not take place, or even if it did, nothing came of it.

It is paradoxical that the only recommendation contained in that resolution that was taken up seriously was the invitation the General Assembly extended to the specialized agencies to consider the work of the Conference and to take the necessary follow-up steps to ensure the further progress of work in their respective areas of competence. The specialized agencies did respond to this, and it is a fact of which we are only too conscious, at times perhaps embarrassingly conscious, that some of the specialized agencies are far more active in the area of space applications than we are, in spite of our being the focal point for activities in this area.

Resolution 1472 (XIV), adopted in 1959, suggested specific tasks for this Committee. Our Committee was asked to review the area of international co-operation and study practical means for giving effect to programmes in the peaceful uses of outer space to be undertaken under the United Nations auspices. The resolution specified three areas of activity which the Assembly felt could be so undertaken.

The first of these related to assistance for the continuation on a permanent basis of outer-space research then being carried on within the framework of the International Geophysical Year. I do not wish to dwell on this, but, as far as we are aware, no research on a permanent or, for that matter, even on a semi-permanent basis, is being carried out under United Nations auspices. But the next two injunctions of the General Assembly, contained in subparagraphs (a) (ii) and (a) (iii) of operative paragraph 1 of resolution 1472 (XIV), are really the important ones. Subparagraph (a) (ii) refers to

(Mr. Vellodi, India)

the organization of the mutual exchange and dissemination of information on outer space research. In the view of my delegation, this matter deserves some attention.

While it is true that some attempt is being made to implement this recommendation through the documents the Secretariat provides us each year, covering national and co-operative international space activities for the preceding year, we are not sure whether the information contained in these reports is adequate. I would be very surprised if any of the national space agencies or governmental agencies dealing with space matters ever refer to these documents to find out what is going on in other countries in the area of space sciences, space technology or space applications. The information contained in these reports is so general in nature and at times so sketchy that it does not, in our opinion, constitute the type of reference material contemplated in the mandate given to us by the General Assembly.

When I say this, it is no reflection on the Secretariat. The Secretariat can only produce the document on the basis of information voluntarily submitted by the Member States. Besides, there exists today, in the form of published material, either in the annual reports of the national space agencies or in professional space journals, far more detailed information, and it would seem to my delegation that we should seriously consider the utility of continuing the compilation of the report in its present form, on national and co-operative international activities.

The third programme identified in General Assembly resolution 1472 (XIV) and reflected in subparagraph (a) (iii) of operative paragraph 1 was the:

"Encouragement of national research programmes for the study of outer space, and the rendering of all possible assistance and help towards their realization".

(Mr. Vellodi, India)

Unfortunately, no serious attempt has been made at any time to clarify how this important recommendation was to be implemented, and my delegation feels that we should now make a serious attempt to remedy this mistake because in our view this injunction of the General Assembly is perhaps the most important one that has a direct bearing on the role of the United Nations in the area of the peaceful uses of outer space.

Let me now try to express my delegation's answer to the third question, I raised, namely, how do we view the future of our Committee? First and foremost, we feel that merely to reiterate that the United Nations should provide the focal point for international co-operation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space is not sufficient. We should understand clearly and agree among ourselves how this somewhat vague concept can be translated into practical reality. Only then can we proceed further and try to do what we have been asked to do: namely, to define the area of international co-operation and programmes that can be undertaken under United Nations auspices.

If we come to the conclusion that the United Nations has a role to play -- and my delegation is convinced that it has -- we should then embark upon a serious study of practical means for giving effect to programmes in the peaceful use of outer space to be undertaken under United Nations auspices. In the view of my delegation, the following are some of the practical measures that the United Nations can and should undertake:

Firstly, information should be disseminated in the most effective and practical way, on the important and practical applications of space research for the direct benefit of mankind. This could be done, as it is being done at present, through the holding of workshops, panel meetings and seminars and through the periodic publication -- possibly once every three years -- of various types of reports and documents, some of which I shall indicate: reports on the growing scope of national and international activities in the peaceful exploration and uses of outer space; bibliographical lists covering scientific and technical problems relating to outer space; detailed information on facilities available for education and training; popular pamphlets or a handbook on outer space activities; information on possible assistance from the United Nations, UNDP and the specialized agencies for the encouragement and development of national space programmes, including detailed instructions on how to go about seeking such assistance.

(Mr. Vellodi, India)

What I have suggested with regard to the dissemination of information is nothing new: I believe every single item I refer to has been referred to in one resolution or the other, or in one report or the other, of this Committee. But there does seem to be an advantage, even at this stage, in looking back at some of the suggestions that have been made, but that perhaps have not been fully complied with.

I shall now go on with my enumeration of the various measures we feel could or should be undertaken within the United Nations system.

Secondly, education and training facilities should be provided and encouraged and the possibility considered of establishing international training centres, under United Nations auspices, along the lines of the IAEA-sponsored International Centre for Theoretical Physics at Trieste;

Thirdly, research, both national and co-operative, should be encouraged through the provision of technical assistance, again along the lines of the services and assistance extended by IAEA under its technical assistance programme;

Fourthly, there should be established at United Nations Headquarters a United Nations centre for information and consultation, which could be of valuable assistance particularly to the developing countries by providing them with the information they would need for making independent and knowledgeable decisions about participation in space application programmes;

Fifthly, tracking facilities should be disseminated in appropriate areas of the world;

Sixthly, international regional data storage and dissemination centres for data on earth resources satellites and related matters should be established;

Seventhly, the establishment of international and domestic satellite communications systems should be encouraged;

Eighthly, space facilities relating to meteorology and geodesy should be developed.

(Mr. Vellodi, India)

Ninthly, the development of additional international sounding rocket facilities should be encouraged.

Tenthly and lastly, existing activities should be continued covering the registration of launches, the maintenance of close relationships with other agencies in the United Nations system, the convening of workshops, symposia, etc., and the maintenance and development of relationships with international scientific and technical organizations active in the field of outer space.

In conclusion, I should like briefly to touch upon the question of the organizational arrangements necessary to facilitate international co-operation in the field of outer space within the framework of the United Nations.

As early as 1959, this question was discussed in some depth by the Ad Hoc Committee, which, while concluding that it did not appear that the tasks then being recommended justified the establishment at that time of a United Nations agency, at the same time drew attention to the character and functions of semi autonomous bodies within the United Nations, such as UNICEF, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, in which it found possible guidelines for a future organizational set-up.

Since then, many suggestions have been made. Several Member States have proposed, time and again, the setting up of a space agency; a suggestion was made by my delegation in 1969 about the desirability of establishing an expert group to advise on the best manner in which to promote the applications of space technology, with particular reference to nations not advanced in space research, including in particular the developing countries. Another suggestion was made at the last meeting of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee by some delegations, including my own, for the establishment of a joint programme committee for space applications which would include technical representatives from all the concerned components of the

(Mr. Vellodi, India)

United Nations family and the Chairman of our Committee, and which would provide the basis for an interdisciplinary approach covering applications dealing with the broad facets of development and would assist in formulating an integrated technical assistance programme in the area of space applications, thereby ensuring the optimum utilization of available resources.

Mr. Chairman, I wish to thank you and my other colleagues for permitting me to make this statement which, I am afraid, has been a long one and, perhaps, somewhat repetitive. But we sincerely believe that the time has come when we should take stock of where we stand and plan our future work meaningfully. I have no doubt that if my ideas should meet with the approval of other delegations, you, Sir, with your customary skill and initiative, will find some way to implement them.

The CHAIRMAN: The next name on my list of speakers is that of the representative of Brazil. I take this opportunity to welcome Ambassador Correa da Costa who is taking part in the work of our Committee for the first time.

Mr. CORREA DA COSTA (Brazil): Sir, let me start by saying how pleased I am to be taking the floor for the first time in this Committee and to be participating in the work of this eighteenth session under your able chairmanship. Let me assure you not only that you may rely on our friendly ties as colleagues at the United Nations, but that you will have my full co-operation and that of my entire delegation in your endeavours to make progress in the tasks entrusted to this body.

The responsibility we all feel here comes from the knowledge that this Committee is not only a major one in our Organization, but also, if I may say so, one of the most productive, having been privileged to give birth to a number of international treaties and conventions.

(Mr. Correa da Costa, Brazil)

My delegation will, in this respect, bend its efforts to see that this tradition is kept alive and that the codification of international space law is pursued with zeal and under close scrutiny. I believe I do not need to dwell on the history of our earnest involvement with the work of this body. I should like only to express here, on behalf of my Government, our sincere appreciation for the confidence you, sir, and the members of this Committee have shown towards us in once more electing a member of our delegation as Rapporteur.

This year our debates are sadly marked by the absence of three of the most capable, knowledgeable and active participants in the work of our Committee. May I, in the name of my delegation, associate myself with the heartfelt expression of sorrow at the untimely demise of Mr. Charvet of France, Mr. Franco Fiorio of Italy, and Academician Blagonravov of the USSR.

