

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THIRTY-NINTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 7 October 1965, at 10.30 a.m.

1. Welcome to United States astronauts
2. General debate (continued)
3. Statement by Mr. Roy, President of COSPAR

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WELCOME TO UNITED STATES ASTRONAUTS

The CHAIRMAN: I am glad to see in our midst two distinguished visitors, two of the ambassadors of our terrestrial world to the celestial universe. We are gratified by the visit of the two astronauts from the United States of America, Lieutenant-Colonel James McDivitt and Lieutenant-Colonel Edward White, who, as is known, were on a special mission to a place far removed from us, but they remained foremost in our thoughts. The symbolic gesture made by Lieutenant-Colonels McDivitt and White carrying the United Nations flag with them on their flight personified the resolutions of the General Assembly that the exploration of outer space is an adventure for all mankind.

May I, on behalf of all the members of this Committee, extend our sincere congratulations for your major contribution to the ultimate conquest of space by man. We are grateful to the delegation of the United States for giving us the opportunity to congratulate personally the distinguished astronauts.

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

The CHAIRMAN: For this morning I have but two speakers inscribed. The first speaker is the representative of Poland.

Mr. WYZNER (Poland): First of all, Mr. Chairman, I associate my delegation with your warm words addressed to our distinguished guests, astronauts Lt. Cols. McDivitt and White. While we are here as representatives of our respective countries, they, as astronauts, are -- to use the words of the Declaration of Legal Principles of 1963 -- the envoys of mankind in outer space. We are glad to welcome them in our midst and wish to congratulate them on their outstanding achievement.

Mr. Chairman, since the present session of our Committee is the first one conducted under your chairmanship, I wish to take this opportunity to congratulate you most warmly on behalf of my delegation on your election to this important post. Your profound experience in the field of international relations and co-operation, your outstanding personal virtues and qualifications make your choice a most commendable one. We rest assured that under your inspiring guidance this Committee will be able to achieve new meaningful results and accomplishments.

(Mr. Wyzner, Poland)

When reviewing the impressive events of man's conquest of outer space, including over 1,500 launchings of space ships, satellites and other space objects, besides the feeling of admiration for the courage and endurance of the astronauts and for the genius of the scientists who made all that possible one should realize that these gigantic achievements were recorded within this short spell of eight years, since the first Sputnik was put into orbit by the Soviet Union on 4 October 1957.

The pace of scientific progress and of constantly developing technology is indeed remarkable. Not long ago we viewed as unsurpassed the mere presence of man in a space vehicle. Today, we have behind us such outstanding and pioneering achievements as a "promenade" in outer space accomplished by the Soviet astronaut, Alexei Leonov, and the record flight of the Gemini V space ship, launched by the United States. Just two days ago, the Soviet Union launched a space rocket towards the Moon carrying an automatic station, Lunik VII, weighing more than 1,500 kilograms -- another outstanding feat by the Soviet scientists.

What is, however, one of the most recent developments in the peaceful exploration of outer space might be called sui generis proliferation of space activities, the growing number of States joining the two cosmic super-Powers in probing new dimensions which were, until recently, out of their reach.

The speakers who preceded me in this debate reviewed space exploration carried out by, among others, Italy with its successful San Marco project; France, which is preparing the first launching of its satellite, and also the important role played by India as a host country of the international launching facilities. This peaceful proliferation of space activities is a positive sign of the technical progress becoming attainable to a growing number of countries, and of an increasing international co-operation in this field.

Poland has made but a modest contribution in this field. Yet we have joined with other nations in conducting research, and many of our prominent scientists are active in this field. Their work is being co-ordinated by a Committee for Space Studies, an organ of the Polish Academy of Sciences, consisting of members representing astronomy, geodesy, law, aeronomy, geophysics, astrophysics, biophysics and physiology.

(Mr. Wyzner, Poland)

A Polish network of optical satellite tracking stations registered by COSPAR continues to conduct astronomical and geodetic observations. It has made a few thousand observations of various Soviet and United States satellites. Among other activities, mention should be made of the Polish programme for the International Year of the Quiet Sun, the study of the orbits of artificial satellites, and of lunar geodesy.

Returning to the work within the framework of the United Nations, we wish to present briefly our views on the recent session of the Legal Sub-Committee.

