

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

THIRTY-FIRST SESSION

Official Records *



FIRST COMMITTEE
3rd meeting
held on
Monday, 18 October 1976
10.30 a.m.
New York

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 3rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. JAROSZEK (Poland)

CONTENTS

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE: REPORT OF THE
COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE

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

* This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be incorporated in a copy of the record and should be sent *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, room LX-2332.

Corrections will be issued shortly after the end of the session, in a separate fascicle for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.1/31/PV.3
18 October 1976
ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 31 AND 32

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (A/31/20; A/C.1/31/3)

PREPARATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE USE BY STATES OF ARTIFICIAL EARTH SATELLITES FOR DIRECT TELEVISION BROADCASTING: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (A/31/20; A/C.1/31/3)

The CHAIRMAN: In accordance with the decision taken at our last meeting, the First Committee will today begin its consideration of the agenda items relating to outer space, namely, item 31 entitled "International co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space" and item 32 entitled "Preparation of an international convention on principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting". The report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space has been circulated and is contained in document A/31/20.

In accordance with the practice followed in previous years, we shall consider the two items that I have just mentioned jointly, on the understanding that those delegations which desire to do so can make separate statements on either item.

In considering the items concerning outer space, we are ever mindful of the outstanding scientific accomplishments we have witnessed during the last decade and a half, including those scored as a result of the collective effort of States in the framework of their bilateral and multilateral co-operation.

The most hope-inspiring development continues to be our joint, noteworthy success that the space beyond the earth's atmosphere has not become the field for unchecked competition in armaments, nuclear weapons having been barred from outer space. At the same time, it is in utilizing the tools of space research in meeting some of the most pressing problems of our time that space activities assume an ever more real meaning for all of us. Recognizing the vital importance, therefore, of channelling space efforts towards the solution of the economic and social problems that beset mankind, particularly in the developing countries, the United Nations has rightly taken the initiative of promoting international co-operation in space communications, meteorology and remote-sensing activities which can be utilized to

(The Chairman)

great advantage in such vital areas as understanding and controlling our environment or mitigating the world-wide shortage of food.

The United Nations has also promoted international co-operation in this field by establishing a legal régime for space activities, to see to it that this new and important instrument of mankind's progress be not used for purposes alien to the overriding principles of national sovereignty and peaceful co-operation of States, but rather be utilized for the sake of easing world tensions, strengthening international security and preservation and further development of cultural values of nations. We already have four important international conventions in force which have been negotiated under United Nations auspices, and work on three more is at an advanced stage. All these augur well for peace and security here on earth, particularly by eliminating the threat of conflict in this new area of human endeavour.

It is the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, whose report we shall start considering here today, to which we are indebted for the kind of leadership it has provided in promoting international co-operation in the field. I wish to thank our dear colleague and friend, Ambassador Peter Jankowitsch of Austria, Chairman of the Committee, who will be presenting to us the report of his Committee, for the excellent work performed by him personally, by the Committee and by its two Sub-Committees. It is therefore with great pleasure that I now call upon Ambassador Jankowitsch to present the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

Mr. JANKOWITSCH (Austria), Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space: Mr. Chairman, first of all let me thank you for your very knowledgeable introduction of our subject for this morning and also for the next few days and also for the excessively kind words which you directed to the Chairman, members of the Bureau and members of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Believe me, dear Mr. Chairman, these words will provide encouragement for our work.

Mr. Chairman, it is a pleasant duty for the Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to present to you and members of this Committee the report of the Committee on the work of its nineteenth session, which was concluded

(Mr. Jankowitsch, Chairman, Outer Space
Committee)

in June of this year. In the short period of time available for this presentation, I should like to endeavour to draw your attention to the main areas of the Committee's work, the details of which can be found in the report before you.

