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Chairman: Mr. RAMPHUL (Mauritius)
Rapporteur: Mr. SANTISO-GALVEZ (Guatemala)

- International co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space: report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space /28/ (continued)
- Preparation of an international treaty concerning the Moon: report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space /29/ (continued)
- Preparation of an international convention on principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting /31/ (continued)

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AGENDA ITEMS 28, 29 AND 37 (continued)

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (A/8720; A/C.1/L.606)

PREPARATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL TREATY CONCERNING THE MOON: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE (A/8720)

PREPARATION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE USE BY STATES OF ARTIFICIAL EARTH SATELLITES FOR DIRECT TELEVISION BROADCASTING (A/8771; A/C.1/L.605)

The CHAIRMAN: I wish to draw the attention of members of the Committee to the draft resolution submitted by the delegations of Australia, Indonesia, Japan, Madagascar, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand, relating to item 28, which is contained in document A/C.1/L.606.

The Committee will now continue the general debate on the outer space items.

Mr. KOMIVES (Hungary): Under rule 112 I dispense with congratulations. However I cannot hide our satisfaction over the Committee's selection of our Bureau. I would like to offer you, Mr. Chairman, as well as the members of the Bureau our very best wishes and to assure you all of our readiness to co-operate.

The delegation of Hungary takes note with satisfaction of the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which gives us a true picture of the activities of the Committee. We would also like to thank and congratulate Ambassador Jankowitsch of Austria, Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, for the lucid and eloquent presentation of the Committee's report. Our congratulations go also to the Chairmen of the two subcommittees of the Outer Space Committee, respectively.

During the past 10 years of its existence the Committee has done very useful and commendable work, especially in laying the ground for the legal basis of space activities. Suffice it to refer here only to the 1966 Outer Space Treaty, to the 1968 Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts and to the Liability Convention that entered into force on 1 September 1972.

(Mr. Komives, Hungary)

It is reflected in the report of the Committee that during the course of this year considerable progress has been made regarding an international treaty concerning the moon, the idea of which had been submitted by the delegation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics a year ago. Though the Committee was not in a position fully to complete the draft treaty, nevertheless the agreement concerning the preamble and the formulation of 21 articles of the draft gives rise to hopes that it will be completed in the near future.

As far as the unresolved issues of the draft treaty are concerned, my delegation continues to believe that the scope of the treaty should be confined to the moon only. I do not want to be repetitious -- the arguments in favour of this position have already been put forward amply in the Committee.

As for the natural resources of the moon, we feel that at this stage of exploration -- when too little is known both of the technological possibilities and of the economic uses of these resources -- it would be too early to provide for a legal régime for the resources of the moon.

To sum up this portion of my statement, I merely should like to add that it is our conviction that the treaty will be of fundamental importance to the expansion of further co-operation among States concerning the moon, as well as for the further development of space law.

Turning now to the next item on our agenda, "Preparation of an international convention on principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting" my delegation welcomes this new Soviet initiative and supports it wholeheartedly for it considers the proposal to be a highly timely and necessary move. It is timely because direct television broadcasting via satellite represents a new, practical form of space technology; and necessary, because this form of space activity, like many others, has to be regulated in order to ensure that it will only be used in the best interest of mankind.

We are well aware of the great possibilities direct television broadcasting has and may have in future from the point of view of education, culture and the promotion of better understanding among people. At the same time the possibilities offered by this form of space technology might be misused, as is expounded so eloquently in the letter of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics addressed to the Secretary-General, contained in document A/8771, and in the statement of the permanent representative of that country delivered to us last week.

Mr. Komives, Hungary)

In this situation the United Nations cannot remain idle. In our opinion the United Nations must take the necessary actions in order to avoid, and to exclude, the possibilities of misusing direct television broadcasting through satellites. In doing so the United Nations would contribute to expanding the scope of activities which are aimed at the strengthening of peace and security, better understanding and international co-operation.

Our delegation sincerely hopes that just as our common responsibility and foresight saved outer space from military bases and weapons of any kind, it will again save it from being used for broadcasts which are detrimental to the maintenance of international peace and security, to friendly relations among States and to the best interests of mankind.

In connexion with this I should like to remind representatives to the declaration of legal principles governing the activities of states in the exploration and use of outer space. In that declaration reference is made to General Assembly resolution 110 (II), which condemns propaganda:

"... designed or likely to provoke or encourage any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression;" (General Assembly resolution 110 (II))

and the declaration considers that the aforementioned resolution is applicable to outer space.

Let us not repeat the same practice in outer space which some follow here on earth. Let us exclude, from the very beginning, the possibility of space becoming a means for transmitting misinformation, incitement, hatred, interference in the domestic affairs of any State, as it happens unfortunately in the case of some radio stations here on earth, one of the examples being the infamous Radio Free Europe.

States having respect for the sovereignty of others, which respect the principles of non-interference in the domestic affairs of others and which stand for equality, co-operation and mutual benefit, do not have to be afraid of the convention as proposed by the delegation of the Soviet Union.

