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Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 12th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 29 October 2007, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Mohamad . . . . . (Sudan)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 31: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (*continued*) (A/62/20)

1. **Ms. Link** (Israel) said that her Government attached great importance to cooperation with other States and international agencies in promoting the peaceful uses of outer space. It had attended meetings of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) as an observer and had participated in the United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE) and its subsidiary programmes and activities. Following its launch of the OFEQ-1 satellite in 1988, Israel had become one of a group of eight nations which were capable of producing, launching and operating their own satellites.

2. Israel continued to use its technological advantages in certain niches, notably small, sophisticated satellites, space propulsion, the global positioning system (GPS) for ground application and satellite-based technologies such as remote sensing. The Israel Space Agency (ISA) had undertaken a number of joint projects that would benefit the international community. It was cooperating with France on the Vegetation and Environment Monitoring New Micro-Satellite (VENUS) project, which included the development, manufacture and operation of an observation microsatellite aimed at optimizing agriculture and aquaculture applications. It was also cooperating with India on the Tel-Aviv University Ultraviolet Imaging Experiment (TAUVEX) project, whose aim would be to solve astrophysical questions relating to star formation, history of galaxies and black holes. ISA had signed cooperation agreements with agencies in France, Canada, Germany, the United States, the Russian Federation, India, Ukraine and the Netherlands, and hoped to sign similar agreements with Chile, Brazil and the Republic of Korea. Israel was negotiating a framework agreement to join the European Space Agency.

3. Israeli academic and research institutes and private companies had played an active role in enhancing international cooperation by exploring space-based technology that could alleviate some pressing environmental needs. Israel was willing to expand its space cooperation and share its knowledge and expertise with other States, and commended the Committee on its efforts to use space technologies for improving quality of life on Earth.

4. **Mr. Kyslytsya** (Ukraine) said that Ukraine's Third National Space Programme for 2003-2007 and its proposed programme for 2008-2012 focused on international cooperation to address a wide range of scientific, technical and economic issues. Funding for the programme would be quadrupled in comparison with previous years. It addressed sustainable development through use of Earth observations and space data, and aimed to strengthen the country's security, expand education and research programmes, and promote country-wide application of technologies. It would transform the space sector into a priority branch of the economy and ensure the development and use of space technology.

5. Ukraine participated in several international projects and programmes aimed at promoting the peaceful uses of outer space and supported the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (SPIDER). Its international cooperation aimed to ensure favourable conditions under international law for Ukraine's participation in international space projects and to support Ukrainian businesses in the global space sector. In 2007, Ukrainian launch vehicles had made four successful orbital launches with satellites for the United States, the Russian Federation, Germany and Egypt.

6. The first all-Ukrainian conference on "Aerospace Observations for Sustainable Development and Security GEO-UA" would be held in Kyiv in June 2008. It would discuss the status of and prospects for use of aerospace information in addressing natural resources management, sustainable development and security. His Government fully acknowledged the dangers of uncontrolled proliferation of rocket technology and complied with relevant international treaties and non-proliferation regimes. It pledged to continue to support global efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The National Space Agency of Ukraine continued to work towards eliminating space debris and took into account the recommendations of the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee in modernizing and designing launch vehicles and spacecraft.

Agenda item 30: Effects of atomic radiation (A/62/46)

7. **The Chairman** invited the Secretary of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation to make a presentation on the Committee's work.

8. **Mr. Crick** (Secretary of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation) recalled that the Committee's, mandate was renewed annually to assess the levels, effects and risks of ionizing radiation worldwide and to disseminate its findings. It had 21 member States, although other States and organizations provided data. Its funding came from the United Nations regular budget. The Committee's annual session was attended not only by its member States but also by 100 cost-free experts of the highest calibre. Every four or five years, it published its findings, which were greatly appreciated by the scientific community. The latest substantive reports had been issued in 2000 and 2001 and had focused on the sources, effects and hereditary effects of ionizing radiation. Generally speaking, the Committee was better at communicating with scientists than with the General Assembly or the public.

9. The Committee had carried out reviews of the effects of various doses of radiation, which, at very high levels, such as those encountered by the firemen who had dealt with the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear-power plant in 1986, could lead to burns, radiation sickness and death and, at lower levels, to an increasing risk of cancer. The Committee's findings were passed on to the International Commission on Radiological Protection or direct to various United Nations agencies, which, in turn, used them as the basis for their own conventions or regulations in the formulation of safety standards and protection programmes. The scientific report contained in section II of the report on its fifty-fourth session (A/61/46) had presented new comprehensive studies on the health effects of ionizing-radiation exposure, had reviewed new cellular, genetic and microbiological techniques and had benefited from longer periods of epidemiological follow-up. It had concluded that, while there were differences at the detailed level, the overall risk factors of cancer remained unchanged.