As you know, Mr. Chairman, and as members of the Committee are aware, the work of the Committee is based on the results achieved by the work of its two subsidiary bodies, the Legal Sub-Committee and the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, both having performed extensive work in their respective areas of responsibility over the past year. In this connexion, I should like to express thanks and appreciation to the Chairmen of the two Sub-Committees: they are Ambassador Eugeniusz Wyzner of Poland, the able Chairman of the Legal Sub-Committee, and Professor John Carver of Australia, the equally able Chairman of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. Both have provided admirable leadership in the work of the two subbodies. Among the officers of the Committee who deserve special attention and praise I should like to mention the Vice-Chairman, Ambassador Ion Datcu of Romania, who has helped to carry a special workload this year, as well as our indefatigable Rapporteur Mr. Lindenberg Sette of Brazil.

Mr. Chairman, turning first to the work of the Legal Sub-Committee, you will recall that last year, in resolution 3388 (XXX), the General Assembly called upon the Committee to give priority consideration to three items: the draft treaty relating to the moon; the elaboration of principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting; and, finally, the legal implications of remote sensing of the earth from space.

(Mr. Jankowitsch, Chairman, Outer
Space Committee)

With regard to the first item, on which I should like to elaborate a little, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space discussed the progress achieved by the Legal Sub-Committee in the preparation of the draft treaty relating to the moon, an item which has been before the Sub-Committee for the past five years. As you are aware, the Legal Sub-Committee completed, at its previous sessions, the text of the preamble and 21 articles, including final clauses, although some provisions of those articles still appear in square brackets or alternative formulations, indicating that agreement had still eluded the committee. This year, the Sub-Committee gave priority to the principal outstanding issue in the finalization of the text of the draft, namely, the question of the legal régime governing the natural resources of the moon. Since the solution of this problem would, in the view of many representatives, facilitate agreement on the other remaining issues, efforts have been concentrated on discussing a possible compromise text on the basis of the various proposals on the legal régime submitted before the Sub-Committee. The principal difficulty in reaching an agreement on the proper wording of the text relates to the basic issue of whether or not such a legal régime should be based on the principle that the moon and its resources are the "common heritage of mankind". This principle was insisted upon by several members of the Committee but viewed with reservation by some others.

Several important proposals were submitted regarding the outstanding issues and serious efforts were made to reach a compromise solution. Final agreement however still eluded the Committee. I might venture to mention, however, that this year we came fairly close to agreement in the working group of the Legal Sub-Committee, and the remaining open issues have been significantly reduced. The area of compromise and consensus has been enlarged. The gap separating the various views on the issues is indeed a narrow one and, in view of the possibility of a compromise, the Committee has recommended that the Legal Sub-Committee continue consideration of this item with the same priority as before.

On the question of the elaboration of the principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting, draft texts of the complete set of principles were worked out, as you know, at the 1975 session of the Legal Sub-Committee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of

(Mr. Jankowitsch, Chairman, Outer
Space Committee)

Outer Space. However, each of the texts included certain elements on which agreement had not yet been achieved, which therefore appeared in square brackets or as alternative texts. This year the Legal Sub-Committee concentrated mainly on the words or phrases in the remaining square brackets and on eliminating alternative formulations wherever possible. The Sub-Committee's working group has succeeded in eliminating the square brackets or alternative formulations and thus finalizing the texts of nine principles relating to the following areas: purposes and objectives, applicability of international law, rights and benefits, international co-operation, States' responsibility, duty and right to consult, peaceful settlement of disputes, copyright and neighbouring rights, and notification with the United Nations.

The remaining principal points of contention relate to the differing positions held with regard to the principle of freedom of information and the principle of sovereignty of States. This latter principle is of direct relevance to the remaining three articles relating to consent and participation, programme content and unlawful broadcasts, on which only an exchange of views took place. The centre of the controversy is whether or not such broadcasting to foreign countries must have the direct consent of the countries concerned.