Our agenda could, at first glance, be interpreted as being less weighty than those of former sessions, particularly as, in the current year, our two subsidiary bodies have made substantial progress on the main issues outlined in General Assembly resolution 3234 (XXIX). It is the considered view of my delegation, however, that, as the main political body entrusted with the task of making fundamental recommendations to the General Assembly on space matters, this Committee cannot shy away from its inherent responsibility for trying to improve the present status of negotiations on matters pertaining to either of the sub-committees.

Your opening statement, Sir, gave us a detailed view of what has been done in the field of the peaceful utilization of outer space, in terms of current technological achievements and in the diplomatic sphere. There is no need for me to enter into an exhaustive examination of all aspects of the work done by our subsidiary bodies. My delegation will have occasion to present its point of view in detail when specific questions are discussed in the course of the present session. But my general statement today will only outline my Government's position on what it deems to be the more relevant aspects of work in the legal and scientific fields.

Let me deal first then with the task accomplished this year by the Legal Sub-Committee. I do not err, I am sure, in associating myself with the congratulations expressed to the Legal Sub-Committee and its very efficient Chairman, Ambassador Eugeniusz Wzner, for the positive and constructive spirit which characterized the Sub-Committee's last session.

(Mr. Correa da Costa, Brazil)

It is true that at that session the Legal Sub Committee was unable to maintain its admirable performance of annually producing a new draft of an international instrument on space law. We should have hoped to see a completed treaty on the moon and other celestial bodies, but, unfortunately, difficulties still persist in the negotiations on this text. Although we now have a unified wording for articles X and X bis of the treaty, it is still cluttered by a very large number of brackets, and certain provisions were drafted in two versions. This points to the lack of consensus that still persists in relation to the three main issues still unresolved in the context of a treaty on the moon. Of these three, I must say, we deem the question of its natural resources to be the most important. The problem is that, even if some considerable effort has been made to conciliate positions and to bring about a compromise, this question has not really, up to now, met with sufficient flexibility of treatment on the part of certain delegations, which oppose an unambiguous commitment to a clearly defined international régime for the natural resources of the moon, as well as the concept of the moon as the "common heritage of mankind". My delegation is aware that some progress in the consideration of these concepts, endorsed by most Member States, was made at the Sub-Committee's last session. Let us only hope that the need for compromise on this important draft treaty will not adulterate concepts which embody the legitimate interests of the majority of countries.

On the subject of the elaboration of principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting, the Legal Sub-Committee was, for the first time, able to come up with a unified text of principles. Even if some of the sentences include words in brackets, or alternative formulations on matters where consensus could not be reached, my delegation feels that a great deal of progress has been made, the main issues of the subject now receiving consideration on a basis of parity. We are confident that it will be possible to achieve further concrete results at the Legal Sub-Committee's next session, with a view to lessening the number of alternatives, clearing the text of brackets and even unifying similar concepts expressed in different principles.

(Mr. Correa da Costa, Brazil)

In the view of my Government, the last main item dealt with in the Legal Sub-Committee deserves particular attention. I am referring, of course, to remote sensing. This Committee is aware of the importance we attach to the question of remote sensing of natural resources by means of space technology, which was the object of the presentation by Argentina and Brazil of draft basic articles for a treaty during the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly, a draft which subsequently, at the Legal Sub-Committee's session in February, gained Venezuela, Chile and Mexico as additional sponsors.

While my delegation feels that, in terms of the Legal Sub-Committee's mandate under resolution 3234 (XXIX), the draft we sponsor and the other two mentioned in the report of the Sub-Committee should have been considered in a more substantive way, and that the Legal Sub-Committee should have proceeded to the long overdue drafting of an agreed proposal for an international instrument on remote sensing, we must also acknowledge that a large area of consensus was apparent, for the first time, in the debates on this item. It is encouraging to note that not only are a number of common elements to be found in the three drafts and in the views expressed by the majority but a clear trend seems to be emerging in favour of speeding up the establishment of a legal framework for remote sensing. This Committee is aware of the reasons for our belief that the matter should be treated speedily and in depth. I must add that we should certainly welcome the continuation of Working Group III, under the able chairmanship of Mr. Abdel-Ghani, during the present session.

Let me now touch briefly, before closing my remarks, on the achievements of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. A great deal was done on remote sensing. My delegation fully endorses the recommendations stated in paragraph 29 of its report. It is certainly the opinion of my Government that the question of the establishment of any future global/international operational remote sensing system or systems merits further study, in the light of the consideration of the legal aspects of the matter, that is to say, the necessary prior establishment of a juridical framework for spatial applications.

(Mr. Correa da Costa, Brazil)

Regarding the review of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, my delegation wishes to restate its appreciation for the work accomplished by the Expert, Mr. Murthy, whom we should very much like to see remain in his post for another term. We are grateful to him for a very dedicated piece of work, accomplished despite a severely curtailed budget.

Finally, on the subject of a possible United Nations conference on space, my Government is now in a position to express its views on the basis of the questionnaire submitted to Member States by the Secretariat. We are answering in writing and should like our reply to be circulated as an official document of the current session of the Committee. My delegation will address itself specifically to the question in the context of item 4(b) (iii) of our agenda.

These are the comments my delegation considered it necessary to make at the present stage. Permit me to end by expressing once more my intention to extend full co-operation to you, Mr. Chairman, and to the Committee in the tasks that lie ahead.

The CHAIRMAN: It is my pleasure to welcome to the Committee for the first time Ambassador Harry of Australia, on whom I now call.

Mr. HARRY (Australia): Mr. Chairman, it gives me great pleasure to speak in this Committee for the first time under your distinguished chairmanship, and you may be assured of the constant co-operation of the Australian delegation.

The year just ended has been marked by further evidence of continued progress around the world in the exciting and challenging area of space science. We are about to see next month the practical realization of the first joint Soviet-American space exploration venture, the Apollo-Soyuz joint flight. My Government warmly congratulates the two Governments concerned on this venture, which we also see as a "bridge in space" between them of more than purely symbolic value. We also note with pleasure the inception a few days ago of the European Space Agency, an agency which succeeds the former European Space Research Organization and the European Launcher Development Organization. Australia has in the past had occasion to work in co-operation with these organizations, and we should be very glad to work with the European Space Agency should an occasion arise in the future. We wish the European space effort -- and in particular the Spacelab programme -- every success.

In the vital earth-oriented fields of space applications -- the fields of remote sensing and direct broadcasting from satellites, upon which attention has increasingly focused in recent years because of their crucial role for mankind's economic and social development -- there has also been considerable movement. The educational direct television broadcasting experiment over India using the ATS-6 satellite is about to commence. We are very glad to see this exciting experiment take place, thanks to the co-operation of India and the United States, two countries for whose scientific achievements in the outer space field we have the greatest respect. We think it will offer conclusive proof of the educational value of direct broadcasting from satellites for more remote areas in developing countries.

The past year has also seen a rapid increase in the number of remote sensing receiving stations either under construction or planned around the world. The practical application of remote sensing technology seems to be approaching the

(Mr. Harry, Australia)

take-off stage. Although the space segment is still regarded as pre-operational, the major commitments in ground systems that are now being put into effect all over the world clearly point to the conclusion that this space application is here to stay. My Government evaluates very highly the potential of remote sensing for natural resources and environmental monitoring. We are now examining the options open to us for the establishment of a remote sensing receiving station and of data dissemination centres in our region. We are very hopeful that it may be possible to set up such facilities not on a purely national basis but on a basis of genuine regional co-operation. The technology of remote sensing cannot be taken full advantage of unless institutional arrangements can be developed appropriate to its scientific potential which, of course, transcends national boundaries. In this regard, we should like to congratulate the Organization of African Unity on its recent decision to set up a remote sensing centre for the African region.

I turn now to the work of this session. For convenience I shall organize my remarks around the reports of the two sub-committees although, as a number of speakers before me have commented, the division is difficult to sustain in the case of remote sensing where work in the two sub-committees is so closely related.

In my delegation's view, it has been a very successful year in both sub-committees. The Legal Sub-Committee registered good progress in all its three priority areas. If it is not invidious to single out an individual, I should like to express thanks for the very substantial progress achieved in the direct broadcasting working group under Mr. Vellodi's chairmanship on the drafting of a single negotiating text of principles regarding direct broadcast satellites. This single text, square bracketed though it is, provides us with a point of departure from which we can realistically hope that principles regarding direct broadcast satellites might be concluded next year in time for the General Assembly to approve them at its thirty-first session.

Some useful progress was also made this year in further clarifying the issues in the problem area of the natural resources of the moon. There is now a single negotiating text for article 10 and article 10 bis of the draft moon treaty, with the help of which we hope it might be possible for differences to be eliminated in the forthcoming year.