(Mr. Komives, Hungary)

These are the considerations my delegation wishes to share with members of this Committee. We trust that all members agree with us that this new, practical application of space technology and direct television broadcasting should only be used in accordance with the Charter and in the best interests of mankind. We sincerely hope that our deliberations in this Committee will result in a resolution to this effect. The Hungarian delegation whole-heartedly supports the draft resolution submitted by the Soviet Union in document A/C.1/L.605.

Mr. ROMULO (Philippines): I take pleasure in associating my delegation with the well-deserved commendations made by previous speakers of the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, under the chairmanship first of our esteemed Secretary-General, Dr. Kurt Waldheim and afterwards of his worthy successor the permanent representative of Austria, Ambassador Peter Jankowitsch.

The Outer Space Committee may indeed be proud of its accomplishments during the past year. Its Legal Sub-Committee has almost completed its consideration of the draft treaty consisting of the preamble and 21 articles, relating to international co-operation with respect to the moon.

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

Closer down to earth, and therefore of greater immediate significance to us earthlings, is the fact that the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee while recognizing that scientific matters are an inherently important part of its work, believes that it should increasingly be concerned with the practical applications of space technology, particularly as they apply to the national development of the poor countries.

It was only two years ago that the United Nations programme to promote international co-operation on the applications of space technology was initiated with the appointment by the Secretary-General of the first United Nations Expert on Space Applications, Professor Ricciardi of Argentina, who has done a commendable job in developing the programme of space applications into a meaningful one. He has visited a number of countries in Africa and in Asia, including the Philippines, in order to assess the prospects of space applications in those countries relevant to their developmental needs. He promoted the holding of panels in various parts of the world in relation to space applications and helped in the creation of fellowships and scholarships for studies on outer space which would be of benefit mainly to the developing countries. He has left a useful legacy to his successor.

I would also commend recent significant achievements in space technology, particularly that of the United States in the launching of the first Earth Resources Technology Satellite (ERTS-1) and the Soviet Union's success in returning to earth through automation a capsule of the Soviet Station Luna-20 bringing back lunar samples. These achievements portend continuing progress in space technology which, if correctly used, could redound to the benefit of all mankind. Credit must, therefore, be given to the United States and the Soviet Union.

These brief comments on the work of the Outer Space Committee underline my delegation's continuing support of the Committee. Much has already been achieved through international co-operation in such fields as communication satellites and meteorological satellites, and we anticipate equally valuable accomplishments in the field of remote sensing of the earth's resources, in the condition of vital aspects of the human environment and in direct

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

television broadcast by satellites ... always bearing in mind that science and technology should be the handmaidens of human well-being and that scientific and technological progress should be used to promote the aims of the United Nations Charter.

In connexion with the preparation of an international convention on principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting, my delegation would at this stage give its support to the recommendation of the Outer Space Committee that the Working Group on Direct Broadcast Satellites be reconvened next year. Furthermore, it is our hope that in the forthcoming General Conference of UNESCO the draft declaration of guiding principles on the use of satellite broadcasting for the free flow of information, the spread of education and greater cultural exchange will be adopted.

I should like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation for the kind references which my friend from Saudi Arabia, Ambassador Baroodi, a veteran in the United Nations, made in his statement last Friday to the Philippine initiative and my own modest contribution to the efforts of the United Nations to promote freedom of information. It is our earnest hope that these efforts will continue and eventually achieve success. The Philippines also shares the hope that the revolutionary advances in the techniques for mass communications will be put to more constructive uses. We have witnessed during the past decade almost unimaginable advances in the capacity of technologically advanced nations in the field of instant communications, particularly in the case of world-wide live telecasts with the aid of space communications satellites. It should be of profound concern to the United Nations that such great progress in international communications should be accompanied by a comparable enhancement of international understanding.

My delegation endorses the recommendation made by the Outer Space Committee to bring to the attention of the General Assembly the Plan of Action prepared by the Executive Committee Panel of Experts on Tropical Cyclones of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). This Plan of Action, contained in document A/AC.105/105, was in response to General Assembly resolution 2733 D (XXV), which recommended to WMO that it

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"take, if necessary, appropriate action to mobilize capable scientists, technologists and other pertinent resources from any or all nations towards obtaining basic meteorological data and discovering ways and means to mitigate the harmful effects of these storms and remove or minimize their destructive potentials."

It may be recalled that the Philippine delegation, together with other like-minded delegations, took the initiative for the approval of this resolution, which was adopted unanimously by this Committee and also by the General Assembly in 1970.

We are grateful to WMO and to its Panel of Experts on Tropical Cyclones for their immediate response to the recommendation of the General Assembly in resolution 2733 D (XXV). The Plan envisages practical measures for international action relating to the preparation of a tropical cyclone warning system and assistance in organizing community preparedness and disaster prevention activities; assistance in the execution of specific projects and the development of techniques; and the establishment of standards that can be used to guide national efforts in the execution of the Plan. It was also envisaged that current research efforts on tropical cyclones should be intensified.