Several proposals have been made to resolve this central issue, including the one made by the United States at the General Assembly last year elaborating on a suggestion made by the United States Secretary of State, Mr. Kissinger, at the meeting of the American Bar Association, in which he stressed the need for consultation in this field and proposed that, before undertaking direct television broadcasts, the broadcasting State must notify the States within the reception area of its intention to broadcast, and that the broadcasting State, at the request of the Governments concerned in the reception area, should undertake full consultations to resolve problems that might arise in such intended broadcasts. A specific proposal on the same lines was made before the Committee by Canada and Sweden. It was, however, not possible to discuss this issue at the last session of the Legal Sub-Committee this year due to lack of time. However, as work has now been completed on all the other articles, it will be possible to give full attention to this central issue with a view to reaching agreement. In view of the progress

(Mr. Jankowitsch, Chairman, Outer
Space Committee)

already made, the Committee agreed that the Legal Sub-Committee at its next session should continue to consider as a matter of high priority the elaboration of principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasts with a view to concluding an agreement or agreements in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 2916 (XXVII) and 3388 (XXX). This year the Legal Sub-Committee has also continued detailed consideration of the third priority item, the legal implications of an earth resources survey by remote sensing satellites, as requested by General Assembly resolution 3388 (XXX) of 18 November last year. The Sub-Committee was able to complete the text of five draft principles which were worked out on the basis of the common elements identified at the last session from the various proposals put forward by Member States. These five principles related to the objectives of remote sensing, the applicability of international law, international co-operation and participation, the protection of the natural environment and the provision of technical assistance. Some of the words and phrases in these five principles appear in square brackets, as consensus could not yet be reached.

The Sub-Committee was also successful in identifying three further common elements in the proposals before it concerning, first, the role of the United Nations and other international organizations in the co-ordination of activities and the provision of technical assistance in this field; secondly, the provision of information concerning impending natural disasters, and thirdly, the prohibition of the use of data and information to the detriment of other States. The main outstanding issues relate to the question whether or not prior consent is required for a sensing State to conduct remote sensing over the territory of the sensed State and to make available satellite remote sensing information to third parties. In other words, what is at stake here is the principle of State sovereignty over its wealth and natural resources and over information thereon.

In view of certain new proposals, particularly the one made by the Soviet Union in the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, providing for certain scientific criteria by which to develop the necessary regulations, it is felt that the matter could be resolved fairly quickly. Accordingly the committee has recommended that

(Mr. Jankowitsch, Chairman, Outer
Space Committee)

the question be further considered at the next session of the Legal Sub-Committee on the same priority basis as the first two issues, relating to the draft treaty on the moon and principles relating to direct television broadcasts.

Finally, with respect to the work of the Legal Sub-Committee, it should be noted that a brief discussion also took place relating to the question of definition or delimitation of outer space and outer space activities, the renewed importance of which was thus stressed -- again an item which has been on the agenda of the Committee for some time.

(Mr. Jankowitsch, Chairman,
Outer Space Committee)

Let me now turn to the work of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. You will note from the report before you that this Sub-Committee gave priority consideration to the questions relating to remote sensing by satellites and to the co-ordinating role to be played by the United Nations in the development of remote sensing activities. The Committee noted the detailed consideration by the Sub-Committee of the subject, especially of the pre-operational experimental phase and the possible global operational remote sensing system or systems. The Committee endorsed the view of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee that further study of organizational, technical and financial methods in this field should progress together with consideration of the legal aspects of remote sensing.

The Committee noted in this connexion the opinion expressed by the Sub-Committee that its assessment of the current pre-operational experimental phase and description of alternatives pertaining to the future operational phase should not be construed as prejudging the consideration by Member States at any time of the elaboration of any organizational and/or legal framework for satellite remote sensing activities.

The Committee was of the view that the various conclusions and observations made by the Sub-Committee in regard to the current pre-operational experimental phase and the future operational phase of remote sensing deserved the careful attention of Member States. It shared in particular the findings reached by the Sub-Committee. The progress to date suggested that satellite remote sensing systems would one day, like satellite weather and communication systems, become operational. At any rate the use of satellite data could be expected to become an integral part of national economies as well as of planning activities. It endorsed the conclusion that international co-operation would therefore be needed in the effective approach for acquiring the benefit of satellite remote sensing in the interests of all countries and that it could be assured only through such co-operation.