We regret that no progress was made on the agreement on the rescue of astronauts and spaceships in the event of accident or emergency landing, although the Soviet draft of this agreement provided sufficient material for its final approval. The Sub-Committee succeeded in clarifying positions on the issue of liability for damage caused by objects launched into outer space, and some, though very limited, rapprochement took place in this field. We think that the Hungarian draft in its renewed form constitutes a good basis for our future work.

(Mr. Wyzner, Poland)

There is more than one indication that the adoption by the General Assembly in 1963 of the Declaration of legal principles governing the activities of States in the exploration and use of outer space was never meant as a final word in the process of applying the rule of law to this new realm. On the contrary, paragraph 1 of General Assembly resolution 1963 (XVIII) stating that "consideration should be given to incorporating in international agreement form ... legal principles governing the activities of States in the exploration and use of outer space" gives a clear indication that the Assembly has regarded the Declaration as a significant but only first step towards drawing up the law of outer space.

The Declaration of legal principles is certainly the most important document of a general character, and contains a set of principles governing the relations and activities of States in space. But at the same time it is far from being complete. That is why it is an important task for the Legal Sub-Committee to translate general principles of the Declaration into the language of an international treaty, convention or agreement, which is most effective from the point of view of its obligatory force. Then, and only then, we might rest assured that the activities of State in space will be guided by a system of precisely drafted and juridically binding legal norms, which is of paramount importance for the orderly conduct of the peaceful exploration of outer space.

The Polish delegation follows with great interest the constructive work being done in the field of outer space by two specialized agencies -- the World Meteorological Organization and the International Telecommunication Union. We endorse the emphasis placed by the World Meteorological Organization on the establishment of the World Weather Watch operating on the basis of information received from satellites and from conventional meteorological observations. Concerning international space communications, we endorse the position that they should be available for the use of all countries and -- contrary to the selfish attitudes of some private corporations -- on a global and non-discriminatory basis. In this respect, the International Telecommunication Union can certainly help the developing nations participate effectively in international space communication systems.

Finally, may I, Mr. Chairman, make a comment or two on the role of our Committee itself. Indeed, its record of achievements and thoughtful initiatives is certainly commendable. Even in the legal sphere, although we would wish a more

(Mr. Wyzner, Poland)

speedy movement towards formulation of complete provisions, some progress and rapprochements of various positions have been reached. However, more of it was possible and should have been made. Nevertheless, in our view, the Committee should direct more efforts at becoming a real co-ordinating centre for planning activities by other interested international and regional organizations, and to some degree international co-operation of States. These planning and co-ordinating functions should perhaps help in switching the emphasis from other useful functions consisting mainly of registering the achievements in outer space. An important step in this direction would be, in our opinion, a decision to convene an international conference on the exploration and peaceful utilization of outer space in 1967, as proposed by Austria and supported by many representatives in the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee.

The idea of holding a scientific conference of this type is not new. As far back as in 1959, the General Assembly, in its resolution 1472 (XIV) envisaged such an international gathering, although due to other factors -- among other things, unresolved organizational problems of the Committee on Outer Space -- it did not materialize at that time. Since then, however, the situation has greatly improved. Our Committee acts on a sound organizational basis, and we are approaching the tenth anniversary of human endeavours in space which would coincide with the holding of a proposed conference. It would be indeed a fitting and appropriate anniversary meeting if it were to serve the practical purpose of summing-up the great achievements and experience in outer space, and of exchanging scientific material, new ideas and concepts.

Although the special Working Group was unable to meet before the present session of our Committee, it is still possible for us to make a decision in principle on the convening of the conference in 1967 and to ask the Working Group to work out, as soon as practicable, all the necessary details and to report to our next session. Since up to now no objection to the idea of holding the conference has been recorded, it is the assumption of my delegation that such a solution might be acceptable to our Committee. By approving such a course of action, we would gain time, which is needed for thorough and satisfactory preparation of this important event by scientists from all parts of the world.

STATEMENT BY MR. ROY, PRESIDENT OF COSPAR

Mr. ROY (President, COSPAR) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, may I first of all thank you for honouring COSPAR by inviting a representative of that scientific Committee to attend the present session, and to thank you also for the very kind words of welcome addressed to me in admitting me to your august gathering. I should also like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to make a report -- for the benefit of your Committee -- on the activities of COSPAR which are related to the problems upon which your Committee is now devoting its attention.