The Plan, although relatively modest in nature and scope, clearly recognizes the value of even limited applied research or development activity, which could lead to significant results. Aside from such important aspects as detection and forecasting and observing techniques of cyclones, storm surge forecasting, flood forecasting, warning systems, risk evaluation, disaster prevention and community preparedness and disaster relief, it provides for training and research, particularly specialized training of forecasters and other personnel. It also seeks to ensure the fullest possible use of research scholars from the developing nations of the cyclone belt. The Plan also includes practical modes of implementation and funding.

In line with the WMO Action Plan, my delegation is again taking the initiative in the introduction of a draft resolution for the consideration of the First Committee. This is in fact the purpose of my appearance before this important Committee which you, Mr. Chairman, have been presiding over with such admirable energy, distinction and perspicacity.

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

As the Committee is aware, the Philippines recently suffered the worst flood disaster in its history, with incalculable damage in terms of the human suffering of more than 2 million victims and of a major setback of three to five years to Philippine development efforts.

The disaster was of such magnitude that the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, Mr. Berkol, flew to Manila to see for himself the vast extent of the damage and help assess the emergency relief and rehabilitation requirements. It was during Mr. Berkol's call on the President of the Philippines that President Marcos broached the idea of enhancing international co-operation in mitigating the destructive effects of storms.

President Marcos's idea is now embodied in a draft resolution which has been circulated in document A/C.1/L.606, with the initial co-sponsorship of the following countries: Australia, Indonesia, Japan, Madagascar, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand. This draft resolution is an appropriate follow-up to General Assembly resolution 2733 D (XXV). The preambular paragraphs, which are self-explanatory, place the draft resolution in the context of past General Assembly actions, take due account of the views expressed during the fifteenth resumed session of the Outer Space Committee, and relate it to the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in the field of natural disaster prevention.

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

The main thrust of the operative paragraphs is to improve and intensify international action to use the means provided by advanced scientific technology to mitigate the harmful effects of the various types of storms through such measures as the enhancement of the WMO's Tropical Cyclone Project and related action programmes. They also seek to encourage the Member States concerned to

"undertake research as well as operational projects towards this end." Finally, they recommend

"integrated action through increased co-operation and co-ordination among the World Meteorological Organization, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator in the field of United Nations natural disaster assistance, particularly the prevention, prediction and control of natural disasters."

The Philippines is determined, within its limited means and capabilities, to co-operate fully with the WMO and with other countries in the implementation of the WMO plan of action. For instance, it is the intention of the Philippine Government to increase the number of its weather stations from 200 to 800; to increase its weather radar stations from two to eight; and to establish synoptic stations, upper air stations (radiosonde and radiowind), automatic picture transmission ground stations and improved weather communications networks and warning systems.

The Philippines wishes to emphasize the necessity for intensifying present researches and initiating new ones on tropical cyclones, in an unremitting effort to realize the belief expressed in resolution 2733 D (XXV) that man's impressive scientific and technical capabilities that have conquered space could also help conquer this environmental scourge.

It is a tragic fact that advances in science and technology have not always been used for the benefit of humanity. Even now, the dangers of nuclear annihilation and of extinction through the pollution and exhaustion of the earth's life-support systems hang like twin Damoclean swords over the peoples of the world. The Philippine proposal seeks in a modest way to emphasize the positive aspects of advanced scientific technology,

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and to help realize its enormous potential for safeguarding human well-being, thereby making an important contribution to the preservation and enhancement of life on our small and vulnerable planet.

It is in that spirit that I have presented this draft resolution on behalf of the co-sponsors, and I now commend it to the favourable consideration of this First Committee of the General Assembly.

Mr. KOROTKEVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic)(interpretation from Russian): May I congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your election to your important and responsible post, and express the conviction that under your skilful guidance, with the assistance of the other members of the Bureau, whom we also congratulate, the First Committee will adopt positive decisions on the important matters on its agenda.

On the initiative of the Soviet Union we find on the agenda of this session of the General Assembly of the United Nations an important and timely question: Preparation of an international convention on principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting (A/8771; A/C.1/L.605). The significance and the timely nature of this question can be seen in the speedy development of space communications, especially of television broadcasting through artificial earth satellites, which is used to an ever-increasing extent in the interests of mankind. The Soviet artificial communications satellites of the Molniya type today enable the inhabitants of the far eastern regions of our country to watch the programmes of Moscow television and the television stations of the Union Republics, which is a clear example of the scientific and technological progress achieved by the peoples of the multinational Soviet Union, whose fiftieth anniversary we shall commemorate this year.

On 23 July 1962 there occurred the first demonstration of television communications between Europe and America through the artificial satellite Telstar-1. On 15 November 1971 the socialist countries concluded an agreement on the creation of an international space communications system, Intersputnik, which in time will make it possible to include the Mongolian People's Republic and Cuba in the common system of television of the countries

(Mr. Korotkevich, Byelorussian SSR)

of the socialist community. Matters of the transmission of television broadcasts are also dealt with in the international organization Intelsat. Thus television through space has already become the main means of transmitting programmes over large distances and at a time not too far distant it will be possible to receive directly on home sets satellite transmissions from practically every part of the world.

