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COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SIXTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 5 July 1974, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. JANKOWITSCH

(Austria)

- Statement by the Chairman
- Report of the Legal Sub-Committee (continued)
- Organization of work

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STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN: I wish, on behalf of the members of the Committee, to pay a tribute to the Government of the USSR for the successful launching of the Soyuz 14 spacecraft and its successful docking with the Salyut Space Laboratory yesterday afternoon, as reported by the Soviet Agency, TASS. On this historic scientific accomplishment and feat, our congratulations go also to the brave Soviet cosmonauts Colonel Pavel Popovich and Lieutenant Colonel Yuri Artyukhin, who successfully manoeuvred the space vehicle into the successful docking, as well as to the Soviet scientists who contributed to this successful technological improvement.

REPORT OF THE LEGAL SUB-COMMITTEE (A/AC.105/133) (continued)

Mr. CHEBELEU (Romania) (interpretation from French): The delegation of Romania would like to make a few brief comments in connexion with the report of the Legal Sub-Committee, which draws up the balance sheet of fruitful activity in the field of law undertaken by the subsidiary bodies of our Committee.

Of course, the Sub-Committee must be congratulated in the first place on having concluded successfully the negotiations on the Draft Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space. We support the text of the convention as it appears in paragraph 54 of the Sub-Committee's report. This text is the fruit of very lengthy and patient efforts during which a constructive spirit and a spirit of compromise always prevailed. We think that our Committee should recommend that the General Assembly approve this text during its twenty-ninth session.

(Mr. Chebeleu, Romania)

In connexion with the fifth preambular paragraph, my delegation shares the view expressed two days ago by the delegation of Canada that it should not be incorporated in our recommendations. For although the moon treaty may be concluded quite soon -- that is certainly our hope -- such a treaty does not yet exist, and it would be quite difficult for us to explain to the other Member States of the United Nations that have not followed our work very closely the presence of such a provision in the text.

In any case, the Romanian delegation believes that adoption of the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space will signal a new step towards the codification of international law applicable to outer space. At the same time, that Convention will be an extremely useful instrument for the proper functioning of the conventions on liability for damages and the return of astronauts, as well as for the implementation of provisions on the demilitarization of space.

As for the draft Treaty Relating to the Moon, we are pleased with the progress made so far in drafting the text. To be sure, as we have already indicated, we would have hoped that our Committee might be able to submit a draft treaty to the General Assembly this year.

We continue to believe that final solutions to the questions still in dispute can be found if we commit ourselves to unremitting efforts to seek compromise formulas. The exchanges of view that took place in Working Group I during this year's session of the Sub-Committee were positive, in our view, and should be pursued. The text contained in the working paper submitted by the Rumanian delegation remains a basis upon which, in our opinion, a compromise can be reached.

With regard to the problem of the natural resources of the moon, in our view the treaty would gain a great deal in importance and significance if it contained such a clause. We also believe that one possibility would be to include in the treaty a more general formulation which would make it possible for us at the appropriate time -- when the problem is posed specifically -- to draft provisions for an international regime governing the exploitation of these resources as the common heritage of all mankind.

(Mr. Chebeleu, Romania)

In view of the importance which many members of the Committee attach to this treaty -- and the just-concluded general debate attests to that fact -- we believe that the Committee should give a special directive to the Legal Sub-Committee to make further determined efforts to conclude the moon treaty at its next session. It would be useful for that directive to contain some guidelines dealing with the substance of the problems, and we are thinking particularly of the question of natural resources, on the lines I have just indicated.

I turn now to the two other questions taken up by the Legal Sub-Committee: direct broadcasting by satellites and remote sensing of the earth by satellites.

It has become obvious that the problems posed by these two kinds of activity are quite different from those raised by the exploration and exploitation of outer space in general. The latter are governed by the outer space Treaty, but that Treaty is manifestly insufficient when it comes to the activities I have just mentioned.

That is why we believe it necessary to draft separate international instruments, with specific standards to govern direct broadcasting and remote sensing, particularly in view of the development and ever-wider use of these two techniques that may be expected in the very near future. We have expressed, both in the Legal Sub-Committee and in the appropriate Working Groups, our views on the principles involved and on the rights and duties of States that should be incorporated in such instruments. I shall therefore not repeat them now.

