

**Committee on the Peaceful
Uses of Outer Space***Unedited transcript*

610th Meeting
Thursday, 11 June 2009, 3 p.m.
Vienna

Chairman: Mr. Ciro Arévalo Yepes (Colombia)

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Good afternoon distinguished delegates. This afternoon we have a very heavy schedule. We have five technical presentations, no less than five! Then we have a reception organized by the Austrian delegation this evening, so we have to see how we adapt the programme a bit. We are already running late but this has allowed the Italian delegation to organize this event in parallel on Galileo. Thank you to them for having shed light on a very important question, in my country as well we celebrate this on the Atlantic coast. Could I ask the technical presenters to abridge their presentations to the extent possible.

I now declare open the 610th meeting of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. We will be re-opening item 7, report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and then item 14, use of space-derived geospatial data for sustainable development. Continue and conclude item 15, other matters.

There will be five technical presentations in the afternoon. The first, by the representative of DESY, from Germany on: From Quarks to the Universe - the Big Bang in the Lab. The second lecture will be by Indonesia on: Space and Climate in Indonesia: status and challenges. The third presentation will be by SGAC on: The outcomes of SGAC 10 year anniversary conference: UNISPACE III how far have we come. The fourth presentation will be by Algeria on the third African Leadership Conference on Space Science and Technology for Sustainable Development. The fifth lecture will be by a representative of Saudi Arabia who will be speaking to us about the contribution of King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology in the

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Then we will be re-opening item 7. Germany you have the floor under this item.

Mr. J. MARSCHALL VON BIEBERSTEIN (Germany) Thank you. Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, allow me to take the floor once more under agenda item 7, this time on behalf of my own as well as the Italian delegation.

The need for space debris mitigation has been recognized by the UN more than a decade ago. Implementation of space debris mitigation measures now belongs to the daily routine of many space-faring nations and international organizations. Several harmful orbital events, most recently the satellite collision in February 2009, have generated a considerable amount of long-life orbital debris. Therefore, in addition to the UN COPUOS space debris mitigation guidelines, making available information on the existing population and objects in outer space is important in order, inter alia, to avoid collisions in outer space between operational spacecraft and space debris and other operational spacecraft respectively, as well as to protect the Earth's population in case of re-entering debris.

Mr. Chairman, there is a wealth of valuable information from reliable sources available relating to objects in outer space which can be publicly accessed, free of charge, on the Internet. Nonetheless, such information is not always easy to find and, in particular, not easy to process for the majority of space-faring nations who do not have the capacities to effectively perform an analysis. Therefore, to make it easier for those nations who are interested in obtaining this information and also, in the spirit of providing transparency and building confidence amongst nations, we see a need for facilitating the access to existing

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sources of relevant data and information via a specific platform, under UN auspices, that would be open and freely accessible to all UN member States.

Our present proposal is based on earlier motions of the Italian delegation at the last sessions of both UN COPUOS subcommittees as well as in this ongoing session. In this context, Mr. Chairman, it seems that our proposal may also bear similarity to what you pointed out in your paper: towards a UN space policy, in mentioning the necessity for, *inter alia*, “access to data and catalogues of debris collected by member States”. However, such a measure as proposed will require thorough analysis and further intensive discussion. We feel that this discussion should be conducted in an initial phase among technical experts. As a preparation for such a discussion, Germany and Italy propose that UNCOPUOS invite member States of the Interagency Space Debris Coordination Committee (IADC), the well-known, highly competent international body of space agencies, to prompt this body to develop first ideas and concrete measures with the purpose of making available already existing sources of information as well as data and information on objects in outer space for the promotion of a safe and sustainable development of the peaceful uses of outer space. Contributions in this respect will be exclusively on a voluntary basis. Subsequently, reflections on this matter shall be presented by IADC to the UNCOPUOS Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. Germany and Italy call on interested delegations to support this proposal. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you very much. I see that several delegations have asked for the floor. Greece to start off with, followed by India.

Mr. V. CASSAPOGLOU (Greece) (*interpretation from French*) Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. Since this is the first time I am taking the floor, I would like, even though it is fairly late in the day, to congratulate you. I was not with you last year because of the football craze but I would like to congratulate you because everything that you have accomplished over the last two years is certainly most useful, most commendable. You have produced a very important report last week, towards a UN space policy.

I have asked for the floor under the last item of the agenda on your proposal but I would like to say, at this point in any case, something about the statement made by Germany when he referred to the event that Italy has just organized for us.

Space debris is something which is the biggest challenge for the sustainability of outer space, of Earth too, but I think that space includes Earth. In 1996 our eminent colleague, Professor Kopal, and yours truly, as representatives of our respective countries and this was just after the publication of the report of Professor Rux on space debris. The two of us proposed that this report be brought to the attention of the Legal Subcommittee so that it could be used for the thinking process in that forum and, if not for the preparation of the treaty, at least as groundwork for declaration of the principles which would be pursuant to the long traditions of our Committee and subcommittees since the 1960s. Unfortunately, exactly 13 years have elapsed since that Czech/Greek Greek/Czech proposal and this has still not been followed up on.

The year before last, in 2007, following a, shall we say, incident, US193, Greece proposed that, parallel to the registry of space objects, the United Nations Secretary-General oversees, through the Office for Outer Space Affairs, that another registry might be set up, that of harmful objects, in other words, space debris. Thanks to my colleague from the United States at that time, two years ago, I found out that there is a database, that was in February 2007, when I spoke about an electronic registry but my dear colleague from the United States informed me that NASA or some administration in the United States already has a similar database and he was also kind enough to give me the email address or the website address so that I could access this database. These are now matters of history but the reason I have gone into all that is by way of referring to the German-Italian proposal which places us in possession of a proposal that we favour 100 per cent. We have to move fast, we are talking about transparency, we are talking about confidence building measures, we are talking about international community as it emerged after the end of the Cold War. Three years ago, I read in a major United Nations newspaper, which shall remain unnamed, that we might perhaps be now faced with a situation not of a third Cold War but a situation that might be a prelude to a tepid war, a hot war rather than a cold war. Anyway, we believe that this is a good proposal, it is an appeal, it is more than a statement, it is an appeal and we look on it very positively. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) I thank the distinguished delegate of Greece, thus we have a proposal from Germany, France and Greece. The next speaker on my list is India.

Ms. R. RAMACHANDRAN (India) Thank you Mr. Chairman. The Indian delegation would like to

reiterate the need for access to reliable data on objects in outer space not only to avoid collisions but also to protect the growing global space assets. Though there is a mechanism in place for registering space launches and space assets by all member countries, the details regarding space debris and identified objects are available only to a few countries. There is a strong need for evolving appropriate mechanisms for sharing such data with other countries. In this context, the idea to have a UN body for this purpose is quite relevant. India would like to fully endorse and support the joint proposal of Italy and Germany to provide accessibility to all members of UN COPUOS relevant and authentic data on objects in outer space to a UN platform. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you very much India. I would now like to give the floor to Nigeria.

Mr. A. ABIODUN (Nigeria) Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. When one reflects on the history of this particular Committee, we have dealt quite a lot on the needs of the developing countries and, from time to time, we touch issues that affect all of us. This is one of them. A number of countries now have a variety of space assets but they have no information on how these assets are performing in space or, what are the possibilities that they might live or die or, that they are in danger and that is why my delegation, and we do appeal to all delegations to do the same, fully endorse the proposal before us that has been presented by Germany, on behalf of Germany and Italy, so that we can move ahead. In the last two to three years, maybe even since UNISPACE III, a lot of effort has been devoted to the space environment and when we look at the presentation from France and the proposal put forward by Mr. Brachet as Chairman, ____ (?) presentation in the year 2005 as to the future work of this Committee, if we are going to have a sustainable space environment that would mean a theoretical subject unless we have the practical means of taking that case by the ____ (?) and the proposal by Germany and Italy is such a proposal and we 100 per cent endorse it. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you distinguished delegate of Nigeria who has endorsed the proposal earlier made by Germany, France and Greece, supported by India.