Direct television broadcasting from satellites is one of the most promising directions of the use of space for the needs of man. It will become one of the most important means of mass information which undoubtedly can and must contribute to bringing people closer together and strengthening their co-operation and mutual understanding. At the same time, if measures are not taken in good time for the legal regulation of those broadcasts, the possibility is not excluded that this important means of communication could be transformed into a source of international conflicts and of worsening international and inter-State relations.

It is well known that the illegal use of this mass information medium could give rise to many important and complex international problems. The ability of radio waves to pass over national boundaries without hindrance has often been used in the past, and is still sometimes used today, in order to carry out the propagation of ideas of war, militarism, violence, racial hatred and hostility among peoples.

As early as 1928 the League of Nations was compelled to adopt a resolution concerning the dangers of radio programmes running counter to the spirit of co-operation. Eight years later, in 1936, an international convention was signed on the use of radio broadcasting in the interests of peace. That convention is still valid today. In 1947, at the second session of the United Nations General Assembly, resolution 110 (II) was adopted on measures to be taken against propaganda and the inciters of a new war. The resolution condemned:

"... all forms of propaganda, in whatsoever country conducted, which is either designed or likely to provoke or encourage any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression,".

(Mr. Korotkevich, Byelorussian SSR)

That resolution, as is stated in the eighth preambular paragraph of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, is fully applicable to outer space (General Assembly resolution 2222 (XXI), Annex).

Attempts to use radio waves as instruments of trade war compelled the Council of Europe to conclude a special agreement to prevent the activities of so-called pirate radio stations which carried out programme broadcasts from beyond the limits of national territories. That question was discussed by the Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organization.

At present UNESCO is considering a draft declaration of guiding principles on the use of satellite broadcasting for the free flow of information, the spread of education and greater cultural exchange. That draft has been transmitted to the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. It contains important provisions providing for such principles as, for instance, that

"Satellite broadcasting shall respect the sovereignty and equality of all States.",

that account shall be taken of

"... the needs and rights of audiences, as well as the objectives of peace, friendship and co-operation between peoples, and of economic, social and cultural progress.";

and that

"Cultural programmes, while promoting the enrichment of all cultures, should respect the distinctive character, the value and the dignity of each, and the right of all countries and peoples to preserve their cultures as part of the common heritage of mankind."

(A/AC.105/104, pp. 6, 7 and 8).

All this shows that States have always endeavoured to regulate the use of radio broadcasts. It goes without saying that similar efforts must be made in the field of direct television broadcasting by artificial earth satellites, which open up new possibilities for the dissemination of mass information.

The absence of any regulation of the use of television is pregnant with even greater dangers for the cause of peace and international co-operation, because it has great influence on the viewer and reception of television broadcasts is not hampered to the same degree by language barriers or the levels of literacy of the population.

The appearance of direct television broadcasts through satellites requires that conditions be ensured so that this new type of space technology cannot be used against the interests of peoples and to serve as a source of conflict among States.

The Byelorussian SSR is firmly in favour of the widest possible development and use of television broadcasting to satisfy the needs of mankind. Byelorussian scientists are carrying out important work in this field. However, we decisively demand that television broadcasting serve exclusively the noble objectives of the strengthening of international peace, mutual understanding among peoples, and economic and social progress.

It is necessary, by working out principles of international law defining the rights and obligations of States when carrying out direct television broadcasts, to protect the sovereignty of States from any interference from outside and not condone any possibility of transforming direct television broadcasting into a source of international conflict and of worsening relations among States. The basis for the activities of States in this field must be principles such as mutual respect for the sovereignty of States, non-interference in internal affairs, equality, co-operation and mutual advantage.

Those are the objectives served by the draft convention which has been proposed by the Soviet Union concerning the principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting and which is now under consideration in the First Committee.

The Soviet proposal is drafted on the basis of generally recognized principles and norms of international law, including the United Nations Charter, as well as on the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies. It provides for the right of all States to carry out television broadcasting by means of artificial earth satellites and the right to enjoy the benefits of such broadcasting, without any discrimination.

The draft convention provides, first of all, that direct television broadcasting must be carried out exclusively in the interests of peace, progress, the development of mutual understanding and the strengthening of friendly relations between all States and peoples; its aim should be to enhance the educational level of the population, develop culture and expand international exchanges in the fields of science, culture and sport. It excludes any material publicizing ideas of war, militarism, nazism, national and racial hatred and enmity between peoples, as well as material which is immoral or instigating in nature or is otherwise aimed at interfering in the domestic affairs or foreign policy of other States.

We attach great importance to provisions of the draft convention such as those stipulating that direct television broadcasting by means of artificial earth satellites to foreign States may be carried out only with the express consent of the latter.