As everyone knows -- but, perhaps, it is not unnecessary to recall it -- COSPAR is a Committee, which was set up during the period 1958-1959 by the International Council of Scientific Unions, to promote progress in space research using the new means of scientific exploration of outer space such as rockets, artificial satellites and space probes, and to initiate, stimulate and foster for this purpose the greatest degree of international scientific co-operation while, at the same time, promoting comparison of progress and co-operation in the various scientific disciplines contributing to a greater knowledge of outer space -- disciplines which come under one of the specialized scientific unions, depending upon their own field.

(Mr. Roy, COSPAR)

Dr. R.W. Porter, one of the Vice-Presidents of COSPAR, pointed out here on 5 December 1963, this Committee is a purely scientific organ, and therefore without competence or power on the governmental level, which is the level on which the United Nations and the specialized agencies function. But, particularly in connexion with outer space, it is very directly concerned with the progress and applications of science, and vice versa. It is therefore natural and necessary for relations to be established between your Committee and COSPAR.

If I take pleasure today in recalling that, under the terms of its statute and within its competence, COSPAR has always affirmed its unstinting and unanimous resolve to satisfy every desire for co-operation expressed by the concerned organs of the United Nations, and particularly by your Committee and its Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, do believe me when I say that this pleasure is derived not only from expressing friendly sentiments to a sympathetic audience; it is also the scientific pleasure of stating a substantial truth.

If this co-operation has begun and is making good progress, this is certainly due to the excellent relations which were fostered by your Committee, and by the welcome which COSPAR has always received from Mr. Abdel-Ghani and his collaborators. May I, therefore, renew the thanks I expressed when, last May at Mar del Plata, I had the opportunity of thanking Mr. Abdel-Ghani for the message he brought to us from the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

On 13 September 1963, Mr. Blagonravov, Vice-President of COSPAR, stressed here that this Committee included, at that date, in addition to ten scientific unions, twenty-three national organizations engaged in space research. These organizations now number thirty-two, and the application for membership of a thirty-third national organization is now being processed. This expansion is obvious, tangible evidence of the services within its field which COSPAR aims to render to the international scientific community.

The first COSPAR subject which is of interest to the United Nations is the potentially unfavourable effects of space experiments. It was in response to an invitation from this Organization to the International Council of Scientific Unions, which entrusted this problem to COSPAR, that our Committee formed, in 1962, a Consultative Group charged with examining spontaneously or upon appropriate request, all space experiments capable of having harmful effects upon other scientific

(Mr. Roy, COSPAR)

activities and observations and with organizing detailed, quantitative and objective studies, the results and conclusions of which were to be communicated to the International Council of Scientific Unions and to other interested groups, as well as to the competent organs of the United Nations, and Governments affected by the decisions to be taken on the results of those studies. The Chairman and six members of this Consultative Group are eminent scientists working in a personal capacity and not as representatives of an organization.

In Florence, in 1964, this Consultative Group produced a report, which was approved unanimously by the Executive Council and Assembly of COSPAR. This report dealt, in particular, with the possible contamination of the atmosphere by exhaust gases and other products of high-power rockets, and the possible danger in scientific experiments -- particularly those in radio astronomy -- of small, bi-pole reflectors set up around the earth. It analysed the results of the only experiment of this nature to have been conducted.

This report was accepted last year by your Committee, which, in expressing its appreciation of COSPAR's efforts, gave valuable encouragement to the members of our Consultative Group. That Group, which was able to hold only a very brief meeting at Mar del Plata, met in London last month. It is still too early to report upon the latest stage of its work. I am happy to tell you, however, that, pursuant to the resolution passed last May by the Assembly at Mar del Plata, this Group has embarked upon the organization of a scientific conference on the sterilization of satellites and probes, which are intended to come near celestial bodies of our system and are capable of contaminating possible life and its environment. This conference will make possible a comparison of knowledge and technology to be used in such sterilization, and its results will subsequently be used by the Consultative Group.

As far as the co-operation of COSPAR in the exchange of information is concerned, the Secretary of your Committee has already indicated the results so far achieved, and I need not cover the same ground. However, I should like to add some additional information on two points.

(Mr. Roy, COSPAR)

In the first place, the first of the two technical manuals, towards the printing of which the United Nations Secretariat contributed upon the recommendation of this Committee, is now being published. In view of the fact that this first manual deals with the optical tracking of satellites in an inexpensive but scientifically valid way, which is a matter of great interest to many developing countries and countries which are engaging in space research, this manual will be of great value. The second manual is an even more important work, since it deals with methods of setting up inexpensive stations for launching sounding rockets, and it is at present being revised by its author as a result of observations exchanged on this subject at Mar del Plata.