Work in the Legal Sub-Committee on remote sensing only really began this year. While my delegation is very appreciative of the contribution of a number of

(Mr. Harry, Australia)

delegations in submitting draft texts of international instruments, we share the view expressed by some other delegations that it may be a little premature to get down to detailed negotiations on the various draft instruments now on the table, before we have a clearer appreciation of the technical and organizational possibilities becoming available in this field. Perhaps we need a little more time for frank discussion of the legal and organizational issues in both committees before we set about drafting the legal instrument. The assessments and recommendations of this year's session of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee on organizational aspects of remote sensing are very relevant to the discussion of legal arrangements which has now commenced in the Legal Sub-Committee. In the view of my delegation, the best organizational system of remote sensing, when it becomes fully operational, will probably be a system conducted within a framework of true international co-operation. It would be a pity if unnecessarily restrictive legal instruments had meanwhile been finalized, based on an assumption that nationally organized and internationally unco-ordinated remote sensing systems were the only systems to be available.

I turn now to the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, the bulk of whose output this year concerned remote sensing. My delegation feels the Sub-Committee is to be commended very highly for the productivity of its discussions on remote sensing, recorded in paragraphs 27 and 28, and for its recommendations in paragraph 29 of its report. A careful reading of these three rather lengthy paragraphs shows that valuable lines of consensus on policy are now emerging. This tangible progress gives credibility and substance to the argument, which my delegation has always supported, that further study of organizational and financial aspects of remote sensing in the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee should progress together with consideration of the legal aspects of remote sensing in the Legal Sub-Committee. This year we can truly say that both sub-committees are making good progress. Indeed, this has created in a sense a new problem which we could usefully turn our attention to at this session -- how to improve co-ordination on this subject between the two sub-committees.

I shall be brief on the other Scientific Sub-Committee agenda items, though this is not to underrate their importance. Australia supports the space applications

(Mr. Harry, Australia)

programme recommended by the Expert. We agree that it should be reviewed annually, taking into account particularly the needs of the developing countries. We are always conscious of the need for effective co-ordination of the activities of the United Nations and the specialized agencies in the area of space applications; but we still do not consider a case to have yet been made for the establishment of a permanent co-ordinating United Nations space agency.

(Mr. Harry, Australia)

We consider that, with this Outer Space Committee as a focus of co-ordination and with the assistance of the Outer Space Affairs Division of the United Nations Secretariat --- to which we pay a tribute --- and of the standing body of ACC on matters relating to space applications, it should be possible to maintain the fullest co-ordination and involvement of the relevant space organizations, specialized agencies and regional economic commissions.

The Australian delegation still has an open mind on the question of a conference on space applications. We see merit in both of the options currently available and we will be very interested in the balance of delegations' views on this question, which might usefully be discussed at this session. The information in the paper prepared by the Secretariat should help us to decide whether it would be more advantageous to focus on space applications in a separate conference of our own, or to take advantage of the larger forum of the proposed United Nations conference on science and technology to assert the claim of space applications as a vital problem area with socio-economic implications appropriate for consideration there. It is a matter for debate, we feel, which venue would be likely to result in a greater public impact for space applications technology.

This is all my delegation wishes to say at this stage. We will speak as necessary later in the session on specific matters.

Mr. ABDEL-GHANI (Egypt): I attend this meeting with mixed feelings. I have a feeling of gratification for the opportunity offered me to continue my participation in the meetings of the Outer Space Committee in whose work I have taken part since its inception. I am happy to be here under your able chairmanship, Sir, and among so many friends and colleagues. I trust that the kind support you used to give me when I worked in the Committee's secretariat will be extended to me in my new capacity. I trust also that this session will provide me with another opportunity to exchange views and to co-operate with the representatives who are gathered here to promote international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

(Mr. Abdel-Ghani, Egypt)

That happy feeling is, however, mixed with sadness. The passing within the past few months of three eminent members of the Committee deprives it and all of us of their long experience and personal contribution. For me who was privileged to be associated for a long time with Academician Blagonravov, Mr. Franco Fiorio and Mr. Charvet, their absence for ever deeply saddens me.

Until last year, Academician Blagonravov and Mr. Fiorio were the only two representatives who had attended all the meetings of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee from its inception and without interruption. They also participated in the work of the main Committee at several sessions. Their contribution to the work of the two bodies was considerable. Academician Blagonravov towered over the members of the Committee, thanks to the vast and deep knowledge of that eminent scientist, as well as to his conviction regarding the concept of international co-operation in the field of outer space. Last year I mentioned in this Committee that the Blagonravov/Dryden Agreement, concluded between the two great scientists, Anatoli Blagonravov on behalf of the Soviet Union and Hugh Dryden on behalf of the United States, would be the basis for the future work of the United Nations in the promotion of international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space. His contribution to another international organization, COSPAR, has been referred to by its distinguished President, Professor de Jager.

The contribution of Franco Fiorio was similar, with his enthusiasm and devotion to the work of the United Nations in the field of outer space in general and in the field of remote sensing in particular. As chairman of the Working Group on Remote Sensing of the Earth by Satellites, he actually led it in the consideration of this complex question and in the production of a report which will for a long time remain a landmark in the treatment of the various aspects of remote sensing activities.

Mr. Charvet was one of the distinguished scholars in the Legal Sub-Committee where he represented France in the most learned and fitting manner. His contribution to the several legal instruments negotiated and drafted by the Sub-Committee was praiseworthy and his constructive approach assisted in reaching agreement on the Convention on Registration.

(Mr. Abdel-Ghani, Egypt)

We will miss those three eminent men, and I personally will miss the distinguished and fatherly attitude of Academician Blagonravov, the warm friendship of Franco Fiorio and the scholarly thinking of Mr. Charvet.

We are mortals; people die, but life continues. Let me therefore proceed to the work at hand.

Mr. Chairman, at the first session of the Committee under your chairmanship in 1972, you made a very thoughtful statement about the role of the Committee in which you said:

"I think that what this Committee should try to do is to avoid being merely a rubber-stamping agency for reports submitted by our Sub-Committees, being only a sort of mail service in transmitting the decisions and recommendations of those organs to the General Assembly. This would certainly not be conducive to the enhancement of the reputation and effectiveness of our Committee and of its members. I think we must rather seek to provide leadership, to come forward with our own initiatives and to give directives to the Sub-Committees and the Working Groups concerning all aspects of their work." (A/8720, p. 21)

The following year you reiterated this appeal -- an appeal to the Committee to come forward with its own initiatives and provide directives.

As we look at the agenda of our current session, it is not possible to say that we have succeeded in responding to your appeal to come forward with initiatives and provide directives. After concluding the general debate, we will take up the reports of the two sub-committees, each of which has held a useful session, has come up with a good report and has made recommendations for its work next year. In all probability, the Committee will take note of the two reports, express its appreciation of the work done by its subsidiary bodies, request them to continue their work and reproduce their recommendations in a form suitable for submission to the General Assembly. The Committee may also make some additional recommendations relating to the work of the two sub-committees. However, the Committee will remain far from the goal that you, Mr. Chairman, envisaged and which the members of the Committee would like to reach, namely, that the Committee, through initiatives and directives, should become the focal point and the real catalyst for international action in the field of outer space.

(Mr. Abdel-Ghani, Egypt)

Why are we in this situation? The delegation of Egypt has been thinking about this question, for if the situation is allowed to continue the Committee may be unable to receive the necessary support from the United Nations and the international community as a whole.

We think that the real reason for this problem lies in the fact that we tend to think of the Outer Space Committee as a parent committee and forget that it is a subsidiary committee. We tend to think that it is the parent committee of two sub-committees and two or three working groups and that its sole responsibility is to look after these subsidiary bodies: receive their reports; take note of them, with appreciation most of the time, in order to encourage them to continue the work; debate at length where and when they should meet the following year, and, at the end, tenderly deliver their reports to the General Assembly. There is nothing wrong with that, and we have to continue doing the same thing. But that should not make us forget that this Committee is a subsidiary body of the General Assembly and, as such, its main function is to act on behalf of the Assembly, or, in other words, on behalf of the United Nations membership as a whole. That means that the Committee has a dual function: on the one hand, it leads its subsidiary bodies; on the other, it represents the General Assembly, with all the Assembly's membership, and should feed it with ideas and initiatives.

If we become deeply aware of this fact -- namely, that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space was established by the General Assembly to serve as a "focal point" for international action in this field -- then we have to think of a work programme to be assigned to the Committee and become responsible to the General Assembly for its implementation.

The irony in the present situation is that each of the two Sub-Committees has its work programme. Similarly, each of the two Working Groups has its work programme. The Legal Sub-Committee, for example, has a clear programme of work, with its due priorities, and we all know that it has had an impressive record in negotiating and concluding several legal instruments, including the space treaty. Also, the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee has its programme of work, which is now centred on the field of remote sensing as well as on the space applications

(Mr. Abdel-Ghani, Egypt)

programme. It may take up other questions, such as that of energy, which you, Mr. Chairman mentioned in your opening statement. The Sub-Committee has a good record and its reports which we consider every year are in themselves a significant contribution to international co-operation in the field of outer space.

We here in the main Committee should not be preoccupied with the work programmes of the subsidiary bodies and how those programmes should be carried out. Instead, we should be preoccupied with the fact that the main Committee itself does not have a work programme, apart from receiving the reports of the subsidiary bodies and passing them on to the General Assembly. We should establish a programme of work for this Committee.