The draft recognizes as illegal and incurring the international liability of States transmissions carried out without the express consent of the latter, as well as transmissions detrimental to the maintenance of international peace and security, representing interference in the internal affairs of States, involving encroachment on fundamental human rights, propagandizing violence, horrors, and pornography; undermining the foundations of the local civilization, way of life, traditions or language; or misinforming the public.

All those important provisions of the draft convention aim at preventing the use of this field of technological achievements for the propagandizing of ideas alien to the cause of peace and international co-operation.

(Mr. Korotkevich, Byelorussian SSR)

This undoubtedly would lead to an infringement of the sovereignty of the various countries; it would restrict their national interests; it would undermine the economic foundations of their culture and would threaten their national independence.

The absence of international legal regulations in the field of direct television broadcasting would also play into the hands of aggressors, colonialists and racists. Using such means of mass information, the racists of South Africa and Southern Rhodesia and the Portuguese colonialists would obtain the possibility of carrying on large-scale propaganda against the peoples of Africa to justify racism, apartheid and colonial subjugation, and to sow and propagate dissension among African peoples. It is quite possible that they themselves are unable to work out such techniques. However, what is indubitable is that they themselves would be unable without foreign assistance to oppose the will of the African peoples and to maintain their racist régimes, to maintain under colonial yokes dozens of millions of people. If there are forces which help them at present, there will also be forces helping them in the future.

Another point is this: In the hands of potential aggressors, for instance, or of a State that had committed aggression, direct television broadcasting from States could be used for psychological preparation of the aggression, for deluding and pressuring the public opinion of other countries, for justifying aggressive plans and acts, for striving to render the victim of the aggression responsible for the aggression.

Therefore, we cannot condone a situation in which anarchy would prevail in space television. It is essential that this achievement of human reason serve the interests of the whole community. And this is the objective of the Soviet initiative in the draft convention, which, together with the provisions that I have just mentioned, provides for effective measures to prevent violation of the agreement.

In the event that some countries did not respect or abide by the provisions of the convention, the Soviet draft provides for the right of States to employ the means at their disposal to counteract the direct television broadcast programmes of which they are the object, not only in their own territory but also in outer space and other areas beyond the limits of the national jurisdiction of any State.

(Mr. Korotkevich, Byelorussian SSR)

The new initiative of the Soviet Union testifies to the constructive approach of the Soviet Union towards equal and mutually advantageous co-operation with all States in the exploration of outer space and the use of space technology to satisfy the needs of mankind. The conclusion of the convention would make it possible more speedily to carry out and make a reality of plans for world television which could bring untold benefits to the whole of mankind. All peoples, all States, large or small, developed or developing, would only stand to gain from this, as would also the cause of peace.

The debate in this Committee testifies to the timely nature of this problem. Most delegations support the Soviet initiative. At the same time we hear some voices opposing the Soviet proposal. But, except for negative statements, we have not heard any serious or well-argued statements against the need to work out and conclude such a convention.

We have been told that it would be premature to deal with these matters since no State at present possesses the means for direct television broadcasting. We have been told that this is a matter for the future. However, it should be noted that the Committee on Outer Space has already debated the question of direct television broadcasting from satellites and that General Assembly resolution 2733 (XXV) of 16 December 1970 stressed the potential benefits of satellite broadcasting, as well as the need for further study of legal principles governing this field, and noted that in 1973-1974 the first satellite-borne instructional television experiment for direct satellite reception into community receivers would be undertaken in India. Therefore, this is not a new problem for the United Nations. The proposal of the Soviet Union would place this problem on a concrete foundation and would guide the elaboration and adoption of principles regulating the activities of States in this field.

When the United Nations started debating matters of space law, we heard arguments to the effect that it was too early to deal with the working out of legal principles in space law. And now we are directly involved in these matters. We have already worked out several instruments of international law governing the activities of States in the exploration and use of outer space, and nobody says that all this is premature. Let us also, for example, take the question of the sea-bed. Are we now actually exploiting and using the

(Sir Laurence McIntyre, Australia)

We have all already become conscious of the exciting possibilities and the new horizons that broadcasting by satellite can open up for us with the continued advance of technology. We can, I think, all agree wholeheartedly that the prospect in the future of direct broadcasting by satellite to television receivers in people's homes promises to help -- and I quote here from Foreign Minister Gromyko's memorandum to the Secretary-General of 8 August -- "to draw the peoples of the world closer together, to widen the exchanges of cultural values and to enhance the educational level of people in various countries" (A/8771, p. 1)

But the problem of its regulation, if indeed it will be possible to regulate it, whether by multilateral convention or bilateral agreement, is surely going to be full of complexity. Granted that direct television broadcasting by satellite could lend itself to abuse, any régime of control imposed on it should not, in the view of my delegation, have the effect of curbing the free flow of information and knowledge around the world. In this regard I am bound to agree with the representative of Canada that the Soviet proposal conveys an impression of negativism which could impede the development of an area of space technology offering important practical benefits for all countries.

