

UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/RES/31/8
12 November 1976

Thirty-first session
Agenda items 31 and 32

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[on the report of the First Committee (A/31/285)]

31/8. International co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 3388 (XXX) of 18 November 1975,

Having considered the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, 1/

Reaffirming the common interest of mankind in furthering the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes and in extending to States the benefits derived therefrom as well as the importance of international co-operation in this field, for which the United Nations should provide a focal point, as expressed in General Assembly resolution 1721 (XVI) of 20 December 1961,

Reaffirming the importance of international co-operation in developing the rule of law in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space,

Welcoming the entry into force on 15 September 1976 of the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space, 2/

1. Endorses the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space;
2. Invites States which have not yet become parties to the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Supplement No. 20 (A/31/20).

2/ General Assembly resolution 3235 (XXIX), annex.

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Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, 3/ the Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space, 4/ the Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects 5/ and the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space 2/ to give early consideration to ratifying or acceding to those international agreements;

3. Notes with satisfaction that the Legal Sub-Committee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space has:

(a) Achieved considerable progress by:

- (i) Formulating nine draft principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting with a view to concluding an international agreement or agreements;
- (ii) Formulating five draft principles and identifying three new common elements in the drafts submitted and the views expressed by Member States relating to the legal implications of remote sensing of the earth from space;

(b) Continued its work on the draft treaty relating to the moon, giving priority to the question of natural resources of the moon;

(c) Discussed questions relating to the definition and/or delimitation of outer space and outer space activities;

4. Recommends that the Legal Sub-Committee at its sixteenth session should:

(a) Continue, as matters of high priority:

- (i) To consider the draft treaty relating to the moon;
- (ii) To consider completing the elaboration of draft principles governing the use by States of artificial earth satellites for direct television broadcasting with a view to concluding an international agreement or agreements;

3/ General Assembly resolution 2222 (XXI), annex.

4/ General Assembly resolution 2345 (XXII), annex.

5/ General Assembly resolution 2777 (XXVI), annex.

(iii) To give detailed consideration to the legal implications of remote sensing of the earth from space, with the particular aim of formulating draft principles on the basis of common elements identified by it;

(b) Pursue its work on questions relating to the definition and/or delimitation of outer space and outer space activities in the remaining time available;

5. Notes with satisfaction the report of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on its thirteenth session, 6/ which, inter alia:

(a) Examines further the question of remote sensing of the earth from space, as set out in paragraphs 26 to 81 of the report, considering in detail both the current pre-operational/experimental as well as the possible future global/operational phase of remote sensing system or systems;

(b) Continues in effect the United Nations programme on space applications;

(c) Provides for further study of a possible United Nations conference on outer space matters;

6. Recommends that the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee should continue at its fourteenth session its work on the matters before it, giving priority to the three items contained in paragraph 71 of the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space;

7. Endorses the recommendation of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space that full utilization be made by the Committee and its subsidiary bodies of their existing terms of reference with regard to the establishment of an appropriate co-ordinating role for the United Nations in the field of remote sensing;

8. Further endorses the recommendation of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space that the Secretary-General, for consideration by the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee at its fourteenth session, should:

(a) Undertake the various studies and reports on remote sensing of the earth from space, as referred to in paragraph 42 of the report of the Committee;

(b) Prepare a study in depth on the question of convening a United Nations conference on space matters, as referred to in paragraphs 55 and 56 of that report;

6/ A/AC.105/170.

(c) Request Member States to provide information on programmes or plans for the generation or transmission of solar energy by means of space technology, as referred to in paragraph 72 of that report;

9. Endorses the United Nations programme on space applications for 1977, as referred to in paragraph 46 of the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space;

10. Approves continuing sponsorship by the United Nations of the Thumba Equatorial Rocket Launching Station in India and the CELPA Mar del Plata Station in Argentina and expresses its satisfaction at the work being carried out at those ranges in the peaceful and scientific exploration of outer space;

11. Reiterates its request to the World Meteorological Organization to pursue actively the implementation of its tropical cyclone project while continuing and intensifying its other related action programmes, including World Weather Watch and, especially, the efforts being undertaken towards obtaining basic meteorological data and discovering ways and means to mitigate the harmful effects of tropical storms and to remove or minimize their destructive potential, and looks forward to its report thereon in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions;

12. Requests the specialized agencies to provide the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space with progress reports on their work, including particular problems in the fields within their competence relating to the peaceful uses of outer space;

13. Requests the Secretary-General, in the light of paragraph 73 of the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, to consider strengthening the Outer Space Affairs Division of the Secretariat;

14. Notes the invitation extended by the Government of Austria to hold the twentieth session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space at Vienna in 1977 and accepts that invitation with appreciation;

15. Requests the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to continue its work, as set out in the present and previous resolutions of the General Assembly, and to report to the Assembly at its thirty-second session.

57th plenary meeting
8 November 1976

President - Mr Amerasinghe
21 Sept 1976, 3pm

(The President)

Finally, there is the group of non-aligned countries, which we helped found and which recently held its Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government in Colombo, Sri Lanka, under the presidency of the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka. We accord to our membership of this Group a pre-eminent position because its principles and philosophy are aimed at the attainment of the supreme objective of the United Nations, the maintenance of international peace and security. The foreign policy of my country is irrevocably committed to non-alignment.

Non-alignment had its genesis in the political situation created by the Second World War, a situation in which two power blocs, obsessed with mutual suspicion and hostility and sharply divided by ideology, strove to surpass each other in military power and competed for influence and support among the uncommitted nations. Non-alignment has met with a great measure of success in safeguarding and promoting the independence and sovereignty of all nations, large and small. The prospects of international peace have been vastly enhanced by increasing adherence to the principles and policy of non-alignment, which categorically rejects the concepts of balance of power and spheres of influence. If its authority is to grow progressively, the members of the Group must remain ever faithful to its tenets.

With the thirty-first session, the General Assembly enters upon the last quarter of the twentieth century. There has been no other period in the history of the human race which could claim such a glittering record of achievement in scientific progress but which has also been besmirched by such savage destruction of human life and property in two world wars and other no less brutal conflicts and by the most infamous affronts to the dignity of the human personality in the name of ethnic superiority.

Even as the secrets of the universe unfold themselves to the penetrating scrutiny of the fecund and versatile genius of human science, the legitimate expectation that the advance of technology would produce a corresponding degree of progress in the solution of the political, social and economic problems that beset the international community has fallen far short of even modest realization.

During the 31 years of its existence, the United Nations has advanced steadily towards the attainment of the ideal of universality of membership. In 1945 it counted 51 countries among its Members. Today we expect the 145th Member