The question will arise: what kind of work programme? The answer to that question is the responsibility not of any single delegation but of each and every member of the Committee. For its part the Egyptian delegation would like to make a suggestion and put it before you, Mr. Chairman, and the members of the Committee, in the hope that other delegations will come up with other and better proposals, out of which we can establish a work programme to be carried out by the Committee during the next few years.

The statement made this morning by the representative of India, Mr. Vellodi, contains several useful and constructive ideas which we should study and make use of in building up a work programme for this Committee beneficial to all the Members of the United Nations, and in particular the developing countries. The delegation of Egypt will try to complement that statement by making a very modest proposal.

My delegation thinks that our Committee should now address itself to a matter which has long awaited our concentrated attention and effective action -- namely, how best to inform the public, including administrative and legislative circles in all countries, and in particular in developing countries, of the matters involved in the peaceful uses of outer space, matters which have current relevance to their economic and social problems and future implications for their development. We think also that this subject matter is one that can be effectively considered only by the main Committee and not by any of its subsidiary bodies, since a programme of public information should embrace all aspects -- technical, economic and legal, as well as political.

(Mr. Abdel-Ghani, Egypt)

We believe that very little has been done by the United Nations during the past several years in that direction. In fact, the attention of the media of information in the United Nations has been directed away from the area of outer space towards other important areas, such as the sea-bed and the environment. I do not blame the media for this situation because I know that we, as delegates and representatives of Governments, have not asked ourselves how to use these media in our area of work.

The irony of the situation is that this happened a year or two after the outer space Conference in 1968, which was held mainly to familiarize the people of the developing countries with space science and technology. Also it is ironic that this has happened at a time when space technology and in particular the technology of remote sensing is certain to have a great impact on the economic and social development of countries and peoples.

(Mr. Abdel-Ghani, Egypt)

It is true that the Space Applications Programme has among its purposes the familiarization of the circles concerned in the developing countries with the benefits of space technology. The Expert on Space Applications is doing as much as he can in this direction within the very limited means at his disposal. His visits to the developing countries, for example, are restricted to meetings with circles which are already more or less familiar with space technology in the fields of remote sensing, meteorology and television broadcasting. But the impact of these visits does not extend beyond these technical circles, does not extend to the public at large, nor to the administrative and legislative authorities, or the circles in charge of public information, including the press, radio and television.

We believe this Committee should request the Secretariat to provide it with an account of what the United Nations has been doing in this area through its machinery for public information, especially through the Office of Public Information, the Centre for Economic and Social Information and their various offices throughout the developing countries. The Committee should also request the specialized agencies to provide it with a similar account. I believe that when the Committee receives such an account it will find there is a lot of work to be done in this respect.

I should like to give one concrete example which shows what the United Nations, given policy guidance by this Committee, should have done. Next month, India will start the operation of its domestic satellite broadcast system. This venture, which India has undertaken in co-operation with NASA of the United States, is of great importance not only to India but to all the developing countries and regions that are economically and socially in a similar situation to India. Is it conceivable that such a historic occasion could pass without the United Nations producing something -- a pamphlet or a television programme -- on this venture: on how it was conceived and implemented, how it is going to be operated, and its expected impact on the Indian people? It cannot be said that the United Nations has had nothing to do with this venture, because for a whole decade the United Nations has been receiving information from both India and NASA about this project and the stages of its implementation, and, in fact, a United Nations seminar was held especially to look into this project. But the time

(Mr. Abdel-Ghani, Egypt)

has come for launching the satellite and operating the system without there being an effort on the part of the United Nations to provide the public -- I again repeat that in this respect "the public" means the administrative and legislative authorities of Member States, especially of the developing countries -- with suitable information about a project of such importance to economic and social development. I repeat that it is unfair to blame anyone for this situation as long as our Committee does not address itself to this question and give it its concentrated attention.

The delegation of Egypt does not have a detailed programme for such activity, but we should like to outline the general scope of such a programme for consideration. Why not give some thought to the publication in several languages of a series of pamphlets on space applications; or to the issuance of a monthly or quarterly publication prepared jointly by the United Nations and the specialized agencies and other international organizations; or to the production of some television and radio programmes; or to the creation of travelling exhibits and similar material? Such activity, given policy guidance by this Committee and implemented by the Secretariat, using resources such as the Office of Public Information and the Centre for Economic and Social Information, could prove most effective in this effort. The Committee could also give attention to a unified world-wide plan whereby members of this Committee and its sub-committees, members of the Secretariat and scientists and experts from COSPAR and IAF would participate in this public information campaign. Further, this Committee could establish contact with national and international space organizations and assist them, in order to obtain their co-operation in this respect.

This approach is already being implemented in other important areas of United Nations activity. We believe it is time for the United Nations to do likewise in the field of outer space. If other delegations agree, we would like to see a recommendation from this Committee to the General Assembly requesting the Secretary-General to study this matter in co-operation with the specialized agencies and the United Nations programmes concerned and report to the Committee at its next session on how such an information programme could be implemented.

I have not availed myself of the occasion of this general debate to say anything about the activities or the views of my country relating to the questions under

(Mr. Abdel-Ghani, Egypt)

consideration at this session. If I may, I shall do that when we take up the reports of the two sub-committees. On these two items my delegation will refer briefly to the activities conducted by Egypt in the field of space technology as well as our views with regard to some of the questions under consideration by the Legal Sub-Committee.

Before concluding, however, I should like to take this opportunity to express on behalf of my delegation and on my own behalf gratification at the election of Minister Lindenberg Sette of Brazil to serve as Rapporteur of this Committee. I am certain he will follow the good traditions of his three predecessors from Brazil, a leading developing country in the field of outer space. With his knowledge of the various aspects of the questions we deal with, I am sure we are happy to have him as our Rapporteur.

I should also like to express my gratification and that of my delegation at seeing the post of Chief of the Outer Space Affairs Division occupied by Mr. Perek, a distinguished scientist and a fine gentleman. I am certain that under his guidance and leadership the Outer Space Affairs Division will continue to serve this Committee and its subsidiary bodies with an increased degree of efficiency and devotion. There is still a lot to be desired, but I am sure this fine group of Secretariat members will continue to live up to the expectations of the Chairman and members of this Committee.

Mr. CHAHID NOURAI (France) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, under your effective and enlightened presidency, it has been possible in the sessions of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to take stock of the past year and prepare the work for the next year. It is within the framework of this double perspective that my delegation would like to make some comments of a general kind. Naturally, we reserve the right to clarify or to supplement those remarks in the days to come.

If we turn to the past for a moment, we will note that the past year has been marked, in the field of space, by some happy events but also, as has been said, by misfortune. This has affected very many countries and the Committee as a whole. My delegation would like to associate itself with the tribute you paid, Mr. Chairman, to the memory of Academician Blagonravov and Professor Fiorio. It is with great sorrow that we learned of their deaths. The delegation of the Soviet Union and the delegation of Italy may be sure that France will never forget the valuable contribution of these two personalities in work on space.

My delegation would also like to say how appreciative we were, Mr. Chairman, of the expressions of sympathy which you yourself and the various delegations were kind enough to make on the death of Mr. Charvet. You can be sure that we shall convey to his family and the French Government the condolences expressed here. The rest is up to each of us. The death of Mr. Charvet at the beginning of this spring, in that wooded country of the Loire that he loved so much, left an after-taste with us all of bitterness and sorrow.

Last year was also marked, from the point of view of space activities, by happy events, which other delegations have recalled. What most characterizes it in so far as concerns France is the implementation of growing, deeper and more diversified co-operation, whether it be in the field of launching, of activities in the strict sense or of structures. Apart from the specifically French programme, which included this year, inter alia, a geodesic, a technological, an aeronomic and a geodesic satellite launching, and soon the launching of an astronomical satellite. 1974/1975 was also marked by an extension of programmes of co-operation with various countries.

(Mr. Chahid Nourai, France)

Most recently, on 30 May last, in Paris, there was signed a Convention creating the European Space Agency, and the French Government attaches to this the greatest possible importance. My delegation has always hoped that this spirit of co-operation would also inspire the work of the Outer Space Committee and its two subsidiary bodies. In this respect a fairly positive account of the last session of the Legal Sub-Committee can be given, even if in certain respects there is more shadow than light.

With regard to the draft treaty on the moon, serious difficulties persist on at least one essential point. My delegation hopes that those can be overcome in the future thanks to a spirit of compromise and respect for the fundamental principles governing the use of space.

The study of questions relating to remote sensing of earth resources had more ground to cover initially and has made more rapid progress.

France considers that this momentum can only be maintained if certain conditions are met. The first is to base ourselves resolutely on drafts which are presented. The second is to be able to limit the subject within its original boundaries and avoid any extension which would again call into question the framework of our studies. What we have to do is to achieve a reasonable reconciliation of two apparently contradictory notions: the freedom of the use of space on the one hand; the sovereignty of States over their natural resources on the other hand. This framework is simple and logical, and if we go beyond it, for example, by expanding it to include elements which have nothing to do with the exercise of sovereignty, we will be sowing confusion which will eventually be a source of delay and misunderstanding.