Would any other delegation like to take the floor at this point?

Colombia and then the Czech Republic.

Mr. J. OJEDA BUENO (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*) Good afternoon, thank you, Ambassador, Chairman. I would like to thank the delegations of Germany and Italy for their proposal. We fully support and endorse it and it has also met with the endorsement of European delegations. Some years ago, we also expressed a wish for greater transparency, periodicity, in reporting. There is one periodic document, a panorama of space activities with the progress achieved and the issues that have arisen, as the Nigerian delegate has pointed out, it has to do with the contamination of outer space. Space debris is a critical element for those countries that still have not been able to launch objects into space but would like, at some point, to launch their own satellites, their own space vehicles. Not only is it necessary to have a registry of space debris floating around in space, also their position, their location and with the help and cooperation of other agencies such as ITU and other organizations involved in the process. Obviously it is a message of hope, it is an aspiration, it is a desire for greater transparency and greater clarity.

That said, there is an operational aspect which makes us curious. How is it going to work? Will a new office be set up? A new official put in charge? A new expert within OOSA? Who is going to fund this programme? Which countries are going to participate by providing information and contribute to resources for this activity? For how long will this activity be envisaged? Is it Germany and Italy, as the initiators of this proposal, who are going to finance it, at least in its initial phase? Are those going to be the countries responsible for the debris in the first place? So this is the operational part, the practical part, that is a source of concern to us. The idea is an idea of genius, it is an excellent idea, it is an expression of hope for all countries, members of this Committee. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you distinguished delegate of Colombia for your statement. I now call upon the distinguished delegate of the Czech Republic.

Mr. V. KOPAL (Czech Republic) Thank you Mr. Chairman. My delegation would like to positively reply to the invitation made by the delegations of Germany and Italy to support their joint proposal to which further co-sponsors have joined. I believe that the idea of establishing a specific platform under UN auspices, this is important, that would be open and freely accessible to all UN member States is sound. Of course, this is now a certain principle, it must be further elaborated and therefore we also agree with the procedure how to do it and how to discuss all the

details further. Once again, I would like to support this proposal. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) I would like to thank the distinguished representative of the Czech Republic.

Any other requests for the floor?

Yes, I have seen the United States, you have the floor.

Mr. K. HODGKINS (United States of America) Thank you Mr. Chairman. My delegation would just like to make a few observations concerning the proposal made by Germany and by Italy.

Asking the member States of IADC to look at concrete measures with the purpose of making available already existing sources of data seems to me to be quite reasonable and we would look forward to whatever results they come up with but there are several points that I want to raise now so that member States can think about this over the next year concerning the rest of the proposal.

The first is that, we have to look carefully at a UN-sponsored database because if you recall in the Legal Subcommittee we had a two-year debate on setting up a registry for the UNIDROIT space protocol and there were questions of who would pay for that registry, whether it would come out of the UN budget. Secondly, and more importantly, would the UN be taking on any liability in the event that that registry was not managed properly and you will have the same questions coming up if you decide we want to establish a UN-sponsored database. Secondly, the database that could be set up, and I want to make sure that delegates understand this, would be based on publicly available data. That publicly available data is not sufficient enough for anybody to do a conjunction analysis of collision avoidance, that simply is the case, so I do not want members of the Committee to be left with the impression that this database is going to allow you to perform collision avoidance manoeuvres on the basis of that data. That is something that is a highly specialized activity and if it is a UN-sponsored activity I am not convinced that the UN is in a position to do that.

Lastly, as we consider the results of what IADC comes back to us with, we should also bear in mind that, in our view, this effort has a direct link to the proposal by France on sustainability of space. So, let us let the IADC look at this, come back with some recommendations but there are certain questions that

we have already raised now that only COPUOS would be able to answer. We look forward to that discussion on the basis of what IADC members bring back to us. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) I would like to recapitulate. The proposal made by Germany and Italy has received support from a number of delegations. The United States are not objecting to that proposal but have made a number of points that need to be taken into account in considerations that will take place within the framework of IADC's work. Who will sponsor the database is a matter that needs to be discussed. There is the issue of responsibility and liability, very important. How these data are to be used and in what way would the United Nations be responsible.

The others are purely technical aspects, also raised by the US. The data that exist and are available at this moment do not necessarily ensure avoidance of collisions. This is another thing that needs to be taken into account in order that there should be no false or inflated expectations.

Finally, what would be the correlation between this proposal and the proposal of France. I think we have raised a number of good points and, as Chairman, I believe that consideration has already started and these aspects, defined by the US, need to be taken into account, obviously in those considerations and whatever discussion of this proposal takes place in the future. Thus, the Chair believes, unless there are objections or any opposition, that with these elements presented by the United States, the group of experts working within the framework of IADC, Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee, which is the competent international body designed to develop ideas, to make proposals, so this is the way to proceed.

I see Greece is asking for the floor but distinguished delegate of Greece can we finish this and then I can give you the floor. Is that OK? Thank you.

If there is no opposition to the summary that I have just made, my understanding is that the room is OK with this approach.

I see no objection.

It is so understood.

Now I am giving the floor to the distinguished delegate of Greece.

Mr. V. CASSAPOGLOU (Greece) Thank you Mr. Chairman. Just two remarks. I fully understand the really wise suggestions from our colleague of the United States and I think we need to have an extensive discussion and exchange of views, it is very complicated. The reference to the UNIDROIT registry that is another thing. The UNIDROIT registry was a registry just for private interest and commercial etc. This registry is extremely .. The former President of France said, ____ (?) I may propose to have some more formal, that means first of all, the declaration of Germany and Italy circulated as at least not an L but a conference room paper and second, to discuss the possibility to have an additional issue in the agenda of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee for next year with this item. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) I thank the distinguished delegate of Greece for this clarification and the spirit of cooperation which always characterizes your statements.

I have no further speakers on my list on this subject and, with your agreement, we will continue our consideration of item 14, use of space-derived geospatial data for sustainable development. The distinguished delegate of South Africa has the floor.

Mr. V. BOTSI (South Africa) Thank you Mr. Chairman. Chairperson, the South African Government has developed a South African Earth Observation Strategy (SAEOS), which is aimed at promoting a global integrated Earth observation system. The strategy was approved in October 2006 and captures the country's response to a ten-year implementation plan for Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS). SAEOS will provide the geospatial infrastructure needed to coordinate the collection, assimilation and dissemination of Earth observations so that their full potential to support policy, decision-making, economic growth and sustainable development in South Africa can be realized. SAEOS will establish an overarching national framework for Earth observation in South Africa. Considerable progress is being made in the worldwide development of GEOSS and we are firmly moving into the implementation phase of GEOSS, however, special efforts need to be made to encourage increased participation in GEOSS especially from developing countries. The longer we wait to do this the further we leave those countries behind and this ultimately affects the completeness of GEOSS as a global system. Also we need the opportunity of engaging those countries who are the most adversely affected from a socio-economic perspective by global challenges such as climate change.

Chairperson, due to the significant infrastructure development and data cost associated with Earth observation and the limited budget available in developing countries, their role in instigating regional Earth observation initiatives to address local problems have been severely restricted. A lack of sufficient local capacity to conduct these initiatives have further exacerbated the problem. It is South Africa's opinion that the future of Earth observation will be determined by the end-users and that only by broadening data access and capacitating these end-users. The full potential of Earth observation data ____ (?) successfully exploited in the various geo societal benefit areas.