Without attempting to enter into any detailed analysis of the Soviet proposal, which seems to my delegation to require thorough and searching technical as well as legal scrutiny, I would only offer two queries on it at this point.

The first is to question whether it is in fact a matter of genuine urgency, bearing in mind that, as the representative of the United States has pointed out, direct satellite television reception by home receivers, as distinct from community receivers, must still be some years away.

My second query relates to the sovereign jurisdiction of States within their own territories -- not only those States that might be able to receive but might not welcome direct television broadcasts from abroad, but also those countries that transmit television programmes by satellite.

It can be expected that as satellite broadcasting technology advances to the point where direct television via satellite to domestic receivers becomes feasible, the Governments of many countries, particularly countries with large land areas and remote centres of population, will want to make increasing use

(Sir Laurence McIntyre, Australia)

of it, whether through their own television services or by authorizing private commercial organizations to do so. Now, I understand that there is no foreseeable means of preventing these transmissions, even though they would be directed essentially to the people of the transmitting country, from spilling over, as it were, beyond the borders of that country and being received by viewers in neighbouring countries. Some of these transmissions are bound to include a good deal of commercial and other advertising matter of the kind expected, and indeed demanded, by numbers of persons in the transmitting State.

(Sir Laurence McIntyre, Australia)

To carry the point to the extreme limit of hypothesis, what if a government -- any government -- should one day decide, in response to popular local demand, to sanction the transmission by satellite television of some of these erotica of the kind that some of our colleagues here have referred to in terms of alarm? Is that government going to be told, and must it accept, that it must not televize to its own people what they want to see and listen to, just because some home viewers in neighbour countries may be exposed to it?

I exaggerate simply to illustrate the sorts of difficulties we are liable to run into if we embark on a course of restriction of a medium of communication and entertainment and knowledge that more and more people throughout the world are bound to demand.

It seems to my delegation that if we are to pursue at this time consideration of the proposed convention on direct television broadcasting by satellite we should refer it to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space for careful study of all the legal and technical aspects by its Legal Sub-Committee and also by its Working Group on Direct Broadcast Satellites.

I turn now to the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which indicates that new ground has been broken in the work of making the nations of the world, and particularly the developing countries, more generally aware of the benefits that the applications of space technology can confer upon them. We note with particular pleasure that the Working Group on Remote Sensing of the Earth by Satellites held a preparatory session during the year and that it is to begin substantive work on 29 January 1973. Inevitably, the preparatory session this year was of a fairly preliminary nature, but it is nevertheless possible even now to see the promise of future progress. Australian representatives have taken an active part in the work of that Group and will continue to do so.

The United Nations Programme on Space Applications, instituted by the first occupant of the position of Expert on Space Applications, Professor Ricciardi of Argentina, is still in its infancy but is showing good promise. The Outer Space Committee has approved continuation of the Programme in 1973 and, in a welcome innovation in the direction of longer-term planning,

(Sir Laurence McIntyre, Australia)

has also endorsed guidelines for 1974. My delegation will be following this work with interest and sympathy. We should like our gratitude to Professor Ricciardi for his creative work to be a matter of record. We regret his departure from New York; we wish him well on his return to academic life, and look forward to working with his successor.

My delegation has noted the approval expressed in the Committee's report for the plan of action prepared by the World Meteorological Organization for its tropical cyclone project, undertaken in response to General Assembly resolution 2733 D (XXV), of which Australia was a co-sponsor. The Committee has asked the Assembly to bring the plan of action to the attention of Member States and to invite them to co-operate in achieving the objectives laid down in resolution 2733 D (XXV). My delegation regards this initiative of WMO as a concrete example of the beneficial application of space technology for the good of all mankind, and the Committee's recommendation has our full support.

Finally, somewhat on the same subject that I have just been referring to, we have now heard the Foreign Minister of the Philippines introduce his draft resolution on the question of international action to mitigate the harmful effects of storms. My delegation fully understands the deep concern of the people of the Philippines in this regard, bearing in mind the recent disaster which they have suffered, and will be glad to co-sponsor the draft resolution.

Mr. BISHARA (Kuwait): I think you will agree with me, Mr. Chairman, that it is quite anomalous for a Vice-Chairman to congratulate the Chairman. Accordingly, I will abandon the tradition of extending congratulations to the Chairman, although it is well established and well respected.

May I pay a tribute to my friend and colleague Ambassador Peter Jankowitsch of Austria for the stimulating manner in which he has been discharging his duties as Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. I believe he has scrupulously followed in the correct footsteps of his predecessor. May I also pay an equally cordial and hearty tribute to the Chairmen of the Legal Sub-Committee and the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee for their constructive work in laying the foundation of a future edifice for harnessing space technology for the benefit of all mankind.

As you know, for the big the moon is a source of exploration; for the small, a source of romanticism. A few years ago outer space was beyond the reach of man. Thanks to the ingenuity of modern science and technology, however, outer space is now the object of exploration and regulation. At an undetermined future date the resources of outer space may become also the object of commercial exploitation.