It is obviously necessary to fulfil other conditions if we are to make progress in this field. We need determination, for example, but caution too, a caution that would lead us to choose a declaration of principles rather than a legally binding instrument.

With regard to direct broadcasting, the record of the sessions of the Legal Sub-Committee shows this item to have been among the most productive. Of course, there are still a number of brackets in the drafts of the various principles; and also, of course, new brackets have to be added to those already existing, sometimes reflecting the existence of serious differences of view. But my delegation notes with satisfaction that there is less and less questioning of the fact

(Mr. Chahid Nourai, France)

that freedom of information, as it is expressed with all its limitations in the instruments of positive international law, can really be reconciled with the sovereignty of States. My delegation is also gratified at the fact that it has been possible to produce outline drafts of all the principles concerned.

With regard to the definition of space, the record is not so good. For lack of time, the Legal Sub-Committee was unable to do sufficient thinking about this. We regret, for our part, that this was the case. As has been repeatedly indicated in the past, this question will be raised with increasing urgency. The development of space vehicles and, generally speaking, the spate of activities going on in air and space, give rise to serious problems of boundaries. When difficulties arise, whether they are a matter of dispute or not, there will be a question of what legal régime applies; and in the case of any difference of view the question will arise of who is the competent judge. So it is not just a problem for lawyers. The scope of the application of space law must be defined, because it is always dangerous to build a house without bothering about its foundations. Boundary disputes are often very arduous and difficult to resolve. And we cannot avoid them -- quite the contrary -- by failing to define the boundaries. From a purely technical standpoint, of course, certain new elements proposed yesterday afternoon in the discussion perhaps suggest that we should no longer simply note the failure of scientific thinking in this matter, as in the past. Generally speaking, my delegation has always thought that space law should not be allowed to fall too far behind space technology. The two kinds of progress should go hand in hand, unless we prefer to put up with the inconveniences arising from the gap between them. It is not correct to say that law is a strait-jacket that hinders the development of space activities.

(Mr. Chahid Nourai, France)

If this law is prudently and reasonably drafted, it will, on the contrary, represent a guarantee of harmonious uncontroversial development for the benefit of all without discrimination. In order to attain such results, a spirit of compromise and pragmatism is obviously something we need constantly. This is the kind of pragmatism that the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee gave proof of at its last session. Without dwelling on the conclusions which it was possible to arrive at, my delegation would like to express the satisfaction which it derives from the work of this Sub-Committee.

In particular, with regard to the organization of remote sensing activities, the more thorough definition of concepts that was undertaken proved of great interest, and the undertaking of detailed studies of the various possible options certainly constitutes a good approach to the question of organization.

If we attempt, therefore, to give an account of the work of the two subsidiary bodies as a whole, we get a favourable impression. This does not mean, of course, that any additional progress would be impossible or untimely, but the framework of activities is there and is working satisfactorily. In the circumstances, my delegation does not consider it useful to suggest the renewal of the mandate of the standing working groups, specializing in the study of any given question. The overlapping of competence which results, and the valuable time wasted by the experts from different delegations are not compensated by the advantages of that arrangement. The very structure of the Committee and its sub-Committees makes it possible to ensure respect for the multidisciplinary requirements often invoked in order to justify the existence of any given ad hoc group.

(Mr. Chahid Nourai, France)

In conclusion, Sir, my delegation would like once again to express its gratitude to you for the way in which you are conducting the delicate tasks of the Chairman, and through you we should also like to thank the Chairmen of the Sub-Committees and of the Working Groups of the Legal Sub-Committee, without whose efforts the important results achieved last year would not have been possible.

As I just said, taking stock of the year as a whole, our impression is not at all negative, in spite of certain appearances. To borrow a rugby term, two tries were scored; next year we have to convert them. This is true particularly of the definition of principles governing remote sensing of the earth's resources and of direct satellite broadcasting.

However, in so far as concerns the definition of space, if I may be allowed to pursue this sporting imagery, I would say that the ball has been left in a corner of the field because no one knew quite what to do with it. In so far as possible, and in the light of the importance of other questions too, we must not allow this to be true in the future.

Mr. BENNETT (United States of America): Let me at the outset, Mr. Chairman, say what a distinct pleasure it is to serve in this Committee under your leadership. The serious and imaginative way in which you have conducted the affairs of this Committee gives us every confidence that we will continue to make progress in this rather uncharted field. We in my delegation also have every confidence in the election of Mr. Lindenberg Sette as Rapporteur of this important Committee.

Before I address myself to the questions on the agenda of this Committee, I should like to express the profound regret of the United States Government at the recent deaths of three highly respected and much valued former colleagues: Academician Blagonravov of the Soviet Union, Ambassador Charvet of France, and Mr. Fiorio of Italy. Each made most significant contributions to our work over a period of many years, and they will be missed not only professionally but also personally. They will be long and warmly remembered.

(Mr. Bennett, United States)

The past year has been an active one, both in space exploration and in the work of this Committee and its sub-committees. The brevity of our agenda conceals a myriad of complex and significant questions which will require a great deal of hard work to resolve. Happily, the reports of the Legal Sub-Committee and of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee reflect the fact that efforts of those two bodies during the past year have been fruitful in a number of areas.

Also on a positive note, we in the United States have had a most successful year in our national programme for the continued exploration and use of outer space. Two examples in particular are worthy of note here: Pioneer-10, which last December swept past Jupiter and is headed for a rendezvous with Saturn in 1979, and Landsat-2, an earth resources technology satellite, which was launched into orbit in January of this year. The American efforts have focused both on the scientific and technical challenges of the exploration of the farthest reaches of the solar system and on concerns that significantly affect the quality of every-day life.

One of the useful functions of the Outer Space Committee's annual review of space activities is to identify and encourage international co-operation in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space.

With regard to the United States international co-operative programmes, I would briefly note the following events which have taken place since this Committee's last session.

Our National Aeronautics and Space Administration has launched four co-operative satellites: one each with the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom. In these projects, in which we have a strong programme interest, we furnish the booster and launch services, while our co-operating partners take responsibility for the spacecraft.

NASA has launched three satellites on a reimbursable basis: one for Canada, one for the Federal Republic of Germany, and one -- the Symphonie communications satellite -- for France and West Germany. Early last month, NASA agreed to launch an Indonesian domestic communications satellite.

(Mr. Bennett, United States)

Both NASA and the new European Space Agency are actively engaged in co-ordinated planning for the use of Spacelab, the manned orbital laboratory which Europe is building as an integral part of the NASA space shuttle. The prime development contract was awarded just one year ago, and the project has proceeded on schedule in Europe. This integrated contribution to the future exploration and use of space represents a new dimension in international co-operation. Spacelab will, for the first time, provide opportunities for United States and foreign scientists and engineers to accompany their experiments into space. It will facilitate many joint-use programmes.

The members of this Committee are already well aware of the ATS-6 television broadcasting experiments we have undertaken. The importance of the potential of such community broadcasting is emphasized by our own national experiments in this area. Even though the United States has a highly developed domestic communications system, we have many areas remote from metropolitan centres that lack many of the services and facilities which these centres provide for their populations. We are experimenting with space applications to provide improved medical, educational and communications services to these areas, and ATS-6 has been used here to conduct the health/education/telecommunications experiment in Alaska and in the Rocky Mountain and Appalachian Mountain areas since its launch in May 1974. This experiment is designed to determine whether satellite systems offer an effective way of providing high-quality educational programmes and health services to people in remote areas. These experiments could open new opportunities for the benefit and advancement of students and doctors and their patients in the United States, and, we hope, might perhaps be even more valuable to countries without an already extensive ground communications system.

The ATS-6 has recently been moved from its position over the Galapagos Islands, in the Pacific, eastwards to a station over Lake Victoria, in central Africa. From that location it will be made available to the Government of India for four to six hours a day for about a year to conduct the Satellite Instructional TV Experiment. India will use the satellite to relay Indian instructional broadcasts to augmented receivers in more than 2,000 remote Indian villages and to some 3,000 additional villages via conventional ground relay systems.

(Mr. Bennett, United States)

The India Space Research Organization is responsible for television programming and for designing, manufacturing and maintenance services, associated ground equipment, and antennae. Its programming will be directed towards improved agricultural techniques, family planning, hygiene and school instruction. The results of this practical applications experiment should give all of us a better understanding of the potential of broadcast satellites as a tool for development. Brazil is already using ATS-6 in an educational television experiment.

Landsat-2, like the first earth resources technology satellite, is serving as a focus for international co-operation. Investigators from 45 countries and five international organizations have been selected to conduct studies with data they obtain. More than one third of the Member States on this Committee are working with us in expanding the practical uses of remote sensing by satellite. Some countries have established their own data acquisition, processing and dissemination facilities. Stations in Canada, Brazil and Italy are now operating, and stations in Iran and Zaire are expected to become operational during the coming year. These stations help to ensure the reception of global data in the event of tape recorder failures and, as the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee makes clear, they can facilitate the emergence of regional arrangements.