South Africa has promoted the concept of data democracy in the global space arena during its tenure as Chair of the Committee of Earth Observation in 2008. In the very same vein as in the agenda item on recommendations on ways and means to foster international cooperation with a view to building national infrastructure to use geospatial data proposed by Brazil, South Africa endorses this important idea and pledges to support Brazil to move this item forward. The concept of Earth observation data democracy relies on focused efforts along several fronts with each front representing a pillar that constitutes a theme. These pillars include unhindered access to Earth observation information, open source of ____ (?) and open systems, such as freely available image processing software ____ (?) and image processing assistance, adequate dissemination models which reflect the realities of bandwidth in developing countries and locally initiated cross-border collaborative projects and intensive capacity building and training programmes.

Chairperson, the African Resource and Environmental Management Constellation (ARM), an initiative by Africans for Africans to strengthen and build their space capabilities, based on their user and capacity-building requirement is yet another example of international cooperation. In June of last year, South Africa, together with Algeria and Nigeria, signed a declaration of intent to cooperate on the ARM project. We are currently working towards signing a memorandum of agreement to formalize our respective commitments. The objectives of the ARM constellation will include realizing the Africa-wide objectives of NEPAD for development in science and technology, providing daily high resolution satellite coverage of key identified areas in Africa, building on indigenous knowledge to develop and transfer satellite technology, developing African human resource capacity in space science and technology by means of joint participation

and knowledge sharing and, providing Africa with rapid unrestricted ____ (?) access to satellite data.

Chairperson, in conclusion, we believe that affordable and timely access to Earth observation data and initiatives, such as ARM, to develop Africa's capabilities to acquire its own Earth observation data will contribute to international cooperation in the uses of Earth observation for sustainable development. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) I thank the distinguished delegate of South Africa for his contribution under this agenda item.

I have no more delegations on my list under this item, we are thus concluding our consideration of this item.

The next is item 15, other matters. I would like to inform the Committee with respect to the composition of the bureaus of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies for the period 2010-2011. Delegations have before them the curriculum vitae of the five nominees for the offices of Chairman, First Vice-Chairman and Second Vice-Chairman/Rapporteur of the Committee, Chairman of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and Chair of the Legal Subcommittee respectively, for the period 2010-2011.

The nominated candidates for the bureaus of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies for the period 2010-2011 are: Dumitru Dorin Prunariu (Romania) for the next Chairman of the Committee; Ms. Nomfuneko Majaja (South Africa) for First Vice-Chairperson of the Committee; Raimundo González-Aninat (Chile), Second Vice-Chairman/Rapporteur of the Committee; Ulrich Huth (Germany), Chairman of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee; Ahmed Talebzadeh (Islamic Republic of Iran) for the position of Chairman of the Legal Subcommittee. We may take it that the Committee, by this applause, voices its agreement with regard to the bureaus of the Committee for the period 2010-2011.

I see no objections. So approved.

I would now like to turn to the issue of permanent observer status. This morning, delegations had an opportunity to hear a statement by the observer representative of the Asia-Pacific Space Corporation Organization (APSCO) on their request to become a permanent observer to this Committee. They submitted document CRP.9 which we have before us. Delegations will also recall that we have received another application from the International Association

for the Advancement of Space Safety (IAASS) also asking to be considered for permanent observer status. If delegations are agreeable I would invite, at this stage, the observer representative of IAASS to address the Committee, it is on paper CRP.8. You have the floor distinguished representative of IAASS.

Mr. G. SGOBBA (IAASS) Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Committee. I have the honour to present to you the first International Association for the Advancement of Space Safety which is a non-profit organization dedicated to this important cause. The Association was established in 2004 in The Netherlands and, since October 2004, is a member of the International Astronautical Federation. In June 2006, former United States Senator John Glenn, the first American to orbit, became an honorary member of the Association. The Association's drivers are the following: advancing safety is not only a moral duty but is a key element to expand space programmes and make them more economically viable. We have not to forget what an accident in space means in terms of stopping or delaying space programmes.

Space commercialization and international cooperation civil space programmes is the way ahead. It requires of course an international safety culture. The international dimension of public sector risk would become more and more evident because of launch and re-entry risk, an orbital collision risk, space debris, nuclear-power sources uses, need for integrated international regulation system to cover traffic and safety of aviation and space operation, emerging sub-orbital space placed and space-based critical services is becoming increasingly understandable. Need for uniform international space safety standards to ensure fair competition in the global space market is also becoming very much an understood issue.

The goals of the Association (IAASS) are very much culturally oriented. The Association does not make policy, does not make lobby, we are only dedicated to enhance the understanding of what safety is, globally. Please remember that of all the accidents that happen in orbit, there are 10 accidents or 10 people killed on the ground and that there are no accidents, up to now, which happened during a mission or on the ground which was not preventable according to well-known technologies and technical means available at the date on which it happened. Our scope, as an Association, is to advance the science and application of space safety, improve the communication, dissemination of knowledge and cooperation between interested groups and individuals. It was mentioned a few minutes ago about the need of disseminated data, we also need to disseminate technical tools. There are,

for example, re-entries of spacecraft which require quite sophisticated analyses and only very few countries are able to perform those technical analyses. We want very much to make sure that the technical tools and means, which are available to the leading space-faring countries, are available to any country that by performing certain operations may impose an international risk. We need to improve the understanding and awareness of space safety discipline, promote and improve the development of a profession of space safety and also standards and advocate the establishment of necessary rules and regulation body which are necessary and common to other fields like sea and aviation.

The membership policy. IAASS admits only individual experts, we do not even seek to grow our membership but we basically accept in our membership anyone who has the necessary title and motivation to become a member. We, as an Association, very much encourage and truly we see as a strategy to have a very good contribution from the academia into the space safety field. Up to now, academia has been very much interested in this field and we believe that, through the Association involvement, we can truly create the synergies with industry and other institutional organizations such that we can create an environment of cooperation and dissemination of new knowledge. By attracting academic interest and involvement in space system safety research activity, the Association counts very much to effectively advance space safety to new levels and to establish space safety as an autonomous technical discipline. The big advancements that were done, for example in the US at the time of the ____ (?) were very much due to these synergies between the academic and the industrial and institutional work.

We provide service to our members which are information exchange, organization of conferences and seminars, access to databases of published data and information and we perform also independent studies. We provide also for space education and training programmes and publication of text books and, in this respect, I would like to underline that this month we have published with one of the most prestigious technical publishing house in the world, Elsevier, the first ever written book on space safety design which is meant to be used by universities. It is quite a thick book, 1000 pages. We also are ready and we support space safety standardization working group.

The organization of IAASS is in such a way to be on one side democratic, so all the members and the leaders of the Association are elected democratically but also to allow and make sure that they are

representative of all regions of the Earth. We have so-called regional representatives that are elected locally and we are meeting continuously representatives from countries which otherwise would not be sufficiently voted into the general assembly. So, in this way, we make sure that truly all possible countries are represented in the Association.

We have technical committees made up by members that have highly technical knowledge ability in their field. We have space systems safety, space transportation safety, space exploration safety technical committee, launch range safety committee, re-entry and space debris, space-based safety critical services and up/down to human factors and performance for safety. We have also a standing committee which organizes the day-by-day life of the Association.

We have established two major awards in the Association which are unique in their field, one is the Vladimir Syromiatnikov safety by design award which recognizes the great achievement of this great Russian engineer who has made possible docking in space through the so-called APAS system that was used during the Soyuz and Apollo missions. Also, we recognize with the second and not least important award, an American leader in space safety, Jerome Lederer, who was the father of aviation safety in the US as well as the Chief of Safety at the JSC after the Apollo 1 accident, we dedicated the award which is space safety pioneer award. By the way, the last edition of this award was given to Don Kessler who is the father of the space debris science.