With regard to future operational remote sensing systems, the Committee endorsed the renewed affirmation by the Sub-Committee that regional co-operation, whether in an international or national framework, would be desirable for reception

(Mr. Jankowitsch, Chairman,
Outer Space Committee)

of remote sensing data from satellites and noted the view of the Sub-Committee that ground facilities for receiving, pre-processing and disseminating data from remote sensing satellites would be most likely financed, owned and operated by the individual users or association of users.

The Committee was pleased to note in this connexion that, in its review of the current experimental phase of satellite remote sensing activity, the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee attached importance to the role being played by the United Nations in such areas as training and education, exchange of information and promotion of awareness as to the current international co-operative progress.

The Committee also took account of the discussions of the Sub-Committee on the possible co-ordinating role of the United Nations in the area of remote sensing. It shared the conclusion of the Sub-Committee that there was scope for the United Nations to play a co-ordinating role in this field. Even in this current, pre-operational, experimental phase such a role might, without infringing on existing bilateral agreements, comprise inter alia: co-ordination inside and between regions on such points as training and technical assistance and programme orientation of special interest to the developing countries. The number of points was likely to be considerably greater in the future operational phase.

The Committee further noted the conclusion reached by the Sub-Committee that it would not be possible at the present session to take any decision regarding specific new steps to be taken to establish a co-ordinating role for the United Nations beyond that already agreed within the Sub-Committee itself and as endorsed by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

In view of this, Mr. Chairman, the Committee recommended that the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee should give further consideration to this matter at an appropriate time. The Sub-Committee had requested the Secretary-General in this connexion to prepare several further reports to help the Sub-Committee's consideration of this matter at its next session and the Committee endorsed that request. This will no doubt be the item of primary consideration when the

(Mr. Jankowitsch, Chairman,
Outer Space Committee)

Sub-Committee meets next year and the General Assembly could look forward at its future sessions to receive more specific recommendations in this field.

Moving on now, Mr. Chairman, to the Sub-Committee's consideration of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, you will note that the Committee has expressed its appreciation of the many panels, seminars and training workshops which have been organized in most regions of the world with the participation of the specialized agencies of the United Nations system and other international organizations such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other organizations such as the International Astronautical Federation, the Committee on Space Research, and the European Space Agency. Individual Governments acted as hosts to these activities and the Sub-Committee expressed its appreciation in particular to the Governments of Canada, Indonesia, India, Kenya and Mexico for having received such panels or seminars. At the same time the Sub-Committee expressed its appreciation to the Governments of the United Kingdom, the Federal Republic of Germany, Pakistan and the USSR for agreeing to act as hosts to further panels or seminars in the forthcoming 1976-1977 period. The Committee also expressed its appreciation to several Governments, particularly Austria, Belgium, India, Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States for training experts in various fields of practical applications of space technology.

The Committee, having reviewed the space applications programme for 1977, approved the programme as proposed by the experts on space applications and endorsed by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. It also noted in particular that a number of delegations expressed the view that the United Nations Space Applications Programme should be expanded with regard to both its contents and its scope and that it should receive greater financial support.

On the possibility of convening a United Nations conference on outer space the Committee, after hearing the views of members on the merits of convening such a conference, recommended that the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee should

(Mr. Jankowitsch, Chairman,
Outer Space Committee)

submit a further report on the subject. Such a report should of course reflect the various views and suggestions made and the replies received from Member States to a questionnaire sent out by the Secretary-General in August of 1974, as well as the gist of statements made in the Sub-Committee, the parent Committee and in the General Assembly. The Secretary-General was also requested to send out a letter reminding Member States of his 1974 questionnaire and he was also asked to prepare a study in depth on the question highlighting among other things the objectives which such a conference should serve and its financial implications.

The Committee also considered several aspects of co-ordination of activities in the field of the peaceful uses of outer space between its subsidiary bodies and within the United Nations system. As for its subsidiary bodies, the Committee felt that the considerations relating to remote sensing required particular attention for the co-ordination of activities between the Committee's Legal and Scientific and Technical Sub-Committees.