(Mr. Bennett, United States)

Finally, I wish to mention the progress of the Apollo-Soyuz Test Project. This project marks the crossing of a major threshold in international space co-operation on both the political and the technical levels. On 22 May senior officials of NASA and of the Soviet Academy conducted a Joint Flight Readiness Review and concluded that the mission would be ready for on-schedule launchings on 15 July. We look forward to the Apollo-Soyuz mission and to reporting on its operations at the next session of this Committee.

Although we may comment in more detail later during our session on the contents of the reports of our two sub-committees, I should like to make a few general remarks on the course of their work this year.

The Legal Sub-Committee, in our view, took positive and constructive steps in continuing to try to clarify the legal implications of both direct television broadcasting and remote sensing from satellites. We support the thorough and responsible approach which has thus far characterized the Legal Sub-Committee's examination of these two extremely complicated areas.

The drafting exercise to develop principles relating to direct television broadcasting by satellite has been useful in identifying those areas of general agreement and in helping to clarify the views of countries on the issues on which there are substantially different opinions. Although the latter differences are of considerable significance, and I must admit that my delegation does not immediately see how they are to be reconciled, we recognize that the Legal Sub-Committee has faced difficult issues frequently in its work and we have confidence that with determination, patience and good will on all sides we shall again in good time find appropriate and acceptable solutions to the problems we are addressing.

The Legal Sub-Committee also began a serious, detailed examination of the legal implications of remote sensing of the earth from satellites for the first time since this item has been on its agenda. An increased number of delegations have expressed their views on the legal implications of remote sensing, and we look forward to hearing from the remaining members of the Sub-Committee when it meets again next year.

The United States delegation introduced a working paper at the last session of the Legal Sub-Committee with the intention of spelling out our views regarding the direction any further development of legal principles in this area should take.

(Mr. Bennett, United States)

From the starting point of the freedom of exploration and use of outer space reflected in the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, we strongly believe that the international community should encourage the broadest possible co-operation and exchange of information so that all countries, not just the space Powers, can share in the benefits which we believe can be derived from programmes such as the Landsat experiments.

There obviously are different points of view regarding where the greatest interests of the members of the international community lie. Those differences have been reflected to some extent in the several drafts which have been put forward and in the comments which a number of delegations have made during our debates so far.

More than anything else, the discussions about remote sensing in the Legal Sub-Committee have begun to point out how extremely complex the legal implications of such activities are. The one week which the Legal Sub-Committee devoted to remote sensing proved useful in beginning to identify the issues which must be addressed but it also demonstrated that we have considerable work to do even to reach agreement on the very complex and difficult questions to be asked. For example, the United States delegation felt rather strongly that an early issue to be faced is the definition of the activities, the legal implications of which we are trying to assess. Although it is only one of numerous issues which must be further examined, it seems to us ill advised to attempt to rush into drafting precise language even before we have agreement on the scope of the remote sensing activities we are talking about.

Another important example of an issue which needs considerably more attention is the likelihood that application of a restrictive dissemination policy would result in the loss of remote sensing data for many countries which do not have their own programmes, including the space segments. Although the United States is not concerned about its ability to conduct such programmes for its own benefit, we should consider it most unfortunate if nations other than the small handful of space Powers were to cut themselves out, perhaps inadvertently, from sharing in these exciting programmes and directly obtaining their own national benefits. This consequence cannot simply be dismissed. For those countries which depend on others for data, there should be very, very careful study before attempts are made to reach agreement on precise language for guidelines on this matter.

(Mr. Bennett, United States)

I also wish to note that a considerable amount of time and effort was devoted by many delegations to attempting to reconcile the remaining issues in the draft moon treaty. Obviously the key remaining obstacle to completion of this treaty centres on the question of natural resources of the moon and other celestial bodies. In spite of the extensive efforts made, it seems that we are prevented from completing this treaty because of factors not directly related to the exploration and use of outer space. There are a number of elements valuable to all countries in the already agreed provisions of this draft treaty, such as the proposed measures to protect the environment of the moon and other celestial bodies, the publication of greater amounts of information derived from exploration of celestial bodies, and the endorsement of enhanced co-operation among the countries undertaking such exploration. Because the unmanned exploration of the planets is in fact continuing even now, whereas the possibilities for commercial exploitation of resources seem still in the distant future, my delegation would consider it unnecessary to delay completion of the moon treaty just because of provisions which would not realistically have significance for some time to come. We hope that delegations may find it possible to reconcile their views in the near future.

We look forward to continuing our constructive discussions of the legal implications of these and other issues related to remote sensing at the next session of the Legal Sub-Committee.

With regard to the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, we are pleased by the progress that was made, particularly in the examination of organizational aspects of remote sensing. My delegation has been among those which have attempted to ensure that the political and legal assessments of remote sensing did not outrun the assessment of what was actually practicable and desirable. The parallel approach adopted in the past year has, in our view, been beneficial to both sub-committees and has kept the deliberations on the legal implications from becoming irrelevant to actual progress in the field.

(Mr. Bennett, United States)

We note with much favour the focus of attention on the desirability of using extant or planned ground stations as the nuclei of regional centres for receiving and processing the remote sensing data of different areas of the world. The studies which have been requested can be most useful in the Sub-Committee's future deliberations on what particular type of international facilities and functions in the remote sensing area we wish to develop. We look forward to the completion of those studies.

The United States also supports the growing number of seminars and symposia which are being held to acquaint scientists and potential users with the characteristics of current remote sensing experiments. In fact, at this very time, the week of 8 to 13 June, NASA is sponsoring a major Earth Resources Symposium at the Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas. More than 1,500 persons from a wide variety of fields are focusing on the practical applications of earth resources survey data gathered by satellites and aircraft. The results of Landsat experiments, of Skylab earth resources programmes, and the need for new data systems are being discussed.

This has been another important year in the exploration and use of outer space, and in our deliberations on the wide variety of questions which those activities generate. The United Nations, through its specialized bodies such as this Committee, and through its Secretariat experts and staff, has again done much constructive and valuable work. The United States continues to view the Outer Space Committee and its sub-committees as examples of some of the best aspects of and best hopes for multilateral diplomacy. We are looking at highly complex questions with practical applications both now and in the distant future. We are working in a field of exploration into hitherto unknown areas, and are developing new and sophisticated disciplines. Most of all, we are working to apply the benefits of these activities to improve the lives of all peoples everywhere. It is therefore with considerable pleasure that my delegation looks forward to our continued work and our future progress.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER (German Democratic Republic): Mr. Chairman, permit me, on behalf of the delegation of the German Democratic Republic, to thank you in your capacity as Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space for your statement on the occasion of the opening of the eighteenth session.

Our delegation also wishes to offer thanks at this point to the representatives of the Soviet Union, the United States of America, India and other States for the efforts their countries have made since the seventeenth session in the peaceful exploration of outer space. With particular attention our country follows the preparations being made by the Soviet Union and the United States for the Soyuz-Apollo programme next month. The German Democratic Republic joins other countries in welcoming the co-operation of the two States in the peaceful exploration of outer space because it will not only provide new scientific data but will above all be conducive to the implementation of the principles of peaceful coexistence in the co-operation of States having different social systems.

In this connexion, my delegation takes the view that in our Committee it is necessary to stress the thirtieth anniversary of the victory of the anti-Hitler coalition over Hitlerian fascism. That victory was the precondition and the basis for the Charter of the United Nations and for the foundation of the Organization of the United Nations as well. On this basis world-wide peaceful co-operation of many types, as, for example in the field of the peaceful uses of outer space, came into being and developed. For this reason, my delegation holds that this reference should be made explicit in the report to the General Assembly.

In co-operation with other States of the Socialist community and thanks to assistance from the Soviet Union, the German Democratic Republic participates actively in the peaceful exploration of outer space. Within the framework of co-ordinated co-operation among Socialist States, the German Democratic Republic is fulfilling partial tasks in cosmic meteorology, the aim being to increase the accuracy of short-term weather forecasts and to make medium-term forecasts possible.

(Mr. Neugebauer, German Democratic Republic)

To improve cosmic communications, the German Democratic Republic works together with other Socialist States on the extension and improvement of the Inter-Sputnik communications system. This purpose is also served by an earth radio station which is under construction on the territory of my country. I do not want to elaborate further here on the activities of the German Democratic Republic for the peaceful exploration of outer space. A detailed report on the subject was transmitted to the Secretary-General of the United Nations by the Government of the German Democratic Republic back in March this year.

Mr. Chairman, our delegation shares the view expressed in your report that the Legal Sub-Committee made remarkable progress at its fourteenth session in dealing with the problems of international law mentioned in resolution A/3234 (XXIX), paragraph 6. At this point I wish to discuss some of these problems.