Second, the reports which national scientific institutions forming part of COSPAR presented to our Assembly in May 1965 at Mar del Plata constitute a document of considerable importance which will, we hope, be of interest to the Secretariat of the United Nations. After inevitable abridgement -- in size, but not in essential scientific information so far as the means, activities and projects of so many organizations are concerned -- these reports have now been sent to the printer. They will appear shortly as the next two issues of the COSPAR information bulletin. COSPAR suggests that in 1966 the United Nations Secretariat might help in extending the publication of its annual reports of co-operating national institutions so that this document might, in date and in presentation, appropriately complement the general report which the Secretariat is to produce in 1966.

The problems of education and training of personnel continue to occupy the attention of COSPAR, so far as they concern the science and technology of the application and utilization of space research. At Mar del Plata these questions were dealt with by the COSPAR working groups concerned, and, in a spirit of international scientific co-operation, in accordance with the aims of COSPAR, we are keeping the United Nations Secretariat, and particularly the Secretary of your Committee, informed on this subject. We hope soon to be able to produce tangible results from the studies now in progress. In particular, the report on the distribution of rocket launching sites, which COSPAR intends to provide, is at present being revised after a thoroughgoing examination of its project in Mar del Plata.

(Mr. Roy, COSPAR)

It has already been mentioned here by the representative of the World Meteorological Organization that your Committee's concern with co-ordination and progress in the knowledge useful for the development of meteorology in the common interest of all nations has been met through the International Council of Scientific Unions establishing a Committee on Atmospheric Sciences under the aegis of the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics in liaison with other unions concerned, several Committees, including COSPAR, and the World Meteorological Organization. For its part, COSPAR has formed at Mar del Plata a new working group especially designed to provide the new Committee with the best co-operation of COSPAR.

In conclusion, and apologizing for having dwelt at length on the activities of COSPAR which have some bearing on the tasks and debates of the Committee at this session at which I have the honour to be present, I should like to reiterate the assurance here that COSPAR hopes to give you more and more useful assistance within its competence and its scientific domain and in accordance with its underlying goal of international scientific co-operation.

Mr. DELEAU (France)(interpretation from French): My delegation would like first of all to express its satisfaction at seeing the debates in our Committee resumed under your distinguished guidance. We have no doubt that the spirit of initiative and the dynamism of your predecessor, Mr. Matsch, will also be the hallmark of your chairmanship, and we hope that our Committee will be enabled thereby to redouble its efforts to discharge the tasks entrusted to it by the General Assembly.

Our Committee's agenda for this year is not very heavy, and our debates should therefore be somewhat less prolonged. However, in the field of space achievements, remarkable exploits have taken place and my delegation can only join its voice to those who have spoken earlier in welcoming the fact that this year astronauts, for the first time, have been able to leave their vehicles and venture on their own into space. In this connexion, I am happy in particular to offer a word of greeting to those who have done us the honour of visiting us this morning. These events mark an important stage in the exploration of outer space.

(Mr. Deleau, France)

But we must also record recent progress among various countries, particularly in the framework of international co-operation in space matters. Much consideration has already been devoted to this in the course of the current session and, therefore, I shall confine my remarks to recalling that my country is pleased with its space activities, whether acting on its own or in collaboration with other Governments. I refer of course to INTERCOM, the satellite telecommunications network in which France has been participating together with over fifty countries, and to its achievements which suggest that when it takes final form it will be utilized by an even larger number of countries. In this field of science and exploration, we very much appreciate the work of COSPAR, which has just been outlined to us.

In the field of research and experiments, France, as you know, is a member of two European organizations -- the European Space Research Organization and the European Launcher Development Organization. France, like other participants, believes that a common effort in this field is required and can provide fruitful results. Furthermore, I should like to mention my country's effort, in collaboration with the United States, for the launching of four Aerobee rockets with a French payload and for the placing into orbit any day now, we hope, of the first French satellite.

Lastly, I should like to mention the co-operation in the launching of sounding rockets by France, Argentina, India, Iceland, Pakistan and the Federal Republic of Germany. We also hope to develop our relations in this field with Brazil, Canada, Spain, Japan and various other countries.