None the less, we should like to emphasize that in our opinion the goal of codifying standards governing direct broadcasting by satellites should be the adoption of a legally binding international instrument. The drafting of a declaration or of certain 'principles' -- and now I must say that the drafting group which met during the session of the sub-committee did very useful work -- can be but a first step towards the adoption of a comprehensive international convention on that subject.

(Mr. Chebeleu, Romania)

Consequently, we believe that our Committee should recommend -- as the Sub-Committee itself suggests in paragraph 22 -- that the study of the juridical problems posed by direct broadcasting by satellites should be continued on a priority basis.

With reference to remote sensing: It is clear today that this activity raises a number of political and legal problems the importance of which has not escaped this Committee.

The Romanian delegation is among those that believe it necessary to establish a firm legal framework for remote sensing activities. The experiments which have been successfully carried out so far and present knowledge on the use and possibilities of this technique fully warrant urgent identification of the international implications of remote sensing of the earth. As soon as possible, in an appropriate international instrument, the rights and obligations of States should be defined -- both those States which launch remote sensing satellites and receive data therefrom and those whose territory is observed -- on the basis of the principle, unanimously recognized in contemporary international law, of the sovereignty of States over their territory and particularly over their natural resources and over information obtained in regard thereto. The drafts submitted to the Sub-Committee by Argentina and Brazil, as well as the document jointly submitted by the Soviet Union and France, contain all the useful elements for a future international instrument on the subject.

(Mr. Chebeleu, Romania)

However, we believe that it is appropriate to emphasize once again that the conclusion of the study on legal problems in connexion with remote sensing should not be a condition, and even less a justification, for delaying the organization of international co-operation in this field. Quite to the contrary, the two processes should go hand in hand and strengthen one another. It would be quite useful for the Committee to so state in its report when it recommends to the Legal Sub-Committee that it pursue the study of the legal implications of remote sensing.

What we have just said -- which to a great extent coincides with views expressed by many other delegations -- indicates that next year's session of the Legal Sub-Committee will be an extremely full one with three questions having high priority: the Draft Treaty Relating to the Moon, direct broadcasting and remote sensing.

However, we do feel that our Committee should recommend to the Legal Sub-Committee that it attempt to deal thoroughly also with some other questions which in our view are equally important, such as those relating to the definition of outer space.

In conclusion, on the question of the meeting place of future sessions of the Legal Sub-Committee raised in its report, the Romanian delegation would like to say that it would favour a decision that all the sessions of the Legal Sub-Committee be held henceforth in Geneva.

Mr. PIRADOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Mr. Chairman, first of all, allow me to express my sincere thanks to you and to those delegations which have congratulated the Soviet delegation on the launching of the spacecraft Soyuz and on its successful docking with the space laboratory Salyut. This launching by Soviet scientists, technicians and astronauts, thanks to whose efforts this outstanding feat was carried out, has been highly lauded. We thank you most kindly for your congratulations and we shall transmit them to the Soviet Union.

In connexion with the Committee's discussion of the Draft Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space for the purpose of its

(Mr. Piradov, USSR)

final approval and submission to the General Assembly, our delegation wishes to offer a small comment concerning its own attitude towards this draft as a whole. We consider the draft as an undoubted success in the work of this Committee and its Legal Sub-Committee -- and most delegations have also stated this -- and we feel that it could be submitted to the General Assembly for adoption by it. However, we would not like to see a situation in which a hasty completion of the work on one of the two priority agenda items of the Legal Sub-Committee would lead to a diminution in the attention devoted to the second priority item, namely the Draft Treaty Relating to the Moon.

Our delegation has already stated that, acting in a spirit of mutual understanding and motivated by a desire to achieve constructive results, we shall not insist on having the Draft Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space submitted to the General Assembly at the very same time as the Draft Treaty Relating to the Moon. On the basis of the foregoing, we shall not object to the proposal calling for deletion from the Draft Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space of the fifth paragraph of the preamble, in which mention is made of the Draft Treaty Relating to the Moon.

However, we request that the report of this session should contain reference to the fact that the Soviet delegation, as well as many other delegations, continues to consider the preparation of the Draft Treaty Relating to the Moon to be the most important task of the Legal Sub-Committee. We would also request that the report note that the Soviet delegation agrees to the deletion from the Draft Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space of a reference to the Draft Treaty Relating to the Moon, solely on the understanding that work on the latter draft should be completed at the earliest possible time, in accordance with the decision that was taken by the Committee in 1971 and which, as will be recalled, has been frequently confirmed and approved by the General Assembly.