(Mr. Jankowitsch, Chairman,
Outer Space Committee)

With regard to the United Nations system as a whole, the Committee noted the needs for ensuring efficient co-ordination of activities between the United Nations and its specialized agencies. It expressed the strong hope that with the creation of a new sub-committee of the ACC the co-ordinated activities within the United Nations system, especially activities relating to the practical applications of space technology, could be effectively accomplished. The Committee also expressed its appreciation to the specialized agencies, particularly the Food and Agriculture Organization, UNESCO, and the World Meteorological Organization, for their continued co-operation. It noted in particular the reports submitted by these and other organizations within the United Nations system for consideration, as well as reports of the sub-committees on this question.

On the question of sounding rocket facilities the Committee expressed satisfaction on the work carried out at the Thumba Equatorial Rocket Station of the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre in India and the CELPA-Mar del Plata Rocket Station Argentina relative to the use of sounding rocket facilities for international co-operation and training in the peaceful scientific exploration of outer space, and recommended that the General Assembly continue to grant United Nations sponsorship to these two ranges.

As Chairman of the Committee, in my statement to the Committee in 1975, I made reference to the obligations incumbent upon the Committee as the focal point of the United Nations for all space-related matters. In this connexion, I pointed out to the Committee the growing importance of the possibility of finding future sources of energy in outer space, citing solar energy as a possible example. A paper on this matter was laid before the Committee in document A/AC.105 (XIX), reviewing the present state of development of solar energy and the prospects of this generation in outer space. The paper comments that while some obligations of solar energy, including space heating and hot water supply, are already in widespread use, others, such as the generating of electricity, require substantial research and development before they will be economical for large-scale use. It notes that solar cells for direct conversion of solar radiation electricity are used as the power supply for most space craft and that proposals have been made for a large array of solar cells to be placed in geosynchronous orbit to transmit power to the

(Mr. Jankowitsch, Chairman,
Outer Space Committee)

ground by microwaves. However, present cost will have to be reduced by a substantial factor if they are to be competitive for commercial power production.

Another working paper entitled "International problems arising from the exploitation of solar and other related energies" was submitted by Argentina, discussing the international problems -- particularly the legal implications -- that might arise in this field. The Committee has recommended in this connexion that the Secretary-General request Member States to provide information on ongoing planned programmes in the field of generation or transmission of solar energy by means of space technology to the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee next year so that it may consider the matter and prepare appropriate recommendations for any future considerations being desirable.

Finally, the Committee discussed the consideration of the strengthening of the secretariat of the Committee. In particular, the Committee noted that a number of new developments would put an increased workload on the secretariat. The coming into force of the Registration Convention, increasing requests for assistance from the Outer Space Affairs Division by regional organizations as well as by Member States in the field of remote sensing reception facilities, and in the interpretation and use of remote sensing data. And it became apparent to the Committee that the Division was unable, because of lack of available experts, to meet all these requests. The Committee also recognized that these requests came to the Outer Space Affairs Division as a result of its position as the administrative arm of the Committee and of the Committee's mandate as the focal point for international co-operation in this area of activity; it therefore recommended that the Secretary-General, in the light of relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, consider strengthening the Outer Space Affairs Division so that it would have the necessary technically qualified personnel available to meet such requests for assistance in the future.

This, very briefly, is the work carried out by the Outer Space Committee and its two subsidiary bodies during the year under review. It has, as you may have noted, touched upon many areas of space activities and it could register significant progress in many of these fields.