This Committee has before it the report of its Legal Sub-Committee. The work of its fourth session, which has just been completed, has not been as fruitful as the work done at the previous session. It is true that, in respect of assistance to cosmonauts, last year the Sub-Committee made considerable progress on those points where agreement seemed possible. This year it was left with the more controversial problems, which made it difficult to record fresh progress.

(Mr. Deleau, France)

With respect to the liability of States for damage caused by space vehicles, we believe that recent events have led at least to a deeper discussion of the questions and issues rather than to a narrowing of divergencies. However, it seems to us that the very important role which we feel international organizations have to play in the space field has been better understood this year. It is certainly for our Committee to encourage the Legal Sub-Committee to continue in its task. It is perhaps a somewhat ungrateful task and it may appear to be very theoretical. Luckily, it has not been necessary so far either to give aid to astronauts in distress outside their own frontiers or to repair damage caused by the fall of space vehicles. It would be deplorable, however, if the Legal Sub-Committee were to lose the advantage it has already gained in sketching out space law.

Two other documents have been submitted to us -- the annual report of the World Meteorological Organization and that of the International Telecommunication Union. With respect to the first of these reports, my delegation notes with satisfaction that the first stage of the World Weather Watch has been carried out satisfactorily, thanks to a considerable organizational effort. The French Government attaches the utmost importance to the success of this vast international undertaking. With respect to the ITU report, I can only express my delegation's approval of this document and I would particularly draw attention to the references to our country.

Before I conclude, I should like briefly to refer to a matter which has already been touched upon by a number of members of our Committee, namely, the session of the Working Group which has been entrusted with the task of examining the desirability and form of eventually holding a scientific conference on the peaceful uses of space. Without going into this matter -- and because my delegation's position is already well known -- I shall confine myself to referring to the practical difficulties that would confront my delegation if this Group were to meet before the end of the twentieth session of the General Assembly.

These are the few comments which my delegation wished to make at this stage of our debate.

Sir Kenneth BAILEY (Australia): Speaking for the first time in this session, the delegation of Australia welcomes you, Mr. Chairman, to the office which already you are filling with the distinction that the Committee had long since come to expect from the Permanent Representative of your country to the United Nations. Australia joins also in welcoming to this session the distinguished Chairman of COSPAR, Dr. Roy, whose presence symbolizes for us the central and vital role that science and technology play in the exploration and use of outer space and to whose statement this morning the Committee listened with so much interest.

(Sir Kenneth Bailey, Australia)

The picture that emerges from the welcome shower of documents which have been circulated, and from the masterly surveys of recent developments in the exploration and use of outer space which have already been given to us by those who preceded me in the course of this general debate, is one of intense activity and exciting growth and expansion in man's knowledge of, and ability to move at will in, outer space. Surely, the eight short years that have elapsed since the first successful launching into orbit of an earth-satellite must rank as one of the most explosive periods in the whole history of the mind of man. It is the privilege -- rather an awesome privilege -- of this Committee to have some responsibility in co-ordinating, facilitating, and even, in a sort, providing a pattern for regulating, this greatest of contemporary dynamic processes.

Not by accident did the General Assembly give to the resolutions under which this Committee was established the title "International Co-operation in the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space". The emphasis on international co-operation was, of course, conscious and deliberate -- to set men's minds in a direction which would prevent outer space from becoming a new area of conflict. Australia, as one of the minor participants in the conduct of activities in outer space, has certainly found its role in the area of co-operation with other States rather than in any isolated individual achievement. It is our hope and belief that Australia's participation in international space projects has not only benefited our own space-scientific community, but has, in its own degree, promoted the peaceful exploration and use of outer space for the benefit of all mankind, to use the General Assembly's own phrase.

Australia cordially congratulates the two great space Powers -- the Soviet Union and the United States -- whose dramatic, and indeed almost unimaginable, achievements during the year since this Committee last met are now part of the authentic record of history. In the nature of things such exploits are not possible for middle and smaller States. But the representative of the United States made memorably clear when he spoke at our 37th meeting on Tuesday last how wide -- how enormously wide -- is the network of international

(Sir Kenneth Bailey, Australia)

co-operation in which his own country's space programme is being developed. Australia has been glad to take an ancillary part in the space programme of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. We have also carried out space activities in association with Britain, and we are members of the European Launcher Development Organization. We are sharing in the World Weather Watch organized by the World Meteorological Organization, and are members of the Global Commercial Communications Satellite System.

To elaborate in detail would be tedious. Members of the Committee will probably recall, however, from news items in Press and radio that Australia has for years managed satellite tracking stations for NASA in our own territory.