The delegation of the German Democratic Republic considers that the status of the moon and of its resources can only be defined on the basis of, and in relation to, the basic principles of international law. The concept advanced or supported by some States that the moon and other celestial bodies and their resources should be declared the common heritage of mankind can, in our view, only be interpreted to mean that: no State may acquire, claim or exercise sovereignty or sovereign rights over any part of those areas; States may only acquire property rights with regard to the resources extracted; States are responsible under international law for any activities on the celestial bodies that are incompatible with the norms of international law; and an international arrangement on the exploration and utilization of these areas must not give any State or group of States unilateral advantage.

As regards direct television broadcasting by satellites we wish to reaffirm, at this point, our legal position that legal standards should be worked out for international direct broadcasting satellites under which such broadcasting will be subject to prior approval by the receiving State. We are not, of course, unaware of the difficult problems still requiring a solution. But under the skilful and able guidance of India's representative, Mr. Vellodi, the Chairman

(Mr. Neugebauer, German Democratic Republic)

of the Legal Sub-Committee's Working Group II, it should be possible to achieve further progress in this important area, too, at the fifteenth session of the Legal Sub-Committee, and perhaps at this session of the Committee.

This would, however, require that all States represented on this Committee be ready for compromise and have the political will to prepare a draft agreement that reflects the interests of States having different social systems.

Moreover, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3234 (XXIX), paragraph 6 c, our delegation considers that the legal norms to be worked out for remote sensing of the earth resources should only refer to the natural resources and not to the earth's environment. We believe that the term "environment" has not yet been defined exactly enough in international law to make it the subject, at this stage, of such a far-reaching arrangement.

Our delegation supports the recommendation of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee to the Committee that the Secretariat should make a study on the usefulness of establishing an international centre for remote sensing data storage, analysis and dissemination. We think that States should exchange remote sensing data primarily on a bilateral basis among national data storage centres. However, as regards an international centre for remote sensing data, its establishment should be combined with the formulation of relevant principles of international law.

(Mr. Neugebauer, German Democratic Republic)

The delegation of the German Democratic Republic also believes that this centre, which should be attached to the United Nations, should base its work on, among other things, the following foundations: first, States should transmit data selected by them to the international centre on a voluntary basis; secondly, the international data centre should transmit such data to States at their request; and, thirdly, the data centre should be financed by those States which avail themselves of its services.

With regard to the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, it is our view that the most appropriate approach for the United Nations in determining its future activities in this field would be to make more effective use of available funds. We believe that it is not necessary at this stage to restructure this programme. We are all aware of the United Nations financial constraints. We ~~do not~~ think that the budgetary proposals in document A/AC.105/C.1/L.65 and Corr.1 are an acceptable compromise.

Mr. CHRISTIANI (Austria): First of all I join in the expressions of grief and sympathy over the death of the three most distinguished colleagues who have passed away. Like many other colleagues in this Committee, I had the privilege and honour of knowing Academician Blagonravov, Mr. Charvet and Mr. Franco Fiorio personally, and my delegation is deeply saddened that they are no longer with us.

I should also like to join with you, Mr. Chairman, and previous speakers in congratulating the major space Powers, and in particular India, for their splendid achievements in the further exploration of space.

My remarks today will be very brief and of a general nature, since my delegation intends to speak on the various subjects before us in greater detail in the further course of our debate.

I think that the representative of India this morning made a most important statement, and my delegation is very grateful for his pertinent remarks. I had intended to address myself to a similar subject but, of course, after his remarks there is very little for me to add.

(Mr. Christiani, Austria)

I should like also to express our appreciation for the statement by the representative of Egypt and his proposals, which we find most attractive. Certainly my delegation is more than prepared to support recommendations in our report concerning the proposals for public relations measures put forward by him.

It has always been my delegation's view that, apart from discussing the reports of the sub-committees, one of the primary functions of the main Committee should be to try continually to define its own role, both within the United Nations system and, perhaps even more importantly, in relation to a rapidly developing space technology in many fields and to ever-increasing demands by the international community for concerted and effective action to meet the challenge of our times -- be it to combat hunger, illiteracy and disease, to enhance the economic and social well-being of everyone on earth or to find new sources of energy. That space technology can do a tremendous amount to meet those goals is by now an established fact.

The question remains: Has the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space done enough over the years to fulfil the hopes that have been placed in it both by its original mandate and by changing circumstances and demands? In retrospect, I feel one could say without too much hesitation that the Committee has, since its inception, gone a very long way and has been very successful in many instances, both in the legal and in the scientific and technical spheres. This fact has largely been due to the generally very favourable atmosphere and the genuine will for co-operation that have always prevailed in this Committee.

It may sound paradoxical, but I feel that this atmosphere, desirable as it is, especially when compared with that of other United Nations bodies, carries the inherent danger of overemphasizing routine and perhaps also self-contentment which, in turn, might lead to a lessening of capability or even lack of critical faculty with regard to our own work and achievement. What I am aiming at is the following.

I feel that we are approaching the point where a comprehensive assessment of the role of our Committee and of the United Nations family in general in space-related matters is called for. This assessment must, in our view, have

(Mr. Christiani, Austria)

as its primary goal the achievement of a broad understanding on how to shape the activities of the United Nations in space matters in the years ahead. This is of course something that cannot be done overnight; it will rather be a process of a few years' duration, but it should, in our view, be started now by this Committee and should and could lead to and perhaps culminate in the organization and the holding of a second United Nations conference on space. And it is precisely to that subject that I should like to address myself at the end of my general remarks, because I feel that it belongs more appropriately in the framework of the general debate than in the context of the consideration of the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee.

My delegation has spoken on this subject on previous occasions, and from my delegation's statements and our reply to the Secretary-General's questionnaire it is clear that Austria is in favour of convening another United Nations conference on space. While there are differences of opinion on this subject amongst delegations, one conclusion seems to emerge readily: we seem to agree that a decision in principle to hold such a conference should be taken only after the objectives and the scope of such a conference have been clearly defined. So far as the objectives are concerned -- and this has been expressed by my delegation also on previous occasions -- they should in our opinion basically be twofold: first, a comprehensive demonstration of the state of the art in space technology especially in the areas of remote sensing, space communications, direct broadcast satellites and so on, together with a broad review of the involvement of the United Nations, the specialized agencies and international governmental and non-governmental organizations and entities in space matters.

(Mr. Christiani, Austria)

Second, and even more important, is the establishment of broad guidelines for the work of the United Nations and the international community as a whole during the coming decade.

The second objective, while closely related to the first, is in the opinion of my delegation of cardinal importance. The conference should not be convened as a scientific congress. We think that the holding of such a conference could be justified only if concrete decisions and recommendations emerged.

Furthermore, as we have also said on previous occasions, we feel that the conference could perhaps lay the groundwork for the creation in the future of a new specialized agency of the United Nations for space matters.

Of course, we would all agree that preparation is of primary importance. In that respect I should like to make two concrete proposals. First, we would propose that from now on the question of convening a United Nations conference on space should be a separate item on the agenda of the main Committee. We feel that, because of its broader impact, that question should be taken out of the agenda of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. Secondly, we propose, as a first step, the establishment of a working group or task force of the main Committee, with limited membership but of course open to all interested delegations, and with the following mandate: first, to define the objectives and the scope of the conference; secondly, to elaborate a broad outline of a possible agenda; and, thirdly, to report thereon to the main Committee at its nineteenth session, in 1976.

We feel that such an approach would not prejudge the question whether or not the conference should be held; rather, it would leave it to the Committee to make a final decision next year, on the basis of a thorough assessment.

Finally, I come to the question whether such a conference should be held separately or in conjunction with the proposed conference on science and technology. My delegation has always been in favour of holding a separate conference, and, having examined the Secretary-General's report in document A/AC.105/142/Add.2, we are even more convinced that it would be a mistake to make a space conference part of the conference on science and technology.

(Mr. Christiani, Austria)

There are a number of reasons for that. One is that if the space conference were part of the conference on science and technology, rather limited attention would be given to space matters. Another reason is that our Committee would have a somewhat limited influence. A third reason, and perhaps the most important, is that no comprehensive plan of action or guidelines -- which I think we all need very much in regard to space matters within the United Nations family -- would emerge if space questions were to be only one of the many agenda items of the conference on science and technology.

Those were the few remarks I wished to make within the framework of a general statement. As I said at the beginning of my observations, my delegation will wish to make a number of more detailed comments, during the further course of our deliberations, on legal as well as scientific and technical matters.

Mr. BOJILOV (Bulgaria) (interpretation from Russian): With every passing year the general improvement of the political climate in the world and the development of the scientific and technological revolution are creating new conditions for the further development and intensification of both national and international peaceful space activities.

Nationally that trend is confirmed by the great success being achieved by the two leading space Powers and other States with their space programmes. Internationally the trend has been confirmed by the great success achieved by a number of space programmes, both bilateral and multilateral.

We are witnessing the development and strengthening of space co-operation between socialist countries, co-operation based upon a comprehensive programme of socialist economic integration. Regular launchings of satellites in the Intercosmos series are the result of the working co-operation between scientists from socialist countries. Within the limits of its resources, the People's Republic of Bulgaria has been making a contribution to the concerted efforts of the socialist countries.