(Mr. Jankowitsch, Chairman,
Outer Space Committee)

I should now like to conclude this brief survey of the work of the Committee in the recent past by an effort to cast a look at the future of international co-operation in outer space; and indeed, as in few other organs of the United Nations, our work in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space is directed to the future. As I pointed out to the Outer Space Committee this year, some recent studies suggest that human activity in outer space, as well as the uses of space technology, will continue to grow in the coming years, especially in the years 1980 to 2000. Earth-oriented space activities seem to be among those that will have the greatest chance of being developed in a substantial manner, both qualitatively and quantitatively. Among the possible objectives of earth-oriented activities, those most frequently mentioned are: the production and management of food and forestry resources; prediction and protection of the environment; protection of life and property, including hazard warnings and the prediction of earthquakes and severe storms; energy and mineral exploration, including the problem of the disposal of hazardous space materials; the transfer of information, with emphasis on new communications systems; use of the environment of space for scientific and commercial purposes which include people living and working in space, travel, processing materials, the study of diseases and medical aspects; and earth science, with such projects as the ocean, the lower and the upper atmosphere.

But there are also activities, perhaps new activities, oriented towards outer space such as the study of the universe, the fate of matter, such as tele-explosion and cosmic rays; the study of the life cycle of stars, including the nature and course of solar activities; evolution of the solar system; and the study of the origins in the future of life itself.

(Mr. Jankowitsch, Chairman,
Outer Space Committee)

Specific projects frequently mentioned in studying future space activities are also the question of establishing colonies on the moon and on orbiting earth satellites, the question of space travel and exploration of the universe and the question of the establishment of commercial industries using processes in outer space which cannot be duplicated on earth because of gravity problems. Such expanded uses of the space environment in the future will no doubt generate proposals for the further development of space law. We can also assume an increase in the use of space science and technology, as you yourself, Mr. Chairman, mentioned in your introductory remarks, because it provides uniquely effective methods for the solution of critical problems of world-wide concern such as environmental pollution, food production in relation to population, provision of new energy sources, improvements in weather prediction and space communications. Space technology is also increasingly applied to other continuing functions of society, particularly health services and education.

The problems arising from such situations are multidisciplinary; no one problem can be singled out as being solely, or even primarily, concerned with science, technology, law, politics, economics or culture. All such elements must be identified to attain the total understanding necessary for decisions on proposals or solutions.

In working out the future of space law, consideration must be given to many such problems, and new forms of international co-operation involving nations and groups of nations will become necessary. The question will arise whether existing space treaties and agreements will be adequate for guiding the development in the direction of our efforts. If new proposals are made, will they be in harmony with international co-operative agreements already in force? Will those who are making proposals acquaint themselves with a thorough factual knowledge which space technology, space economics and the institutional and legal factors require? In any event, we can be sure that, with the growth of activities in the last decades of this century, the importance and relevance of our work in the United Nations in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space will grow in importance, and I believe that the Committee, as in the past, will

Mr. Jankowitsch, Chairman,
Outer Space Committee)

continue to discharge its responsibilities in the manner it has tried to do before. In doing so, the Committee will, as always, look for further guidance to this Committee and to the General Assembly for its work over the coming years.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Ambassador Jankowitsch. I am sure that I am reflecting the sentiments of this Committee when I express to him our appreciation for his detailed, thorough and lucid presentation of the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. It will no doubt facilitate discussion of the items under consideration by this Committee.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Comrade Chairman, we have listened with great interest and attention to your extremely competent introductory address, which once again serves to confirm the correctness of our unanimous decision in electing you Chairman of the First Committee. The Soviet delegation, speaking for the first time in the First Committee at this session of the General Assembly, would like to wish you, comrade Chairman, and all your colleagues and our colleagues on the Committee success in their work and the achievement of positive, constructive results in our consideration of all the items on the agenda of our Committee.

The First Committee is today beginning its consideration of the questions of international co-operation in space research and exploration for peaceful purposes. In this regard, I should like to stress that it has now become a tradition to begin the session of this Committee with matters pertaining to outer space. It would appear that this is no accident, since the progress which has been achieved in studying the peaceful uses of outer space is a symbol of the possibilities which can be exploited in other areas which are under consideration in the First Committee.