It is rather paradoxical that although outer space is no longer a mystery we do not yet have an authoritative definition of it -- as if the law were trailing behind the rapid advances in science and technology. The value of outer space will, however, remain in its impact on the lives of human beings everywhere. There has been greater interest in the sea-bed and the ocean floor beyond the limits of national jurisdiction merely because the resources of that area seem to be more promising and more accessible to exploitation. However, other applications of space technology may also have practical applications for the lives and well-being of human beings everywhere. We hope that the remote sensing of earth resources by satellites will be effectively utilized to alleviate the shortage of food, solve the problems of ecology and promote the conservation of nature. Other developments will have a marked effect on the utilization of broadcasting and information media to transcend political and geographic barriers and promote better understanding among all nations.

(Mr. Bishara, Kuwait)

It is heartening to note that activities in outer space are widening in scope. My delegation would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the United Kingdom and Japan on their successful launching of scientific satellites. We hope that other countries also will join in the exploration of outer space. The Declaration of Legal Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space provided that outer space and celestial bodies are not subject to national appropriation by claim of sovereignty, by means of use or occupation, or by other means.

(Mr. Bishara, Kuwait)

It is a corollary of this principle that the natural resources of the moon and other celestial bodies are the common heritage of mankind. We believe that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space should seek inspiration from the work of the sea-bed Committee, which has already consecrated the principle of the common heritage of mankind in relation to the sea-bed and its resources. We hope that in due course a régime will be established for outer space and other celestial bodies and that appropriate international authorities will be entrusted with the task of exploiting their natural resources for the benefit of mankind as a whole, taking into account the interests and needs of the developing countries.

One may readily admit that although the resources of the sea-bed have largely been explored and its commercial exploitation is almost within reach, the resources of celestial bodies are virtually unknown, and the possibility of their commercial exploitation may be for the far and distant future. Nevertheless, the legal principles which apply to the sea-bed should equally apply to outer space. My delegation's view is that the draft convention proposed jointly by the delegations of France and Canada concerning the registration of objects launched into space for the exploration or use of outer space is both necessary and timely. An adequate system of registration will make it possible to identify space objects for the purpose of the Convention on Liability as well as for the purposes of the Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts and the Return of Objects launched into Outer Space.

The outer space Treaty of 1967 laid the foundations of outer space activities. Thus, instruments that have been adopted or are still in draft form merely seek to spell out in detail the provisions of that major instrument.

So far, nothing has been done to the effect that the provisions of the exploration and use of outer space should be carried out for the benefit of all peoples irrespective of the degree of their economic and scientific development. The inadequate technology of the developing countries has so far excluded them from taking part in outer space activities. Moreover, outer space activities can be directed in such a way as to bring increasing

(Mr. Bishara, Kuwait)

benefit to the developing countries. It is high time that the space Powers seriously considered launching a space programme specifically designed to promote the interests and welfare of the developing countries in all areas where space technology can be practically applied. Future generations will judge our work not merely by the skill with which we draft international conventions or by our success in making space exploration the exclusive preserve of a few advanced countries, but rather by our determination to explore every single possibility of using this new field of human endeavour and this new type of advanced technology for the benefit of all peoples, especially those who have long been suffering from misery, want and deprivation.

I turn now to the draft treaty proposed by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the use of satellites for television broadcasting. My delegation in principle supports the main features embodied in the draft treaty. Those features pertain to the consent of the receiving State.

We have social, cultural and religious traditions and concepts we like to preserve and sanctify, and equally we do not like any intrusion in the purview of those traditions. We like our traditions to be consecrated, not to be violated. Any dissemination of information contrary to our traditions and ideals and concepts of life is, indeed unwelcome. Bearing that in mind, we in principle support the draft treaty proposed by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, subject to the rigorous reformulation of some provisions.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of the World Meteorological Organization.

Mr. LANGLO (World Meteorological Organization): I am grateful for this opportunity to comment on the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

As members are aware, the General Assembly has during the past 10 years addressed to my organization, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), a few but far-reaching resolutions arising from the discussion of outer space matters by this Committee. Members may wish to be informed briefly on the subsequent action taken by WMO on those resolutions, and also to hear the views of my organization on the new draft resolution on further international action on the mitigation of the harmful effects of tropical storms presented today by several delegations (A/C.1/L.606).

(Mr. Langlo, WMO)

As is mentioned in annex II of document A/8720, the World Weather Watch, a far-sighted programme of WMO, was developed as a result of a resolution adopted by the General Assembly more than ten years ago and at a time when the use of satellites for meteorological purposes was in its early experimental stages. Thanks to the enormous efforts of a few countries, it has been possible to build up gradually an operational system of meteorological satellites from which, I am happy to report, all countries of the world are able to benefit without any restriction. For instance, it is possible for any country to acquire at relatively low cost a receiver which permits the reception of pictures of the cloud systems for areas of the size of Europe through the automatic picture transmission system.