May I be permitted, also, to comment on a few organizational matters in view of the fact that very little time remains for a practical solution to these problems. On Wednesday afternoon, a document was circulated containing

(Mr. Piradov, USSR)

a proposal dealing with dates and places for the meetings of our Committee and its Sub-Committees in 1975. Nobody, I am sure, will be surprised if I state that we are by no means satisfied with that document.

First of all, it contains no specific reference to our own proposal concerning the holding of the next session of the Legal Sub-Committee in Geneva. I referred to this in my first statement made at the time our discussion began. We do insist that we be supplied with the possible dates for convening the Sub-Committee's session in Geneva, bearing in mind our discussion of this matter with you, Mr. Chairman, and with our colleagues in the Committee. If an official inquiry has to be sent to Geneva for that purpose, we would request the Secretariat to do this without delay. Secondly, the document contains no references to the possibility of holding the Committee's session at the end of August and the beginning of September, the date on which it had been held up to 1973. We also request that we be informed of the possibility or impossibility of doing this. We consider this to be a very important matter which merits all due attention.

(Mr. Piradov, USSR)

I have still another proposal of an organizational nature. Many Committees and other subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly are preparing and appending to their reports on their work various draft resolutions for the General Assembly dealing with matters which fall within the purview of those Committees and other bodies. In the view of the Soviet delegation it would be useful if our Committee also were to include in its report to the Assembly a draft resolution on items concerning international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space. This proposal, which, together with other decisions of our Committee, could be agreed upon among delegations, would certainly facilitate discussion of these items at the Assembly session and would also supply evidence of the responsible attitude of our Committee towards the results of its work. This attitude towards our work would be shown by both the lawyers and the non-legal experts of this Committee.

We, of course, are ready to hold an exchange of views with other interested delegations as regards both these proposals and the proposals we made in our first statement.

Mr. CHRISTIANI (Austria): In commenting in more detail on the legal questions before the Committee at this time, I should like to confine my remarks largely to the areas of direct television broadcasting by satellite and remote sensing, since there seems little one could usefully add to the remarks that have already been made by other delegations on the Draft Convention on Registration as well as on the Draft Treaty Relating to the Moon.

My delegation has already had the opportunity to express its satisfaction on the completion of the Draft Convention on Registration. I wish to add here that we agree to the proposal, made by the representative of Canada, to delete the fifth paragraph of the preamble, and we have just heard from the representative of the Soviet Union that his delegation too would be agreeable to that deletion. We express our gratitude to him for this spirit of co-operation.

As far as the Draft Treaty Relating to the Moon is concerned, efforts have been made in informal talks during this session to narrow the differences of opinion, but, probably to no one's surprise, those efforts have not been successful, as it seems because of the strongly held view of some delegations that no solution is possible at the present time.

(Mr. Christiani, Austria)

As far as the legal implications of space communications -- in particular, direct television broadcasting -- are concerned, I should like here to make a few comments on the substance of the four principles discussed in the Legal Sub-Committee. My delegation will have additional and more general remarks to make on Monday, when the report of the Working Group on Direct Television Broadcasting itself will come up for discussion. I might add that it is to be understood that the following remarks are preliminary in nature.

As far as the principle of applicability of international law is concerned, my delegation has already stated in the Working Group on Direct Television Broadcasting that activities in this field which are international in nature should be carried out in accordance with generally recognized rules of international law. We are of the opinion that there are quite a few existing legal instruments of a binding character which are applicable, and my delegation is therefore among the sponsors of a list of such instruments to be found in annex III (b) of the Legal Sub-Committee's report. As to the actual text of that principle, we should like to see it drafted in such a way that States shall ensure that activities in the field of international direct television broadcasting, are conducted in accordance with generally recognized rules, and so on, with due regard to the principles of international law contained in the Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation Among States and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

By way of explanation I might add that the reference to international direct television broadcasting seems more appropriate than using the notion of having international effect, because it appears that that could be interpreted as also relating to either unintentional or unavoidable spill over, which, as we all know, is an altogether different question and a problem which at the present time is not susceptible to easy solution.

As far as rights and benefits are concerned, my delegation would favour deletion of all expressions within brackets, for the following reasons.