In the decisions taken this year by the twenty-fifth congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union provision is made for an expansion of international co-operation in the most varied fields and on a wide range of

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

problems. The General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Leonid Brezhnev, referred to the conquest of space as one of the most important and topical global problems which in the future, I quote, "will have an ever more marked effect on the life of every people and the whole system of international relations". It should also be stressed that, in the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, space research was described as being one of the most promising fields for international co-operation favouring comprehensive development of equal co-operation among States in research into and use of space for peaceful purposes. The Soviet Union views such co-operation as an important contribution to the cause of peace and the improvement of mutual understanding among peoples.

In the year which has elapsed, the Soviet Union has successfully continued its national programmes for the use of and research into outer space by the Soyuz and orbital stations. The most important development as regards the conquest of space is the orbital scientific station Salyut 5. In the USSR, continuous research is being conducted into the planets of the solar system and the moon by means of automatic cosmic devices. A new and vivid page in this history was the flight of the automatic station Luna 24, which made a soft landing on the surface of the moon, undertook a number of experiments, carried out research and collected and brought back to earth samples of moon rock. Success is also being achieved in international co-operation between our country and other countries, especially the socialist countries, in research into and use of outer space. An important milestone in this co-operation was the conclusion of an agreement on co-operation in research into and use of outer space for peaceful purposes, and nine socialist States were the originators of this. The text of this agreement is published as an official document of the General Assembly. Specialists from socialist countries, combining their efforts within the framework of the Intercosmos programme, are making an important contribution to space research. In accordance with the programme of co-operation of the socialist countries in the field of research into and use of outer space for peaceful purposes, an orbital flight was undertaken of Soyuz-22, which is equipped with photographic equipment prepared by specialists from the German Democratic Republic and the Soviet Union and manufactured at the Carl Zeiss Jena factory in the German Democratic Republic.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

In our attempt to bring about further comprehensive development of our joint work in the conquest of space the Soviet Union has proposed to its partners in the Intercosmos programme that they send their citizens to be trained in the Soviet Union so that they can participate in joint flights on Soviet space craft and stations.

Permit me now briefly to say something about the main results of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its sub-committees in 1976. The report of that Committee, the work of which has for some years now been successfully and skilfully headed by Ambassador Peter Jankowitsch, demonstrates that this area of international co-operation has become an integral part of the work of the United Nations. Whichever direction we turn in space research, whether it be cosmic space communications or television, navigation at sea, space meteorology or the very promising remote sensing of earth resources by means of artificial satellites -- in all these areas organs of the United Nations have played and continue to play an important part. It is particularly important to point out that organs of the United Nations dealing in one way or another with questions connected with space -- primarily the United Nations Outer Space Committee -- are able and are designed to give an orientation to international co-operation in this area that is in keeping with the interests of all countries. One can without any doubt speak of success in the work of recent sessions of the Outer Space Committee and its sub-committees, which have taken their decisions on the basis of unanimity.

The Soviet Union consistently supports the decisions adopted by this body. We would like to hope that other States, too, share the view that it is necessary effectively to use the machinery of the United Nations in these matters. One of the important matters being discussed in the United Nations Outer Space Committee and its Legal Sub-Committee is the draft treaty on the moon. Discussions in the United Nations Outer Space Committee and its Legal Sub-Committee have shown the prospects for such an agreement both from the standpoint of the practical interests of various States and from the standpoint of the progressive development of international space law. The bulk of the draft has been in principle agreed upon.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

Just one question really is still outstanding; that is the question of the régime for the exploitation of the natural resources of the moon. The Soviet delegation has always endeavoured to resolve this complex problem relating to the natural resources of the moon in a spirit of compromise and in the most constructive way. Unfortunately we are compelled to note that not all members of the United Nations Outer Space Committee have adopted a similar position. In our view the insistence of certain delegations on including in the draft treaty on the moon provisions which are not conducive to that end -- that is to say the development of international co-operation in research into and use of the moon -- can only hinder, delay and complicate important scientific programmes which are being carried out in this area and hence deprive the treaty of its fundamental import.