The next conference of the IAASS will be held in Huntsville, Alabama, next year at the end of May and will have as a title, making safety matter. Thank you very much for your attention.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you very much representative of IAASS for your presentation of this International Association for the Advancement of Space Safety. Before giving the floor to members, I would like to say that APSCO spoke this morning possibly we could start off with APSCO because that is an intergovernmental organization and then, after that, we could take the following association. If there are no objections, I would suggest that we consider the case of APSCO. I would like to welcome APSCO.. Greece did you ask for the floor? Greece first followed by Venezuela.

Mr. V. CASSAPOGLOU (Greece) (*interpretation from French*) Thank you Chairman. I wanted to speak on the general problem of observers

and, when I say observers, I am not referring to observer States, I am talking about all the remainder, all those who are not intergovernmental organizations such as ESA and Intelsat and other organizations, be they political, technical, operational, whatever. I am basically referring to non-governmental organizations per se, in the strictest sense of the word.

It is with great attention that I perused CRP.11, dated 9 June, and there is an odd 20 of these bodies here, some of these bodies could be accepted by ECOSOC whereas others are presented here as being the saviours of the world. I cannot allow COPUOS and its two subcommittees to be transformed into a meeting room for various social and other interested associations, it cannot be allowed to go from a political forum to that. I think that we have to agree on criteria, unfortunately we have not had any rules of procedure and this has been the case over the last 50 years, so we really must set up some criteria. Each and every time we have to set up a restricted committee, just as we have in the case of large scale international intergovernmental diplomatic conferences where there is a credentials committee, I would insist on this. Amongst the criteria, we must first refer to the complete transparency with regard to inter-institutional aspects having to do with civil law and the economic aspects of these institutions or bodies. Thirdly, what I think is most important, their representativity as entities under civil law because there are some charity associations where it is an assembly of little old ladies, little old gentlemen and a couple of spinsters thrown in. I think that we have to have an association or an organization that has a headquarters, a business address, it must be a living entity and it must have representativity, it must be very clear what countries are represented, etc.

When we refer to permanent observer status, Chairman, I think one should not consider that that means forever, I think that one should allow oneself the possibility of withdrawing our consent with this status. If these civil law associations have fulfilled, have met the criteria for admission, then, provisionally for one, two or three years, we can see what we wish to do in their respective cases.

As for the authorization to be admitted to one of the three categories of ECOSOC. In order gain admission to ECOSOC, an organization has to have some sort of an affidavit on the part of COPUOS and also should have direct contacts with the ECOSOC Secretariat. It is necessary, first and foremost, to stand in defence of the prestige, the dignity of our forum. We are not a national parliament where lobbyists can come and go, we do not need lobbyists, it is highly

regrettable that I saw that there was an invitation, on the part of an observer, which was addressed to other non-governmental organizations calling them for an exchange of view in some lounge. Now, what is that?? That is simply unacceptable behaviour. I believe that we should pull our support for that organization because I believe that this is totally unconscionable.

Thirdly, I would also like to refer to a subject which is expensive for taxpayers and here I am referring to the rationalization of our work. We cannot accept to have all the observers speaking without any time limit, I think that we have to set up a Greek clepsydra, we have to give them five minutes no more.

As for presentations, I have said a couple of years ago already, that presentations have to be shunted off towards the afternoon because otherwise we are cutting our debates by two and we are subjecting ourselves to presentation upon presentation upon presentation. I believe that we should not speak of this in terms of cutting down the number of sessions or the length of session, I think that we have to apply a bit of common sense in how we apportion time, quite simply.

My proposal is a formal one. I believe that, by next February, before we accept any admission to observer status on the part of NGOs or intergovernmental organizations, we have to see whether they meet our criteria or not, if we accept them or not and I believe that, by February, really we should have wound up our work in preparation of that.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you very much distinguished delegate of Greece. There are some extremely interesting points in your statement, however, I do not want to prejudice or pre-determine the upshot of this debate before we get there. Venezuela now has the floor.

Mr. R. NAVARRO (Venezuela) (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you very much Chairman. I would like to thank APSCO, Asia-Pacific Space Corporation Organization, for its acceptance within the observer fold of our Committee. However, before I go any further, I would like to know exactly what the position of the Secretariat is on CRP.11 through you Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Yes, you are quite right, that is the logical sequence that we should take things up in. First, I will turn to the Secretariat for its presentation of CRP.11 which has been the result of concerns which already surfaced last year on the part of delegations and the Secretariat worked this document up.

Mr. N. HEDMAN (Secretariat) I therefore refer delegations to Conference Room Paper 11 and, as delegations recall, at its fifty-first session in 2008, the Committee agreed that non-governmental organizations that had been granted permanent observer status with the Committee should inform the Committee of any progress made in obtaining consultative status with ECOSOC. In fulfilling that request, the Office for Outer Space Affairs has reviewed the ECOSOC database of NGOs, non-governmental organizations that have consultative status with this organization and invited non-governmental organizations that had been granted permanent observer status with this Committee, with COPUOS, to provide the information requested by this Committee. As you can see, distinguished delegates, a table containing both information from the ECOSOC NGO database and information provided by those permanent observers of this Committee is annexed to the present document.

As you can see from this table, we first have the name of the organization in alphabetical order, the year since becoming an observer with COPUOS, with this Committee, and then comes the entries in the ECOSOC database. Lastly, reflection of the response of the respective non-governmental organizations to the invitation by the Office to provide information to the Office for Outer Space Affairs.

A couple of observations here, you will see different classes of entries in the ECOSOC and GO database. Where it is indicated in this table, no entries, it means that there is no entry in the database under that respective organization, it is blank. When there is indicated in this table, entry found status, this organization is not in consultative status with ECOSOC, it means that the entry found in the NGO database of ECOSOC simply states that fact, this organization is not in consultative status with ECOSOC. Further on, Mr. Chairman, there are several different categories of consultative status with ECOSOC and we have put exactly as it is in the entry in the NGO database, as you can see here, whether this is a special consultative status or whether it is a roster consultative status etc. and, for your consideration and also for the information of this Committee to try to have some explanation to that, on the last page, page 4, we have included the language, information taken from the website of ECOSOC explaining the values, types of consultative status with that organization and they are in three categories, general, special and roster status. So these three categories, they are referring to a consultative status with ECOSOC.

So, Mr. Chairman, with this document, the Secretariat hopes that the information provided here would provide some information to the debate among delegations. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you Secretariat. I have a question. Could you be so kind as to explain something about the letter that you sent out to the various observers. Tell us a little bit more about that and how do you analyse the answers that you have obtained. What was the response rate as well? Thank you.

Mr. N. HEDMAN (Secretariat) Thank you Mr. Chairman. Yes, thank you for reminding me of that. Yes, of course, when it comes to the letter that was sent out by the Office to all these organizations, in some cases we did not receive a reply but we contacted the organization and tried to get some ideas and more information. I can just review this, if you see, for instance, the first organization in the list, the African Organization of Cartography and Remote Sensing, they have been in contact with the Office but they have not provided any concrete information as to the correctness of the entry in the ECOSOC database and also what their intentions are to seek ECOSOC consultative status, so that is what is indicated there. We can say for instance, it is quite straightforward when it indicates, reply received, and then coupled with their confirmation of the intention to apply, etc., that indicates that there is a reply received from that organization.

We asked all of the organizations and, in some cases as you will see here, an organization already has consultative status with ECOSOC and that is just a fact that organization is already in consultative status with ECOSOC and the entries there as reflected in the NGO database, for instance, No. 4 COSPAR. This is mainly what the Secretariat has been able to obtain through this communication with the NGOs with permanent observer status with this Committee and, in some cases, we have had to send a reminder and be in contact with them.