On 28 April this year an agreement was signed in Sofia between the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Government of the People's Republic of Bulgaria on scientific and technological co-operation in the preparation and use of aerospace methods of remote sensing of the earth. In a

(Mr. Bojilov, Bulgaria)

desire to expand co-operation in the development of methods for prospecting the natural resources of the earth and controlling the environment by means of aviation and space technology, both Governments undertook, in article 1 of the agreement:

"to conduct joint work on the development and improvement of aerospace methods of remote sensing of the earth and technical means of processing and interpreting the material obtained, with a view to their practical use in industry for prospecting natural resources and controlling the environment".

Both Governments agreed that the Soviet side would undertake to carry out various space surveys of the territory of Bulgaria and subsequently transmit to the Bulgarian side the material so obtained, after initial processing. In that regard article 4 of the agreement provides that

"special processing and interpretation of the material produced by aerospace surveys of the People's Republic of Bulgaria and its territorial waters and continental shelf in the Black Sea will be carried out by organizations of the Bulgarian side, if necessary with the participation of Soviet specialists, or by organizations of the Soviet side, with the participation of Bulgarian specialists".

In our view, the Soviet-Bulgarian agreement turns a new page in the history of co-operation between the socialist countries in prospecting the earth's natural resources and controlling the environment by means of aviation and space technology.

We are happy to be able to point out that the broad prospects opened up by co-operation between States in the exploration of outer space are being increasingly exploited. That is demonstrated by the launching of the first Indian earth satellite, carried into space by a Soviet rocket, and the successful launching of the joint Soviet-French ARAX project, the carrying into orbit of the French MAS-2 satellite by a Soviet launching vehicle, and the successful carrying out of other joint space programmes.

(Mr. Bojilov, Bulgaria)

There is no doubt, however, that a most impressive demonstration of the possibilities of the development of international co-operation will be provided by the experimental joint Soviet-American Apollo-Soyuz spaceflight. There is every reason to state the bilateral and multilateral space activity for peaceful purposes is conducive to the easing of international tension, the strengthening of trust among peoples and the promotion of the development of international links in all areas.

Before turning to an assessment of the work of the auxiliary bodies of our Committee, the Bulgarian delegation has the sad duty to express to the Soviet delegation its most sincere condolences upon the death of Academician Blagonravov, a man and scientist who began as a pioneer and became the true doyen of the development of international co-operation in the use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

We also note with great sorrow that we no longer have among us Mr. Viorio or Mr. Charvet, men who made such great contributions to the work of our Committee. I take this opportunity to convey most sincere condolences to the delegations of Italy and France.

Our delegation believes there are grounds for acknowledging that the work of the auxiliary bodies of the Committee over the last year has, on the whole, been successful. We consider that the Legal Sub-Committee, under the skilful leadership of Ambassador Wyzner, made considerable efforts to comply with resolution 3234 (XXIX) of the General Assembly. In our view, this organ of the Committee did make certain progress towards concluding the draft treaty on the moon. As we know, there are still three problems outstanding: the scope of the treaty; information which must be submitted about flights to the moon; and the status of the natural resources of the moon. Nevertheless we should stress that the question of the status of the moon's natural resources, as our delegation pointed out at the 1991st meeting of the First Committee of the General Assembly, is a major source of difficulties. In that sense we consider that the procedural decision of Working Group I to give priority to the consideration of the question of the status of the natural resources of the moon was undoubtedly correct and useful. Accordingly, it was possible to direct the

(Mr. Bojilov, Bulgaria)

efforts of both the Working Group and the Sub-Committee itself along the right lines. The practical result of the talks held under the skilful leadership of Professor Haraszti is the text of article x and x bis, which, to our great satisfaction, contains a number of elements that were at the base of the proposal forward by our delegation in document A/AC.105/C.2/L.93. We must, of course, point out that the text of article x and x bis includes a great number of square brackets, a fact which inevitably prompts the thought that considerable efforts will be required in order to achieve final success. At the same time, we cannot fail to point out that this text is a good basis for further consultations and talks about the question of the status of the natural resources of the moon. Once this problem is solved it will help to open the way to the speedy conclusion of a treaty on the moon in a spirit of mutual understanding the co-operation.

The Bulgarian delegation has always held the view that the problem of regulating activities involved in direct television broadcasting is one of the most important problems of contemporary international space law. That is why we welcome the fact that the Legal Sub-Committee's second Working Group, under the businesslike leadership of Mr. Vellodi, did useful work in formulating draft principles for the purpose of concluding an international agreement or agreements as provided for in resolution 2196 (XXVII), adopted on the initiative of the USSR delegation.

In our view it would be no exaggeration to say that we can already glimpse the outlines of the possible draft principles. This is demonstrated by the report of Working Group II. This document, which contains a considerable number of alternative texts and square brackets, also shows that we have ahead of us a lot of difficult work if we want to reconcile the divergent points of view. In our view, however, the most important thing is that we have now passed the stage of work done on the basis of a comparative table and that there now exists an agreed single text which, no matter how multicoloured it may look today, is nevertheless a solid basis for drafting work and for consultations and talks.

In our view the Legal Sub-Committee should continue working at a fast tempo. Its purpose is an extremely noble one: the use of direct television broadcasting

(Mr. Bojilov, Bulgaria)

for peace, security, co-operation and the strengthening of trust among peoples. At the same time we should not underestimate the danger, because any delay may turn one of the greatest scientific and technological achievements of mankind into a source of disagreement and friction. That is why the Bulgarian delegation considers that the Legal Sub-Committee should not only continue giving highest priority to but also should pay particular attention to the task of drafting principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting for the purpose of concluding an international agreement or agreements.

In our view, the Legal Sub-Committee, particularly its Working Group III, under the energetic leadership of Mr. Abdel-Ghani, has created the necessary conditions for constructive work on, among other things, the question of the legal consequences of the remote sensing of the earth by artificial satellites. It is well known that there is no lack of general ideas or concrete proposals, and indeed there were three drafts which formed the basis of the work of the Sub-Committee at its fourteenth session. Furthermore, we believe there has emerged a considerable degree of agreement on some aspects of the legal regulation of the use of space technology to study the natural resources of the earth. In other words, it is now not only necessary but also possible to proceed to draw up an agreed draft international document on the remote sensing of the earth's natural resources. Of considerable interest -- and this is only natural -- is also the question of organizing international co-operation in the field of the remote sensing of the earth by means of artificial satellites. Any system of remote sensing of the earth by means of artificial satellites should consist of three parts: the space part, the airborne part and the land-based part.

(Mr. Bojilov, Bulgaria)

While at the present time the space and the airborne parts are ipso facto national, the land-based part can and should include national centres, an international centre and regional centres, created under the aegis of the United Nations.

The United Nations Secretariat has done a great deal of research into the question of organizing international co-operation in the field of the remote sensing of the earth by means of artificial satellites. Nevertheless, there still remain a number of questions which require serious attention and careful research. In our view, the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee correctly recommended that the Secretariat continue its work in connexion with the study of various possible decisions regarding the establishment of the land-based part of the system of remote sensing, taking into account the possibility of placing such a system under the United Nations aegis and taking into account the views expressed by States and the proposals made by the specialized agencies.

On the whole, we feel that the Committee at this session should discuss the question of how to activate the future work of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. In our view the ideas put forward in the statement of the leader of the Soviet delegation warrant the most serious attention.

The task of our Committee, as you have so often stressed, Mr. Chairman, is to play the role of a co-ordination centre for international co-operation in the field of the use of outer space for peaceful purposes. In our view, this presupposes not only discussion and the taking of organizational and technical decisions relating to the work of the Committee and its organs, but also active consultations and talks designed to seek agreement and solutions for the most important problems involved in the use of outer space in the interests of peace, security and co-operation.

In this sense we would like to express our conviction that the Committee, Mr. Chairman, under your skillful and businesslike leadership, will do a great deal of fruitful work.

The CHAIRMAN: The first speaker this afternoon will be the representative of Argentina, followed by the representatives of Pakistan and Poland.

Mr. CZARKOWSKI (Poland): My delegation would like to speak on the following point of order. Yesterday, we inscribed our name on the list of speakers kept by the Secretary of the Committee. We were in the first place. This morning we found that we are in twelfth place. It is the considered view of my delegation that the list of speakers should follow the order of notifications by delegations as they present their names to the Secretariat. We think that the Secretariat has no right to change the order of the list of speakers without consulting delegations concerned.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the Secretariat wish to comment on this point of order?

Mr. ROBINSON (Secretary of the Committee): I am sorry to disagree with the representative of Poland. There were no changes made with the exception of the inclusion of the United States of America and the German Democratic Republic which had been inscribed for yesterday afternoon and so placed. The list was copied by my secretary as it was inscribed here at the desk.

Mr. CZARKOWSKI (Poland): I cannot accept that explanation of the Secretariat. My delegation, yesterday, received instructions to check carefully as to what the list of speakers for this morning was, because we had other arrangements for today. I was informed that we were in first place, and not, as the Secretariat is saying, that we were in twelfth place from the beginning.

The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.