Using the term "under its supervision" seems superfluous when we base ourselves on the general principle of State responsibility, which in a general way seems to be beyond dispute. The word "entitled" seems more in keeping

(Mr. Christiani, Austria)

with the principle of equality of all States. Express mention of the kind of benefits seems to categorize and possibly to restrict those benefits, and therefore to us it seems advisable not to mention them expressly.

As to the principle of international co-operation, my delegation has repeatedly stressed in the Working Group on Direct Broadcast Satellites the great importance it attaches to the maximum possible extension and use of international co-operation as the corner-stone for direct television broadcasting. While my delegation has made it clear that it shares the view that direct television broadcasting by satellite to any foreign State shall be conducted with the consent of that State, it nevertheless is of the opinion that that principle should be seen together with the principle of participation as envisaged in the Canadian-Swedish set of principles and should not necessarily form part of a principle on international co-operation.

As to State responsibility, my delegation has already made it clear in the Working Group that the principle of international State responsibility is valid whether such activities are carried out by governmental agencies or by non-governmental entities. We should therefore like to see the principle read as follows.

"States shall bear international responsibility for direct television broadcasting by means of artificial earth satellites, whether such activities are carried on by governmental agencies or by non-governmental entities, and for ensuring that such broadcasting is conducted in conformity with these principles."

It is well known that that responds to the Canadian-Swedish text.

(Mr. Christiani, Austria)

As far as the regulation of programme content is concerned --- and we find this in brackets as the third paragraph --- my delegation has, like many other delegations, stated that it cannot accept such a principle in general and, moreover, finds it superfluous in the light of the principle of prior consent. We therefore find it difficult to subscribe to any international responsibility, or even liability, of States as an outflow of such a concept.

As far as the last principle --- the peaceful settlement of disputes --- is concerned, we agree with the text of the first paragraph.

I should like to conclude by making a few remarks on the legal implications of remote sensing. Basically, we are of the opinion that this new technology holds tremendous prospects and potential which should be made available for the benefit of all mankind and should especially be applied to the greatest extent possible to the manifold problems of development. Therefore, the maximum possible use of this technology and an extensive international co-operation seem to us to be essential. What follows is that any international legislation --- and I might add here that we are in principle in favour of and recognize the need to establish basic principles to form the basis for the conduct of States in this respect --- should, in our view, to the minimum extent possible attempt to restrict the potential inherent in the application of remote sensing.

While certainly recognizing the inherent right of States to protect their natural resources, nevertheless a provision according to which any such activities are dependent upon the consent of the State in question seems to my delegation to go beyond the necessary and desirable regulation in this respect. In this respect, I think what we in the United Nations should be concerned with is not restricting the use of the technology but, rather, ensuring that through meaningful and extensive international co-operation, international organizational arrangements and machinery, perhaps, a device is found in order to minimize the possibilities of misuse of remote sensing to the detriment of any State.

As I said at the beginning of my brief remarks, my delegation will come back to this particular subject in a broader sense when we discuss the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee.

Mr. KLEINPETER (German Democratic Republic): It was with pleasure that we heard of the successful launching of Soyuz 14 and the docking with Salut 3. Allow me to transmit to the delegation of the USSR the most cordial congratulations on the occasion of this manned space experiment.

It is with satisfaction that the delegation of the German Democratic Republic takes note of the report of the Legal Sub-Committee. We would therefore like to thank once again the members of the Legal Sub-Committee for the work accomplished.

The activities carried through by the Legal Sub-Committee prove that solutions in the further codification of the law relating to outer space are possible. This is shown in particular by the completion of the Draft Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space, which we consider to be another useful step in developing the law relating to outer space.

The German Democratic Republic had expected that similar results could be achieved also in working out the Treaty Relating to the Moon and that both treaties could be submitted to the General Assembly for adoption; but it appears that in practice that was not possible. Nevertheless, the German Democratic Republic agrees that the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space should be transmitted to the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly for adoption.