Just for your information, Mr. Chairman, for instance with No. 16, the Prince Sultan bin Abdulaziz International Prize for Water and sorry for the error there, it should be PSIPW of course, we received a reply that all necessary documentation were prepared for submission to ECOSOC and it has been confirmed to the Secretariat during this session that the documentation is already prepared, it is now just a matter to transfer the documentation, the application to ECOSOC.

Mr. Chairman, this is what we have been able to _____(?).

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you very much. Could I ask another question? Were there any organizations that did not respond?

Mr. N. HEDMAN (Secretariat) Yes, Mr. Chairman, as you will see from this table, we can just go through the table and see there has been no reply whatsoever from the International Space University (ISU).

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you very much. This is a very clear demonstration of the interest that exists. The delegation of China would like to take the floor.

Mr. K. ZENG (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*) Mr. Chairman, from the Ministry of Information and Industry of China, on behalf of the Chinese delegation I would like to express my congratulations to the Asia-Pacific Space Corporation Organization for becoming a permanent observer with this Committee. Also, I would like to express my gratitude for all those who have supported that organization. As the host country of that organization, China will continue to provide support for the growth of that organization and also China will work together with that organization and other member States to promote the widespread use of space technologies in the Asia-Pacific region so that space technology and science could better serve the economic growth and social progress of the Asia-Pacific countries and also to make our own contribution for the whole world. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) I thank the delegate of China and we are coming back to the issue of observers. I am concerned that some did not even trouble themselves to respond. Continuing with the same subject, I have Bolivia, Switzerland, Venezuela and Greece on my list.

Mr. P. MARCA PACO (Bolivia) (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you Mr. Chairman. With a view to keeping abreast of events the Committee put together a report last year on this matter and that leads me to a question. Does an organization that the Secretariat just named, No. 17 if I am not mistaken, item 5 of paragraph 309 of last year's report identified the International Institute of Outer Space Law had observer status with ECOSOC, I understand that it did not go through this process, did not fill out the form, maybe it was the Space

University. My question is, will it retain its observer status in view of that situation? That is the first question.

Another question I have and, by the way, I have nothing against these NGOs, I understand some of them work very actively with the authorities on space related issues but last year we considered the need to regularize or formalize the situation of permanent non-governmental observers and again, referring to the report and the list submitted to the Committee in the intersessional period, pages 28-29, there is a section entitled non-governmental organizations, and there are new organizations here on the list and of these, six do not have observer status with ECOSOC. Some have filled out the forms, some have not, only two have the actual observer status. Also, looking at the list of these organizations that did not fill out the form, their observer status with ECOSOC would then be in question. If they do not have observer status then why are they even on the list?

The draft report which the Committee will certainly approve tomorrow should, in the opinion of my delegation, draw the distinction between the status of intergovernmental observers and that of non-governmental observers, for all of the reasons that have been mentioned here. The way it is written at the moment, they are all referred to as observers, all under the same heading if you will. I believe that in our report we should draw the distinction and particularly single out the non-governmental organizations. They should be identified as such and if they have, or have not, reached a formal status. For each observer on the list we should provide information, is it an intergovernmental organization or, is it a non-governmental organization, this would give us more clarity as to how these organizations are involved in this work, it is important to know whether they are intergovernmental or non-governmental. Also, harking back to the discussion that took place here last year, these concerns were already expressed and they are captured in last year's report of the COPUOS session. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Yes, we are going to take note of all comments. The next is Switzerland then Venezuela, then Greece, then China again, asking for the floor and Iran. Remember we need to wrap up the debate after that, we are running out of time.

Ms. N. ARCHINARD (Switzerland) Thank you Mr. Chairman. The Swiss delegation would like to come back to the application of the International Association for the Advancement of Space Safety that

we have under the eyes. Indeed, we are a bit concerned by the lack of information provided, for instance, we find no mention of any address or contact point within the documents provided by the Association especially the ____ (?) one, so the only address we find and the only name, actually point of contact, is the one of the President of the Association which signs the application letter addressed to the Director of OOSA and the address given here is located at ESTEC which is the European Centre for Technology of the European Space Agency of which Switzerland is a founding member. Switzerland has a concern and would like to clarify what the relation between the European Space Agency and this Association is, so as to avoid any possible confusion of which observer would be officially representing the voice of ESA in this Committee in the coming years. This delegation would like to delay the decision on the acceptance of this Association as permanent observer. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Yes, thank you. I understand your concern very well, distinguished delegate of Switzerland. Added to what the distinguished delegate of Greece has already said, the matter of this organization and its application will not be considered at the current session, this is something that will be taken up later, not at this current session.

Mr. R. NAVARRO (Venezuela) (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you Mr. Chairman. I think that the discussion as to whether or not we accept certain NGOs is important. Venezuela, in the last session, made very clear its position that we should establish very specific norms and requirements that observers, or those seeking observer status, should comply with our rules and regulations. We have to put this process in order. We have in front of us a list drawn up by the Secretariat and there are certain organizations here who have not attended our meetings in years, who do not even respond to the Secretariat's letters or requests and this is not in order. We should prepare a statement and we have the following statement to make.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela attaches importance to the issue of initiatives and norms and requirements to govern the work of COPUOS. Venezuela believes in participation of the public and we believe that non-governmental organizations have a place to participate, both at the national and international levels, by contributing specialized knowledge. In this context, recalling the discussion in the last session, we believe it is necessary to revise the procedures with a view to regularizing the granting of

observer status to those organizations that apply for it. We need to know which, in the last period of sessions, have received such status, this is consultative status with ECOSOC, some of the organizations have not filled the requirements for that, they have to be recognized as international organizations, they have to have established an executive office, a statute and a programme linked to the subject matter falling under the competence of COPUOS.

Mr. Chairman, at the last session, we had an interesting discussion on the participation of NGOs in the work of COPUOS and the Chair indicated that the Committee is not now granting observer status as easily as it did in the past. We should further strengthen our requirements in that regard. We need to give further consideration to the issue of NGOs and then submit to the Committee rules and norms that should apply. As to those organizations that have not in any way contributed to the work of the Committee, their status should be reconsidered.

In principle, we should have clear rules, establish permanent criteria and, as soon as possible, start applying them. In this regard, we believe that the Committee at its fifty-first session should, with the necessary adjustments, revise the procedures and norms applied to the granting of permanent observer status. The elaboration of these criteria with a view to making sure that organizations that are granted permanent observer status should meet all the criteria listed and the Committee should be informed of the progress and the contribution made by those organizations within the scope of the work of ECOSOC.

Mr. Chairman, based on this premise, the Venezuelan delegation believes that formal requirements need to be met for granting permanent observer status to NGOs and those that were granted in 2009. Since 1990, we need to review that list and make sure that they are all in compliance with all requirements. If they are not in compliance, this means that we should not continue with past practice in the institutional and procedural spirit of the United Nations of which COPUOS is a formal part.

We have before us CRP.11 and we are thankful to the Secretariat for having drawn it up and for collecting all this information. We see 20 non-governmental organizations here that are observers with COPUOS and a very small part of these have formal status but no status with ECOSOC. This should be granted *a posteriori* and not *a priori* in accordance with the formal requirements and the record of these organizations over the years and we know that the

process began in the early 1990s. This should be respected in considering granting permanent observer status to NGOs.

The delegation of Venezuela suggests that, starting now, we respect and strictly comply with all rules and standards and requirements established by COPUOS itself with regard to NGOs. Those that have been granted observer status with the Committee but have not met the requirements, particularly not reached a consultative status with ECOSOC, should be given a period of time in which these NGOs can rectify the situation and meet the requirements and only then continue as observers. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) I thank the delegation of Venezuela for its statement. I have Greece on my list.

Mr. V. CASSAPOGLOU (Greece) (*interpretation from French*) Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank, through you, the Secretariat for the work accomplished for our sake, I am referring to CRP.11 and I have a couple of things to add, particularly after hearing the comments of our colleagues from Bolivia and Venezuela.