The World Weather Watch is essentially an operational system linking together all the weather services of the world and providing rapid collection and exchange of all necessary weather data. Very substantial improvements have been made in this system during the past ten years, mainly due to developments in the global observing system thanks to sophisticated satellites but also due to improvements in the global telecommunications system and to more extensive use of electronic computers. As an example, the speed of exchanges of data on the main international circuits connecting the major meteorological centres have been increased 40 times in many segments. The successful implementation of the World Weather Watch plan has largely been due to a voluntary assistance programme from which many countries have benefited, and we are grateful to the donor countries participating in this programme.

As was recognized by the General Assembly in a subsequent resolution, it is, however, necessary to complement the operational World Weather Watch system with a comprehensive research programme in order to enlarge our knowledge of the circulation of the whole atmosphere up to a height of 30 kilometres. This programme is called the Global Atmosphere Research Programme (GARP), and is organized jointly by WMO and the International Council of Scientific Unions. It is not an exaggeration to say that this programme is one of the most ambitious international research efforts ever contemplated.

(Mr. Langlo, WMO)

One of its projects is a First GARP Global Experiment using the whole atmosphere as a laboratory, the success of which will depend on the full participation of all countries of the world, and a specific effort of those countries that are able to launch meteorological satellites. The observing system for the global experiment, which will last one year and probably start in 1977, is crucially dependent on a system of four or preferably five geostationary satellites which we hope will be launched in co-operation between the United States of America, the Soviet Union, the European Space Organization, and Japan, assisted by a few other countries. I am not going into further details of this experiment, but the above information is sufficient to indicate the important role that the satellite is playing in achieving a better understanding of the processes in the atmosphere. Such increase in our knowledge is fundamental in order to improve and extend weather services to human activities, and not the least of which is better to assess the possible effects of man's activities on our climate.

As a part of the same research programme, a special tropical experiment will be carried out in the tropical Atlantic in the summer of 1974, with the participation of a greater number of research ships, aircraft, and other observing systems than has ever been attempted before.

This leads me to the third subject, which has been dealt with in a General Assembly resolution addressed to WMO, namely, resolution 2733 D (XXV) calling upon the Organization to take appropriate action to mitigate the harmful effects of tropical storms. In response to this resolution, the WMO has prepared a Tropical Cyclone Project, and a plan of action for this project has been made available to the General Assembly in document A/AC.105/105. It is not my intention to take you through this document, but in support of the draft resolution submitted by several delegations today, I will highlight a few points of our plan of action.

The primary objectives of the plan may be summarized in four points:

First, to strengthen and make more generally available the capabilities and techniques for forecasting tropical cyclones, storm surges and floods, in particular flash flooding in association with tropical cyclones;

Second, improvement of tropical cyclone warning systems;

(Mr. Langlo, WMO)

Third, providing support to disaster prevention and community preparedness activities, and

Fourth, providing basic data on risk of loss by cyclone wind, storm-surge or flood to those who need it for development planning and other purposes.

With regard to the first point, photographs from present geostationary satellites make it possible to keep a daylight surveillance of tropical cyclones over the Caribbean and the central Eastern Pacific Ocean. If a geostationary satellite could be placed over the Equator 120° East, as called for in the plan for the global experiment mentioned above, it would also be possible to track tropical cyclones over the Western Pacific, the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean. The potential benefits of the recommended programme are enormous and fairly obvious. A better capability to predict storm-surges would reduce the annual average toll amounting at present to 40,000 drownings all over the world and thousands of millions of dollars of destruction.

With regard to the second point, the report says, "There is a general feeling that the present arrangements for the distribution of the warnings issued by the Meteorological Services to the public are not entirely satisfactory because responsibility is frequently diffused through a number of national agencies".

Steps are being taken to improve this situation, and this leads me to the third point the importance of pre-disaster planning. A number of measures are proposed to assist Member countries in reducing damage from tropical cyclones by better protection and better community preparedness. These questions obviously require very close co-operation and co-ordination between various interested bodies, and I am happy to report that WMO has established a close working relationship with the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator in Geneva to this end. Furthermore, all our regional programmes in this field are carried out jointly or in collaboration with the regional economic commissions concerned, and are supported by the UNDP and the International Red Cross Society, as appropriate.

You will have understood from the above that WMO warmly welcomes the draft resolution proposed by seven delegations as mentioned above. May I express the hope that all countries of the world will continue to work together, as

(Mr. Langlo, WMO)

they have done now for 99 years for the peaceful purposes of knowing more about the common and only atmosphere we have on this planet, and not in the least to make a special effort now to mitigate the harmful effects of one of its most devastating phenomena: the tropical storm.

Mr. YANGC (Philippines): It is a pleasure for me to make the announcement that Mauritius now has become a co-sponsor of the seven-Power draft resolution contained in document A/C.L/L.606.

The CHAIRMAN: There are no more speakers inscribed on my list for this morning's session. Before adjourning the meeting I would like to propose to the Committee that it decide to close the list of speakers in the general debate on the items under discussion by 6 p.m. today. If I hear no objection I shall take it that the proposal is accepted.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.