In connexion with the successful Mercury project, earlier, there were tracking stations at Island Lagoon in the south centre of the continent and at Muchea near Perth in Western Australia. Today, there are tracking stations at Carnarvon in Western Australia which assisted in the recent successful flight of Gemini V, and also tracking stations at Tidbinbilla near Canberra, the national capital, where the United States is developing other tracking stations to assist in its exploration work, and with which Australia is glad to be associated. NASA has freely taken Australian nationals into its establishments, and they have derived great benefit from familiarity with the technological and scientific achievements involved.

In collaboration with Britain, Australia has long been carrying out at Woomera a number of sounding rocket launchings in furtherance of experiments for scientific organizations in Britain, and there have been some modest firings of Australian rockets for scientific measurements. Altogether there were thirty-five sounding rocket firings in Australia in 1964. These will be of importance to the International Indian Ocean Expedition, as well as making a further contribution to the International Year of the Quiet Sun.

Australia -- as I mentioned -- is a foundation member of ELDO, together with six European partners. Under an agency agreement Australia not only provides launching sites, but is to carry out launchings for the organization. Several firings of the first stage of Europa I have already been made, and initial three-stage firings are to follow. Australia will shortly, therefore, join the small company of States which have placed earth-satellites in orbit.

(Sir Kenneth Bailey, Australia)

Australia's participation in the World Weather Watch, through the establishment of Melbourne as one of the World Weather Watch Centres, was mentioned yesterday by the representative of WMO. Australia was also an original signatory of the agreements for establishing interim arrangements for a Global Commercial Communications Satellite System, and is participating in the system established in pursuance of those agreements. We welcome, like others, the valuable reports which the Committee has received both from WMO and ITU.

The Australian delegation has listened with the utmost interest to the constructive suggestions that have been made for stimulating the activity of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee. We pay tribute, in this regard, particularly to the thorough and comprehensive analysis of the Sub-Committee's work which was presented for our consideration by the representative of Italy. Australia attaches high importance to the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, and hopes it will have every opportunity to play a constructive role in the exciting contemporary developments that are taking place.

The Australian delegation regrets that the Working Group on the proposed world conference on space activities could not meet as originally scheduled. The pressure of General Assembly business does not seem to us to permit an effective meeting of the Working Group at present, but we would look forward to a meeting of the Group early in the new year.

Turning briefly now -- briefly, because the report of the recent session of the Legal Sub-Committee comes before the Committee as an independent item on our agenda -- the delegation of Australia will say a brief word about the work of the Legal Sub-Committee. Our view is that, though the time available for the recent session was very brief, -- too brief, perhaps -- and though the report shows that no further texts were agreed upon, the time spent in the discussion of issues and principles will in the long run prove most useful and productive. In that regard, the delegation of Australia does not share or accept the views expressed by the representative of the Soviet Union in this Committee as to the attitude of other delegations.

(Sir Kenneth Bailey, Australia)

The space activities of small and middle States must almost inevitably be carried on through international organizations. It is, therefore, most important that the rules which the Legal Sub-Committee is developing for the regulation of space activities should make adequate provision for the rights and duties of international organizations carrying on space activities. The Australian delegation thinks that real progress was made, in this respect, at the recent session. The Legal Sub-Committee should, in our opinion, be enabled to press on with its work as soon as possible.

Mr. HASEGANU (Romania) (interpretation from French): My delegation would like to avail itself of this opportunity to convey its sincere congratulations to the delegations of the Soviet Union and of the United States for the remarkable achievements recorded this year through new accomplishments in the conquest of outer space and the enriching of our knowledge of the phenomena and laws governing outer space.

In reviewing these achievements, we should first like to mention the performance of the Soviet and United States astronauts who exited from their respective space vehicles and, in accordance with a pre-established schedule, carried out certain experiments in space. Equally remarkable and impressive were the space flights organized by the same two countries which made it possible to photograph the moon and the planet Mars. At the same time, we greet with particular satisfaction the ever-increasing contribution to research in outer space by a mounting number of countries and international organizations.

Among all the questions which relate to space activity, my delegation would like to emphasize the training of national cadres of specialists as a primary prerequisite for inducing all countries to participate in the exploration and exploitation, for peaceful purposes, of outer space.

In view of the fact that communication by satellite and space meteorology have become practical realities, these fields offer particular urgency from the standpoint to which I have referred: that all countries, irrespective of their level of development, can and should benefit from these scientific achievements.