Among the criteria, as you know, that a non-profit organization of the private sector must meet to be recognized as a non-governmental organization there is a requirement that it should be approved by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of its country. In a country anybody can claim, for the sake of the outside world, that he or she is an NGO and that is why that rule exists, there should be national recognition. An organization should be recognized as a non-governmental organization by its own government, its own foreign ministry. In the United States, if I am not mistaken, only 300-400 NGOs are recognized as such, a vast country, a democratic country, but only 300 or 400, maybe 600 at the most, are recognized as NGOs. There is an internal domestic process for recognition of NGOs. Thus, I state, that if these organizations fail to come here with a certificate of the foreign ministry of their country, we should not even consider their application. That was my first suggestion, an important criterion that I think we need to establish having listened particularly to my friend from Venezuela just now.

As to No.14, International Space University (ISU), this is a for-profit enterprise. It provides courses and tuition fees to the tune of \$30,000, if I am not mistaken, per year. This is not in the spirit of non-profit activity as far as by scientific or research organizations, nobody can say that Space Explorers Association or

others on this list are not involved in truly non-profit activities at the highest level of scientific knowledge, so these are different. Some are obviously very valuable in terms of the contributions they provide, others we have reservations about. Greece suggests that we set up a small informal group made up of volunteers to study the issue and draw up a list of criteria and we can start that work right away. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Very good. I think I have four more delegations asking for the floor and then we will wrap it up. China, you have the floor.

Mr. Y. XU (China) China appreciates the Secretariat's efforts to get the information concerning the status of the permanent observer NGOs to COPUOS and we are grateful for the note prepared by the Secretariat, in particular for kindly reminding us of the COPUOS decision made in 1990 and reaffirmed in last year's session.

As we all know and agree that the prerequisite for an NGO to become a permanent observer to COPUOS is consultative status with ECOSOC. Although we agree that, to some extent, COPUOS is in a unique situation so we bend the rules to make it possible that the NGOs can acquire consultative status with ECOSOC after it has been granted a permanent observer status to COPUOS. As a general understanding, if we bend the rules in favour of certain groups we have good reason to look forward that that group will fulfil the bending rules ____ (?). But, we look at the table attached to the note, we have a mixed picture, on the one hand we congratulate several NGO permanent observers for their consultative status with ECOSOC and we are encouraged about several visible progress has been made by several NGO permanent observers for their application. But, on the other hand, we are a little bit disappointed at those no replies, failure to provide concrete information or, even, just to confirm their intention to apply. It seems to me that all this means is that no progress has been made, even in some extreme situations after 15 years, no progress has been made.

Now we are facing a critical question, do we take a decision that COPUOS made very seriously and abide by the rule which has been made in 1990 and reaffirmed in 2008 or, are we inclined to discard those rules since some of our permanent observer NGOs are really unable to fulfil that requirement. It would seem that, I have to make it crystal clear and emphasize that China is not in any way opposed to the participation of NGOs, on the contrary China will look forward to

work with even more permanent observer NGOs since they have scientific and technical expertise which many of the government representatives, including myself, do not have. It is a question ____ (?), that is that COPUOS ____ (?). At least we can see that it is also in the long term benefit of the NGOs in question because if the NGOs want to play a very important role in COPUOS or in the UN ____ (?) they have to get the consultative status. So we hope that we can make progress on that issue in the coming years and we hope that COPUOS will ____ (?) this matter until it is solved. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) I thank the distinguished delegate of China. Iran has the floor.

Mr. B. BOLOURIAN (Islamic Republic of Iran) Thank you Mr. Chairman. We appreciate the work done by the Secretariat to prepare the valuable information and the latest developments regarding those NGOs which have been granted permanent observer status with the Committee and have been expected to make the necessary effort to obtain consultative status with ECOSOC. We highly value the contribution by the relevant NGOs to the work of the Committee, at the same time we share some of the concerns just raised by the previous speakers on the issue at hand. My delegation believes that the rules and requirements which govern obtaining observer status with this Committee should be duly respected by the NGOs. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you very much Iran for that statement. Syria you have the floor.

Mr. O. AMMAR (Syrian Arab Republic) (*interpretation from Arabic*) Thank you Chairman. I see that, once again, we are losing a lot of time and expending enormous efforts in addressing this issue of organizations and associations applying for observer status. This has been the case last year, the year before as well and I would like us to break with this practice and put together clear, well-defined criteria, as to what criteria should be met when applicants are seeking observer status.

I would like to thank the Secretariat for having prepared all this information for us on the organizations which already have been granted observer status by our Committee. The table that we have in the document in question shows to what extent it is important to have clear and well-defined criteria for the admission of further candidates to this observer status category because it is necessary to have any new

applicants meet these criteria. However, looking at this table, I think that we also have to double-check that the present observer status organizations and associations that have already been granted status because we cannot have non-homogeneous criteria between observers that have already been admitted and new applicants. I think we have to regularly review the members and go through the list of observer status associations to make sure that they apply to that category and also apply them, of course, to new applicants and thereby save the time that we are regularly wasting on these matters here in this forum. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you very much representative of Syria. The United States.

Mr. K. HODGKINS (United States of America) Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, as my delegation has stated on repeated occasions, we value the participation by all observers whether they are permanent or temporary, whether they are NGOs or intergovernmental organizations, they have made a valuable contribution to the work of the Committee as well as to the action teams and to UNISPACE III. The trend clearly in the UN system, if not globally, has been of more involvement of civil society. So, to engage in a discussion on how we might, either directly or through indirect means, make NGOs less welcome in this Committee or question their viability in my view is swimming against the tide in the UN, we may as well go back to say pre-1991, if that is the way we want to handle our business here.

There are two points about performance in this Committee, prior speakers have raised the issue of NGOs that have permanent observer status in the Committee and whether they have contributed to the work of the Committee, that is quite legitimate. However, the problem has not been whether observers have contributed to the work of the Committee, the problem has been the member States of the Committee and whether they have contributed. I call your attention to resolution 56/51. In that resolution we had agreed to discontinue the practice of rotating seats among four countries and to bring them on as full members as well as to add two additional members to the Committee, which is fine, but, at the same, we also agreed that regional groups should hold consultations among their members for the purpose of urging them to participate in the work of the Committee and its subcommittees and that the regional groups report to the Committee at its forty-fifth session.

You only have to look at the report of the Committee, or the subcommittees, to see who actually participates in the debates under the agenda items, who actually makes statements. You only have to look at the list of participants to find out what member States actually show up and those that do not. I would suggest, if we are worried about the NGOs and observers and their level of participation, we are going to have to also do our own kind of self examination.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, the point about ECOSOC and the consultative status. If I recall from the debate in 1990, the request for the NGOs to obtain or at least apply for observer status in ECOSOC was artificial and it is still, in my view, artificial, because it does not serve any real purpose other than to at least have the NGOs take a step to gain consultative status with ECOSOC but, if ECOSOC does not give them consultative status, that does not automatically disqualify them as a legitimate observer in this Committee because they have something to add. You look at the 20 organizations that are listed in this table and they all have something to add to our work, this is not as if we invited some alien organization to participate.

My suggestion and this is probably the easiest way to move forward and it would, I think, allay the concerns of those delegations that have spoken before me. We should simply eliminate the ECOSOC step and then there will be no problem because then we will not worry about whether this particular NGO has applied with ECOSOC, we make our own decision that, yes, this is a group that we want as part of our Committee and that is as far as it has to go and then we have no problem. So this debate we have every year about whether they have complied with these old rules, old rules which I would maintain are very outdated considering we set these in 1990, they have not kept up with the geopolitical trend, if you will, since 1990. That is my suggestion, if we want criteria. My delegation's view is that the criteria we currently have is inadequate because it is restrictive and we ought to just get rid of this ECOSOC requirement and then everyone will be happy. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you delegation of the US. Mexico, I believe you have asked for the floor.