A question which is still a matter of topical interest is that of direct television broadcasting by means of artificial satellites. The Soviet delegation takes a very favourable view of the work of the Legal Sub-Committee, which has concluded its first reading of the draft principles governing activities in this field of direct television broadcasting. An important result of the work which is being done is acknowledgement by a considerable number of delegations of the fundamental principle whereby a State planning to carry out broadcasting by direct television to a foreign State must in advance obtain the consent of that foreign State for such broadcasting.

We believe that it may be possible to conclude the preparation of the draft at the next session. For our part we are prepared to do everything in our power to see to it that this task, among others at the General Assembly, is successfully concluded. The Soviet delegation has often stated and states once again that direct television broadcasting, which is one of the striking achievements of contemporary technology, raises serious problems which have to be solved before practical work in connexion with direct television broadcasting actually begins.

Of particular interest were the discussions in the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee on the questions of remote sensing of the earth. A number of studies and the comprehensive preparation of organizational, economic and scientific and technical aspects of matters connected with remote sensing of the earth carried out by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee have created

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

the necessary basis for consideration and preparation of the legal principles governing activities of States in the field of remote sensing, and indeed this is made incumbent upon us by the relevant resolution of the General Assembly. We are convinced that the preparation of principles governing activities in the field of remote sensing would be more successful if it were possible to achieve mutual understanding on certain fundamental issues.

In conclusion I would like to say a few words on the organization of the Outer Space Committee's work and that of its auxiliary bodies. Like many delegations we find satisfactory a practice which has stood the test of time, that of alternating sessions of the Legal Sub-Committee between New York and Geneva. In our view this is a tradition which should be preserved and we would request the Fifth Committee to take its decision on this accordingly.

The CHAIRMAN (interpretation from Russian): I thank the representative of the Soviet Union, Mr. Issraelyan, for his friendly words to the officers of the Committee and myself.

(spoke in English)

I have no more speakers on my list for this morning. Is there any representative who wishes to speak at this stage?

I call on the representative of Iraq.

Mr. KITTANI (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): The delegation of Iraq had intended to participate in the discussion of the two items on our agenda this morning, but we are unable to do so for the very simple reason that the report of the Committee has not been submitted to us in the Arabic language, though the Committee had in fact adopted its report on 2 July last -- in other words, over three and a half months ago. We do not know when we should be receiving the report in Arabic. If we cannot have it in Arabic, we shall be compelled to speak in a different language at a subsequent meeting.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Banerjee, to give an explanation, if it is possible at this stage.

Mr. BANERJEE (Secretary of the First Committee): I have been given to understand that owing to the heavy working load there have been some delays in reproducing documents and that priority, therefore, has to be established regarding their production. That is the impression I have been given but I will certainly look into this matter and report to the Committee later.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Secretary of the Committee. I call on the representative of Iraq.

Mr. KITTANI (Iraq): Mr. Chairman, this raises another question, and that is, what is the status of Arabic as an official and working language of the Assembly and the Main Committees. Do you need a request to translate a document, or is it done automatically. If the former is the case, then this

(Mr. Kittani, Iraq)

raises serious implications not only for this Committee but for the other Main Committees and the plenary Assembly. I was under the impression that all General Assembly documents pre-session, in-session and after-session, came out in Arabic. What is the use of translating the document in question after our debate is over?

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think that the Committee at this stage has the time to discuss, or should discuss, this question. I suggest the Secretariat be requested to furnish detailed information at a subsequent meeting of the Committee if this is acceptable to the representative of Iraq.

If no other delegation wishes to speak, I should like to make two announcements. First, I intend to close the list of speakers on the items under consideration tomorrow, Tuesday, 19 October, at 6 p.m. I think that should give ample time to delegations wishing to enter their names on the list of speakers. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that it is so decided.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: I should also like to inform the Committee that, in connexion with the agenda items presently under consideration, the United States delegation has offered to show a slide programme of between 30 to 45 minutes dealing with the American space craft landings on Mars after the conclusion of this afternoon's meeting of the Committee. I think it might be of interest to members of the Committee to see this programme. If there are no objections, I would request the Secretariat to make appropriate arrangements for the showing.

The meeting rose at 12 noon.