So far as the fifth paragraph of the preamble is concerned, the delegation of the German Democratic Republic does not object to its being removed from the Convention, as some delegations have suggested. In view of the real situation, that paragraph should not further delay the final approval of the Convention in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

Last Wednesday we set forth the fundamental view of the German Democratic Republic with regard to the completion of the Treaty Relating to the Moon. As the informal talks on Wednesday have shown, the question of the administration and exploitation of moon resources has become the crucial point for the completion of that Treaty. We repeat once again:

(Mr. Kleinpeter, German Democratic Republic)

"The German Democratic Republic therefore holds the view that at present there is no practical and therefore no international necessity to concentrate the deliberations on the elaboration of an international régime of law concerning the administration and exploitation of moon resources." (134th meeting, p. 7)

In view of the importance of the Treaty Relating to the Moon, the German Democratic Republic advocates that the Legal Sub-Committee should, at one of its forthcoming sessions, deal particularly with that Treaty.

With reference to the five principles, Working Group III of the Legal Sub-Committee succeeded in elaborating the problem of direct satellite television. This is a useful step, but the brackets in the paragraphs indicate that there are still differences. Considering the fast technical and technological evolution in this field, legal skeleton solutions will be imperative. Therefore, the German Democratic Republic holds that this item of the agenda also has to be dealt with by the Legal Sub-Committee with priority.

With regard to legal norms for remote sensing of the earth by satellites, my delegation has already taken a position by approving the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee (A/AC.105/131) in its statement given during the general debate. The German Democratic Republic proceeds from the expectation that, after completion of the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space, the Legal Sub-Committee will be concentrating on -- in addition to problems already mentioned -- the elaboration of legal norms for remote sensing of natural resources of the earth by satellites. We are of the opinion that the priority of this question can no longer be denied.

The German Democratic Republic agrees with the report of the Legal Sub-Committee (A/AC.105/133). As I have said before, this report does not entirely come up to the expectations the German Democratic Republic had of the work of the Legal Sub-Committee, but we can say with a clear conscience that important strides have been made.

(Mr. Kleinpeter, German Democratic Republic)

As far as the organization of the Legal Sub-Committee's future work is concerned, the delegation of the German Democratic Republic supports the proposal of the Soviet Union to hold a further session of the Legal Sub-Committee at Geneva and to deal with the open problems first of all exclusively in the Sub-Committee, and not in the Working Groups.

Mr. SUZUKI (Japan): The last session of the Legal Sub-Committee was held only a month ago. At that time my delegation had ample opportunities to expound its position on most of the items on the agenda of that session. And then, on 2 July, during the general debate at the current session, the leader of my delegation had the opportunity to express the views of the Government of Japan on some of the important points contained in the report of the last session of the Legal Sub-Committee.

In order to avoid unnecessary repetition, and to save the precious time of the Committee, I shall confine myself to making brief comments on a few points which have not been taken up so far by my delegation.

With regard to the draft moon treaty, we do hope for the earliest possible completion of our work. We are firmly convinced that the Committee and its subsidiary bodies should continue as in the past to explore all available means to resolve the remaining questions related to this treaty in the nearest possible future. When the representative of the Soviet Union made a suggestion on 1 July to set up a working group at the current session to resolve the remaining questions related to the draft moon treaty, my delegation did not express any immediate reaction because, in spite of our recent experience at the Legal Sub-Committee, we thought, for the foregoing reasons, that the Committee should not overlook any possibility, however tiny, of making progress in our work to finalize the draft moon treaty. However, the result of the informal consultations on 3 July and the statements we heard during the general debate seem to indicate that the time is not quite ripe yet for this kind of exercise. If this assessment of ours is correct, the best way for the Committee to proceed is, in our view, to give all delegations some time for reflection on this question and take it up again at the next session of the Legal Sub-Committee, at least with an equal degree of priority as that given to direct broadcast satellites and remote sensing by satellites.

As for the draft registration convention, my delegation wishes merely to say that we fully share the views set forth by the representative of Canada, supported by the representative of France, on 3 July. I believe that the Committee and the Legal Sub-Committee have exerted their best efforts to present to the General Assembly the draft registration convention and the draft moon treaty together. However, the delay in the finalization of the draft moon treaty should in no way block the adoption of the already completed draft registration convention at the

(Mr. Suzuki, Japan)

twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly. We therefore consider that the draft registration convention should be presented to the forthcoming session of the General Assembly without its fifth preambular paragraph, which should be deleted.

We therefore wish to join the representative of Austria in expressing our deep gratitude to the representative of the Soviet Union for his spirit of co-operation.