Mr. S. CAMACHO-LARA (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you Chairman, I will be very brief. My delegation could endorse the position of those who have said that possibly we should indeed maintain the criteria that have been set up in 1990, no problem on that for us. However, we do

not believe that, at this juncture, we should decide that if these organizations do not have consultative status obtained within ECOSOC by the next meeting, which is going to be in February, if they have not got that observer status by then that we should eliminate them and deny them of observer status. We are aware of the value of their contributions as NGOs however, we do know that non-participation on their part may be due to budgetary restrictions or cuts or staff budget cuts, all of these organizations and associations cannot necessarily afford to participate in every single event, there are some States that cannot afford either. So some of these organizations have been at various times very active, have significantly contributed to the substantive level of our discussion. I do not want to go into the details of this, upon request I could of course if you wish me to, I do not believe that we should multiply the criteria to be applied, we could subscribe to the US proposal in this regard, i.e. if each and every time we are going to be coming up against problems with the consultative status under ECOSOC, if each and every time we have these problems and, after all, we could take up ECOSOC link criteria and endorse the US proposal.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you very much Mexico. Venezuela did you ask for the floor?

Mr. R. NAVARRO (Venezuela) (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you Chairman. The US delegation has made a proposal according to which if we have to wait for ECOSOC to pronounce we are going to be possibly able to do without ECOSOC after all. Instead of sending the organizations to ECOSOC and have them be severe in their criteria maybe we could do without ECOSOC and I think that that would also be a viable approach and solution.

I would refer to resolution 96/31 which states that, all UN organizations must review their NGO consultation procedures to make sure that there is consistency with the text of this resolution, that is the brunt of the resolution. I believe that it is necessary to give civil society the possibility of contributing to our work, indeed contributing to the debate within our Committee.

Chairman, I do not think that our mission should be to make life difficult for these associations and organizations, we should make it possible for them to contribute in such a way as to ensure the advancement of our work.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you very much. Greece for a short

comment, then Colombia, and then I would like to conclude this debate.

Mr. V. CASSAPOGLOU (Greece) I fully support the idea of our colleague from the United States. It is a very wise idea and we have to work on that. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you, Greece. Colombia followed by Romania and then we really have to conclude on this.

Mr. J. OJEDA BUENO (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you. I do not wish to reiterate the positions already presented by various delegations on this matter but it is true that we need rules. We do not know whether the rules we have are restrictive or not, apparently ECOSOC consultative status is not something that is easy to achieve so, consequently, I think that the fairest proposal, as far as we are concerned, is the American proposal allowing for the broadest possible participation of civil society.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you Colombia. Romania you have the floor.

Mr. D. PRUNARIU (Romania) Taking into account the change conditions from the moment when ECOSOC was necessary to approve the status of some NGOs and ____ (?) status where the Committee's self-determinant organizations, institutions. I endorse also the proposal made by the United States to eliminate the ECOSOC problem when we accept the NGOs because we are able to appreciate exactly what NGOs are dealing with space and are helping our Committee. For instance, the Association of Space Explorers, it is an association of individuals dealing only with space and bringing their experience only within this Committee not having any other ____ (?) within the UN. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Fine, thank you. To sum up, we do not have to conclude on this matter today definitively, I would just like to take stock.

Everyone in the room agrees that the participation of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations is very important for the various eloquent views already expressed. We have also decided that the situation is not satisfactory, it must be improved, I think it is important for us, the members of the Committee, to feel at ease and it is important for the observers also to feel at ease. They

must be synergy ensured. Observers should feel welcome in our midst.

Now, how to improve the situation availing the various proposals. I personally believe that the ECOSOC procedure is a fairly cumbersome one, it is difficult, I am aware of this because I have spoken to my colleagues in ECOSOC and they have confirmed that that is the case. We are in a fairly atypical situation, it is a very specifically focused Committee. How can ECOSOC consultative bodies have such specific concerns as we have? Possibly we should envisage skipping this administrative hurdle which is a very unwieldy time-consuming one. I suggest that you think about this but possibly you should enrich this proposal with various ideas. We should not just entertain one single proposal, I think that we should not lock ourselves in on one solution, we should maybe set up a small working group of States which, on a voluntary basis, would contribute to this debate and present the upshot of their discussions and ideas in complement to the 1990 ideas that we have in this document. They should consider present practices and see then what the group, in its wisdom, could come out with by way of a positive recommendation to get us out of this dead end. I personally believe that that is the only solution possible and if you have no objection I would suggest that we leave it at that, we do not have to lock in a decision on this straight away.

China then followed by Venezuela and then I really wish to conclude.

Mr. Y. XU (China) I apologize after hearing your summary of discussions I humbly, on behalf of China, disassociate us from your summary. We totally disagree with your suggestions and we reserve our right to ____ (?) this issue at the General Assembly because it seemed to us that NGOs participating in UN entity is a cross-border issue and not only related to this COPUOS. COPUOS is a main body of the UN so we have make very careful consideration of this issue before jumping into any suggestions under ____ (?). We hope that we can keep this issue and these standards and think very profoundly before making any decisions on them. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you China. Venezuela has the floor.

Mr. R. NAVARRO (Venezuela) (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you. The problem is that, on the list that we have before us, there are few institutions or organizations which actually have obtained consultative status with ECOSOC. If you were to take No. 7 for example, in 1995 they were

awarded observer status and, in 1996, they were given consultative status with ECOSOC. So, the one preceded the other. I believe that if an application is not lodged then NGOs will never obtain such consultative status so I think that they just have to abide by the general rules availing for the awarding of consultative status.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you Venezuela. I would like to say that indeed this has been a most interesting debate. Bolivia you are really the last speaker on this matter.

Mr. P. MARCA PACO (Bolivia) (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you. I would like to warn the Committee that if we were just to delete the column ECOSOC, if we were to accept three or four NGOs every year then, by the time ten years goes by, in this room there will be more NGOs than States present. They are going to be taking decisions instead of States taking decisions. I am willing to go along with that but I do not think that is very wise, I do not think that is where we want to go in this Committee. Possibly we could set a ceiling, if we were to say five per year then that is 35 ten years down the road and more of them than that is 50 of them and that is going outnumber the member States. Possibly we could slow down that pace. These organizations have permanent observer status once they are accepted into the fold, that is not a good idea. If we have rotation to allow every State to sit on the Committee, I do not understand why observers should be given permanent rights to observe. I do not think it would be a good idea to set aside the ECOSOC rules because, after all, there are reasons for those rules and they have set the rules for participation. Let us not forget that we, in the Committee, are a subsidiary body to ECOSOC and I do not think that a subsidiary body can just flout the rules of the body to which it is subordinate.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you very much Bolivia. We cannot go on like this, everyone is asking for the floor. The Secretariat has a heavy schedule so I think I will just give the floor to two more delegations, Venezuela and South Africa and then we really must come to an end.

Mr. R. BECERRA (Venezuela) (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you very much. I know that we do not have much time but I also believe that the technical presentations should be left until later because this is a very important debate that we have to have.

ECOSOC is considered as being a step to take as an administrative hurdle, that is not the case. What

would be the case if we did not have to go via ECOSOC? Each year, ECOSOC would require the NGOs to present a report on the financial situation applying in each organization, on the basis of that ECOSOC can decide whether yes or no, consultative status can be granted. It is not a purely administrative approach or hurdle here, this is not something which is not important, this is something which does favour interaction between civil society and our Committee. This is a possibility which makes it possible for civil society to contribute significantly to us and our work.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) South Africa.