Certain steps in this direction have already been taken. We refer to the information contained in document A/AC.105/28 entitled "Information on Facilities for Education and Training in Basic Subjects Related to the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space", as well as to the information given in the reports submitted to our Committee in general, and in particular that of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination contained in document A/AC.105/L.20 and the report of the World Meteorological Organization. We have also carefully considered that portion of our Secretary's statement which dealt with a plan submitted to specialized agencies for promotion of assistance and training of national cadres, and the description of the stage reached in the application of decisions of the Committee appearing in its report addressed to the nineteenth session of the General Assembly, which put forward the specific purposes to which our Committee is dedicated.

(Mr. Haseganu, Romania)

The conclusion to be drawn from these documents presents an encouraging picture of the vast possibilities inherent in this field and confirms my delegation's belief that henceforth we should devote particular attention -- within the framework of the terms of reference of our Committee -- to the question of the training of national cadres of specialists, and that this matter should be examined from the viewpoint of prospects opening up in the field of space activities. Bilateral and multilateral assistance, by those who have more experience in this field, would be most valuable indeed in attaining this goal.

In respect to the organization of international co-operation including the training of national cadres, a key role can be played by the convening of an international conference on outer space -- a conference we have supported previously. The reports of WMO and ITU have led us to envisage a fact which, in the not-too-distant future, will provide important direct benefits to the entire world: namely, the practical exploitation for peaceful purposes of communications and meteorological satellites. The report of WMO shows that the first phase of the World Weather Watch, a general study of the organization of the World Weather Watch to work out a preliminary plan and the detailed documentation on various aspects of the function of the present world system and the identification of inadequacies, has been completed successfully and that work is now proceeding on the second phase of the detailed examination of the organization of the World Weather Watch, taking into account the progress made in the technical field and examining issues such as the world observation system, the world telecommunications network and the world system for the processing of data. We have also noted the fact that the two world meteorological centres at Moscow and at Washington are operating in normal fashion.

The report of ITU is of particular interest in its review of the measures taken this year to pursue the study, from the technical viewpoint, of the utilization of space telecommunication and activities linked to the application of decisions taken under the Final Act of the Extraordinary Administrative Radio Conference on space communications held at Geneva in 1963. We have a deep appreciation of the work of these organizations, and would like to express our hope that the report which we submit to the General Assembly will reflect that appreciation.

(Mr. Haseganu, Romania)

Although technological and scientific progress recorded year by year reflects an accelerating pace, we cannot fail to note, on the other hand, that the legal regulation of problems caused by man's penetration of outer space has lagged somewhat. In these conditions it is urgently necessary to work out a binding legal instrument -- a convention or an international agreement -- that would codify the principles which should govern the space activities of States. The attainment of this necessary step would be likely to facilitate and hasten the process of the drafting of other legal instruments dealing with special questions. We should like to avail ourselves of this opportunity to restate our position of principle: namely, that these conventions should be universal. Universality is an inherent characteristic of the penetration of outer space, and any obstacle to the application of this principle could not fail to limit space activity itself.

The Legal Sub-Committee, which met recently under the chairmanship of Professor Lachs, worked to draft conventions on assistance to and return of astronauts and space vehicles in case of accident, and liability for damage caused by the launching of objects into outer space. We express our regret that the desired results were not achieved, but we consider none the less that the discussions held did serve to clarify a whole series of positions and even, in some cases, helped to bring about a closer meeting of minds.

Desiring to contribute to the organization of broad international co-operation in the study and use for peaceful purposes of outer space, my delegation is prepared to devote careful attention to, and to support, any initiative designed to achieve this goal.

We cannot conclude this brief statement without congratulating the Secretariat on the manner in which it has discharged the tasks entrusted to it as a result of decisions taken by the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: I have no more speakers on the list for this morning.

May I inform the members of the Committee that the general debate will be finished this afternoon and that, up to now, I have four speakers on the list -- the representatives of the United Arab Republic, Hungary, United Kingdom and Czechoslovakia. Does any other representative wish to speak this afternoon? If so, I shall be happy to add his name to the list.

It seems that no one wishes to be added. Therefore, under the circumstances, we shall finish the general debate this afternoon, as I have said, after hearing the statements of the four representatives just mentioned. We shall then proceed to the next item on our agenda, item 4, International sounding rocket facilities.

The meeting rose at 12 noon.