With regard to the elaboration of principles on direct broadcast by satellites, we share the view set forth by the representative of the United Kingdom last Wednesday that there is a long way to go before any agreement can be reached. We therefore believe that the Legal Sub-Committee should continue consideration of this question as a priority item at its next session. In proceeding with the elaboration of the principles on direct broadcast by satellites, however, the Legal Sub-Committee, in our view, should always bear in mind the possibility of future technological development which might bring about a solution to some of the most difficult questions, such as the one related to spill-over.

As regards the venue of the future sessions of the Legal Sub-Committee, I can perhaps say that, speaking only from the point of view of our own convenience, we would have preferred New York as the venue of all those future sessions. However, the present agreed system of rotation between New York and Geneva does not cause any major difficulty for my delegation. Although we do not have strong views on the venue of future sessions of the Legal Sub-Committee, if the proposal to hold all future sessions of that Sub-Committee in Geneva is motivated by the need to lower the costs -- which I understand is the case here -- we believe that that question should be considered in its correct perspective. In this connexion I am wondering whether the Committee might not wish to go a step further in this direction and explore means to lower more drastically the costs of future meetings by, for example, fixing the dates of annual sessions of the two Sub-Committees and the parent Committee. I should like to hear from the Secretary whatever figures or rough idea he might have as to how far the costs can be lowered by fixing the dates of these annual sessions, because the result could have an important bearing when we discuss at a later stage the question of budgetary appropriations for the United Nations Programme on Space Applications.

The CHAIRMAN: I am sure that the Committee Secretary has taken careful note of the views and suggestions expressed by the representative of Japan on the venue of the future sessions of the Legal Sub-Committee, as well as of the views and suggestions previously expressed by the delegation of the Soviet Union, and that at a later stage he will provide the Committee with all the relevant data.

Mr. von KYAW (Federal Republic of Germany): I think that more or less everything has already been said on the draft Convention on Registration and the Treaty Relating to the Moon. We are of course happy that with the deletion of the fifth preambular paragraph we can now go ahead and recommend the adoption of the draft Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space.

As regards the moon treaty, it has been pointed out that the main, primary difference of opinion relates to article X and that the deletion of this provision could enable us to make progress at this moment. On the other hand, we fully understand the objections of those who attach importance to a regulation concerning the question of natural resources. We also understand that there is always the danger of creating a precedent. So I think we should all agree -- and my delegation certainly can so agree -- to this matter being discussed again with priority at the next session of the Legal Sub-Committee.

With regard to remote sensing, the Sub-Committee has been unable to give full consideration to the various proposals. I think that it would therefore not be correct -- at least at this moment -- to make in-depth comments. We agree that this question too should be given priority at the next session.

(Mr. Von Kyaw, Federal Republic of Germany)

Five general principles concerning direct broadcast satellites have been elaborated, at least tentatively and with many brackets around them. Here again, further study will be necessary, but I could perhaps now make a few general and preliminary comments.

In this context, we believe in the possibility of establishing basic principles or guidelines ensuring international co-operation and the participation of all interested countries in this field. We believe that the principles to be elaborated should and must be sufficiently flexible not to stand in the way of the full use of this new and promising technology in the future.

These principles should, in our opinion, be based on a full understanding not only of the legal and political but also of the technical implications. So far, the approach taken has sometimes tended to neglect certain technical aspects which may not yet have matured sufficiently. For us, the notion of prior consent as such is hardly acceptable, in its pure and simple form at least. National sovereignty constitutes only one aspect, important as it may be, among others. The principles of free access to information and of free cultural interchange is to us of equal importance.

Not the mere use but only the misuse of direct broadcast by satellites should be made the point of departure of any draft on the subject. In view of the complexities of the issue, we believe that for global application only rather general guidelines can be elaborated. As we see it, the key to any solution of the manifold problems lies in regionalism, in regional co-operation and participation, allowing for solutions adapted to the specific conditions of each region.

Finally, let me comment briefly on the future sessions of the Sub-Committees. We tend to support the principle of rotation, since it is our understanding of the paper submitted by the Secretariat in annex V to the report that for the time being, at least, that will not involve any substantial cost increases. For that and many other reasons, we consider that rotation would be in this respect the best way of handling future sessions of the Sub-Committees.