Ms. N. MAJAJA (South Africa) Thank you. Similarly we agree on the value that is brought to the Committee by these NGOs but the problem is how do we actually agree on how they come into the Committee. The discussion I have noted with keen interest is going backward and forward without a specific decision. We therefore support your suggestion, Chairperson, to establish a working group to look at this issue, holistically once and for all, because we have seen each time and again the Committee takes a lot of time in deciding whether the NGOs should be actually given which status or whatever. If we sit, a small group of countries, and we look at this issue once and for all we may be able to come to a solution. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you for having preserved my proposal, South Africa, that is about the only proposal I can make as Chairman. There is always the pros and cons, I think that what I have proposed is something which is sound. I do not know whether China would be against setting up a working group which would consider the issues at stake.

Mr. Y. XU (China) Thank you for bearing with me although we are perplexed on your only proposal to set up a working group to look at this issue. The general idea for us is that the NGOs participating in COPUOS is not the issue only concerning the member States, it is also concerning the UN body as a whole so, beside setting up a working group of member States but I think, perhaps, you can also ask the Secretariat to seek the ideas from the ECOSOC Secretariat as well as the ECOSOC non-governmental committee on that. I think that is the general idea we should have as a background to talk about this issue. Not only ____ (?) of the member States.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Yes, I believe that this is a very reasonable

proposal that we should request the views of ECOSOC, this can be done. I believe that Austria is also nodding.

Ms. C. REINPRECHT (Austria) Just to support your proposal, I think it would be wise to look into the subject matter by creating a working group that has the opportunity to discuss this further so we can move ahead and, given that we report to the General Assembly anyway, at some point UN bodies will be involved in that question. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you.

Mr. K. HODGKINS (United States of America) Just to clarify, this Committee is not subservient to ECOSOC, we are a standing body of the General Assembly, we report directly to the Fourth Committee. ECOSOC might have a view but I am not entirely convinced it is a view that I find determinant. What we have to first establish is, is it required for an NGO to be an observer in the UN system? Is it a requirement that they go to ECOSOC? Do NGOs that are in FAO, do they have to go to ECOSOC? Or the ILO or UNIDO? I am not sure. In reading the note, on page 4 of the note, it says, organizations that apply for consultative status but do not fit in any of the other categories usually included in the roster, these NGOs tend to have a rather narrow or technical focus, then it says, NGOs that have formal status with other UN bodies or specialized agencies, such as FAO or ILO, can be included on the ECOSOC roster. It sounds to me as though you are able to grant observer status, whether you are on the ECOSOC roster or not is optional. I could be wrong and that is something that we obviously have to consider.

In terms of having a working group, I suppose we could but I do not think today we are going to be able to nail that down completely because I would like to have a better understanding of what the mandate is for that working group. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you. I would request that the delegate of China should not insist on taking the floor so as not to go on with the discussion. I believe that we have had a broad ranging debate on this. I suggest that we defer this matter until tomorrow. China could you allow me to go on to item 15 of the agenda?

Mr. Y. XU (China) Thank you Mr. Chairman. I think what I am suggesting to consult ECOSOC and the NGO committee it is because the status of COPUOS is affiliated to ECOSOC because NGOs participating in United Nations is a matter concerning

ECOSOC as well as the NGO committee. so we will have a broad idea not only concerning the COPUOS mandate. I think I am very disappointed to hear that my ideas were misinterpreted and we insist that one way or another that that issue should be controlled by ECOSOC as well as the NGO committee. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you. Let us now go on to 15, other matters. We have no speakers requesting the floor under 15. We have several technical presentations and we have 30 minutes left.

I would like to give the floor to Poland.

Mr. P. WOLANSKI (Poland) Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, I would like to make a very short comment about the comments of the Greek representative after lunch concerning the 400th anniversary of Galileo, especially about his comments on Copernicus.

I would like only to mention that Copernicus was a mathematician, astronomer, physician, classical scholar, translator, artist, jurist, governor, military leader, diplomat, economist and, also served in a position in the church as a Catholic cleric, this was not a priest which is very often misinterpreted. Copernicus was a great scientist, diplomat and scholar. Concerning the predecessor of the Copernicus theory there were a few Greeks which proposed the hypothesis about the solar system, about the revolution of Earth around the Sun, it was Philolaus, Heraclides and Aristarchus but there was also one Greek, Ptolemy, who proposed the theory about the geocentric system which lasted about one and a half millennium and only Copernicus proved that the Earth and other planets are rotating about the Sun and it is very commonly acceptable and Copernicus was a very great astronomer. Thank you very much for taking your time.

The CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from Spanish*) Thank you very much. So now we have 30 minutes for the technical presentations. Consequently, I would like each presentation to be 10 minutes long. Let us take the first presentation straight away, the floor is given to Mr. Thomas Naumann of Germany.

Mr. T. NAUMANN (Germany) [Presentation: From Quarks to the Universe - the Big Bang in the Lab]

Second VICE-CHAIRMAN Thank you Mr. Naumann for your presentation. I wish that the LHC experiment, which has been postponed for many months due to technical problems, will reach a

successful conclusion in the near future. We will move now to the second presentation.

Switzerland has the floor.

Ms. N. ARCHINARD (Switzerland) Thank you. The Swiss delegation just wanted to thank the German delegation for this very interesting presentation on the activities conducted at CERN. It is really interesting that we hear, here in this forum, about the connections between the problems addressed in astronomy and astrophysics and those addressed at CERN on material and the origin of the universe. The Swiss delegation also wanted to precise a point that CERN, which is a European intergovernmental organization, hosted by Switzerland but also by France because the LHC accelerator goes through the border between France and Switzerland. Thank you very much.

Second VICE-CHAIRMAN Thank you very much for your intervention. Now we move to the second presentation which will be by Ms. Erna Adiningsih on space and climate in Indonesia: status and challenges.

Ms. E. ADININGSIH (Indonesia) [Presentation: Space and Climate in Indonesia: Status and Challenges]

Second VICE-CHAIRMAN Thank you Ms. Adiningsih for your presentation and for your very interesting results regarding our growing understanding on the climate variability and also on anthropogenic climate change and enhancing the importance of space-based observation as regards the capability to make projections for future climate and also to adapt to climate change.

Our third presentation that we will hear today is by the representative of Algeria, Mr. Aboubekr-Seddik Kedjar on the third African Leadership Conference on Space Science and Technology for Sustainable Development.

Mr. A-S. KEDJAR (Algeria) [Presentation: third African Leadership Conference on Space Science and Technology for Sustainable Development]

Second VICE-CHAIRMAN (*interpretation from French*) Thank you Mr. Kedjar for your very interesting presentation, I am sure that this conference will be successful. The programme sounds very interesting and certainly very useful and beneficial for Africa not only for Africa.

(*continued in English*) Now we will move to the fourth presentation today that is by Ms. Ariane Cornell of the Space Generation Advisory Council on the outcomes of the SGAC 10 year anniversary conference: UNISPACE III -How far have we come?

Ms. A. CORNELL (SGAC) [Presentation: The Outcomes of the SGAC 10 Year Anniversary Conference: UNISPACE III – How Far Have We Come?]

Second VICE-CHAIRMAN Thank you Ms. Cornell for your presentation and for sharing with us the results and the conclusions and the learning process of the 10-year anniversary conference of the Space Generation Advisory Council.

Are there any questions or comments?

I see none.

Distinguished delegates, I will shortly adjourn this meeting of the Committee, before doing so I would like to inform delegates of our schedule of work for tomorrow morning. We will reconvene promptly at 10 a.m., at that time we will begin our consideration of agenda item 16, report of the Committee to the General Assembly.

Are there any questions or comments on this proposed schedule?

I see none.

Before adjourning, I would like to thank the interpreters for their cooperation by staying over time and we will now move and go to enjoy the Heurigen. This meeting is now adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow morning.

The meeting closed at 6.21 p.m.