Mr. SKALA (Sweden): I have only a procedural question. At our afternoon meeting on Wednesday, the United States delegation asked certain questions with regard to the meeting schedule for next year, and further questions have been asked today by the delegation of the Soviet Union. May I just ask the Secretariat when we might have further information on available dates and places for meetings. If we could have it this afternoon, it would be very helpful for our future planning.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the Committee Secretary to answer the question of the representative of Sweden.

Mr. ROBINSON (Secretary of the Committee): We have already made inquiries of the Department of Conference Services with respect to the availability of dates in Geneva as well as the availability of dates for meetings of the main Committee in August and September. We hope to have those dates this afternoon but, if not, we will certainly have them on Monday.

Mr. RAPIN (France) (interpretation from French): As the representative of a country that is a co-sponsor of the Draft Convention on Registration, I should like to join other representatives who have spoken this morning in thanking the Soviet Union delegation for the spirit of co-operation it has demonstrated; we deeply appreciate it.

With regard to the conditions set by the Soviet delegation, my delegation would have no difficulty in accepting them, because we feel that they fully reflect the substance of our work so far.

Mr. VELLODI (India): Mr. Chairman, I should like to put a question, through you, to the Secretariat. On the subject of the venue of the meetings of the Legal Sub-Committee -- and for that matter, one might discuss the venues of the meetings of our other bodies as well -- my own delegation takes the view that the decision must rest primarily on financial considerations. If the holding of meetings in Geneva would pose additional financial implications, my delegation would have some difficulty accepting any change in the existing

(Mr. Vellodi, India)

pattern. In this connexion, the question I should like to put through you, Mr. Chairman, to the Secretariat is this: Would any savings which might result either from a change in venue of the meetings of the subordinate organs or from doing away with summary record coverage -- which has been referred to in annex V to the Legal Sub-Committee's report -- be available, for example, to the United Nations Programme on Space Applications?

I ask that question because I do realize the budgetary problems and it seems to me that this is something worth considering. You are aware of my delegation's strong views with regard to the United Nations Programme on Space Applications. We have had serious difficulties in the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, not only this year but last year, in trying to get some additions, however nominal, to that Programme; and while this is a point to which my delegation will refer when we take up the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, I should like to ask you, Mr. Chairman, and the Secretariat to look into this matter and give us a reply as soon as possible.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. ROBINSON (Secretary of the Committee): We will take this matter up with the Controller and answer the question put by the representative of India as soon as possible.

The CHAIRMAN: As no other representative wishes to speak, I assume that the Committee has concluded its consideration of agenda item 4 (a).

If I hear no objection I shall take it that, in accordance with the proposal concerning the draft Convention on Registration made by the representative of Canada and supported by a number of other representatives, and in the light of the agreement expressed by the representative of the Soviet Union to the deletion of the fifth paragraph of the preamble, the Committee decides to transmit that draft Convention, as amended, to the General Assembly.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: I call now on the representative of the Chairman of the Legal Sub-Committee, who wishes to make a brief statement.

Mr. TUERK (Representative of the Chairman of the Legal Sub-Committee). In taking the floor once more, I should like to express my gratitude for having had the privilege to be present during the deliberations of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on the report of its Legal Sub-Committee, and, in particular, the Draft Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space.

I should like also to thank those delegations which have during recent days made kind remarks on the report which I had the pleasure to deliver on behalf of the Chairman of the Legal Sub-Committee, His Excellency Ambassador Wyzner.

As I will have to return to Caracas shortly in order to take part in the proceedings of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, I should like also to take this opportunity to bid farewell to the members of this Committee, many of whom are colleagues and friends from the Legal Sub-Committee.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: That concludes the Committee's discussion of agenda item 4(a), consideration of the report of the Legal Sub-Committee. We had originally reserved two meetings for it today, but in the circumstances we are in a position to make an earlier start on the discussion of the next item, which, in accordance with the programme of work adopted earlier in the session, is item 4(c), the report of the Working Group on Direct Broadcast Satellites. We could begin the discussion of that item now, but I have a feeling that delegations might wish to have further time to prepare themselves, and that we could with some benefit adjourn at this stage and take it up at this afternoon's meeting.

I would suggest, however, that if we decide to do that we should bear in mind that if the consideration of item 4(c) is completed this afternoon and time

(The Chairman)

is still available we could immediately take up item 4(b), the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee, so as to gain time.

Since I hear no objection, I take it that the Committee agrees to adopt the course I have just proposed.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.