10. With regard to safety standards, in 1996 the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and five other organizations had co-sponsored and issued the most recent edition of the International Basic Safety Standards for Protection against Ionizing Radiation and for the Safety of Radiation Sources. IAEA General Conference resolution GC (51)/RES/11, of 21 September 2007, had noted that the secretariat had commenced revision of the standards with the participation of sponsors. It had taken note of the Scientific Committee's 2006 report and had urged the secretariat to consider carefully and justify any potential changes to the standards, ensuring consistency with the 2006 report. At its session in May 2007, the Committee had considered five annexes on public and worker exposures, medical exposures, accident exposures, effects on non-human biota and Chernobyl radiation and effects. It had concluded that those annexes should be finalized and published in 2008.

11. Between 1980 and 2007, the Scientific Committee's annual budget had generally declined in real terms, even as the cost-free assistance available to it was falling. A P-5 post had been abolished in the 1992-1993 biennium, precisely when the pace of communication and scientific development had been stepped up and the number of references to the Committee's work in the scientific community had soared. The budgetary constraints that had caused his predecessor to resign and had overburdened the secretariat had obviously had an impact on the quality of the Scientific Committee's work and its outreach to the public. Its studies were no longer as reliable, thus undermining credibility, and there had been delays in their publication — the twentieth-anniversary Chernobyl report being a case in point — which in turn had hampered the work of other specialized agencies; it had become impossible to engage first-class experts and difficult to address cross-disciplinary aspects. The Committee noted with appreciation that the budget proposal for 2009 had been increased. Of course some help would be available in the form of funds transferred by UNEP and the general trust fund it had established for voluntary contributions to the Scientific Committee.

12. The staffing needs, however, remained. It had been suggested that the Professional post abolished in the 1990s should be reinstated, because, given the pace of scientific development, a single expert could not be knowledgeable enough in both physics and biology or handle the communications and coordination required.

13. The expansion of the Scientific Committee's membership, would pose financial and administrative

problems, and especially the fact that members had to be active scientists knowledgeable in a broad range of issues in the field of radiation levels and effects, able to compile, prepare and evaluate scientific reports and to summarize and synthesize material for the General Assembly, the scientific community and the public.

14. At its forthcoming session, the Scientific Committee would address its longer-term strategy and programme of work, which would encompass improving its methods of work and communication with the public, and dealing with scientific issues of increasing scope. Complex documents would have to be adopted with time-sensitive data on public, worker and medical exposures and on accidents like Chernobyl and their effects on both humans and non-human biota.

15. The Scientific Committee was highly respected by Governments, international organizations and the scientific community because of its independence and scientific objectivity. Its findings critically underpinned the programmes of Governments and other international organizations on protection against radiation; in that context, it was important to keep the science and the policy separate while adjusting to future challenges. It was more efficient to develop a global consensus through the sharing of knowledge and information than through national or regional initiatives.

16. **Mr. Maleki** (Islamic Republic of Iran) asked how Member States could justify allocating only one expert to the secretariat of such an important body as the Scientific Committee. Perhaps it should open its membership to more of the developing countries, which understood the value of its work and which would surely try to remedy the situation.

17. **Ms. Parviainen** (Finland) observed that the draft resolution to be adopted under the item proposed introducing an observership system for a year, that would allow observers to participate in the coming session and facilitate eventual full membership for them in the Scientific Committee.

18. **Mr. Metelitsa** (Belarus) asked whether his Government would be able to receive the Chernobyl report prior to its issuance at the next session.

19. **Mr. Onuoha** (Nigeria) asked how useful the Chernobyl report would still be, if it had not been possible to complete it even 20 years after the event.

20. **Mr. Crick** (Secretary of the, United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation) said he did not know why there was only one expert in the Scientific Committee secretariat, except that it was a legacy issue. He also did not know why a second Professional post had been abolished in the mid-1990s.

21. Regarding the membership of developing countries, it should be pointed out that from its inception the Committee had been a scientific, non-political committee. It was therefore inevitable that some members should have participated in it from the pioneering days of the development of ionizing radiation. Now, of course, developing countries were bringing more and more expertise to the table. The challenge for the Committee was to organize its work differently from the way it had done in the 1950s and 1960s, when the Scientific Committee had been the only forum for sharing information on the subject of ionizing radiation. The Internet was now the way, through peer-review journals readily available on it. The Scientific Committee had to become a body that synthesized information, as well as collecting data from all sources more efficiently and making that data available to all. That operational issue was being discussed as one part of future strategy.

22. He assured the delegation of Belarus, which had been sending observers for the past two or three years to the discussions on the Chernobyl document, that the report would be made available in advance to his Government so that the country's scientists could check that no scientific data had been overlooked. Reports had actually already been issued on Chernobyl in 1988 and 2000. The forthcoming report provided a follow-up on the latest trends in health patterns, and was therefore not time-critical; but it was unfortunate that it had not been available on the twentieth anniversary. Follow-up reports would continue to be issued in the future as health patterns were monitored.

23. The secretariat saw no problem in dealing with six observers in the immediate future, but it was concerned about the long-term resources for handling more people in a decision-making capacity than currently were members.

24. **Ms. Gatehouse** (Australia), noting that Australia had chaired the Scientific Committee at its fifty-fifth session, said that Governments and organizations throughout the world now relied on the Committee's

scientific estimates for evaluating radiation risk, establishing radiation protection and safety standards and regulating radiation sources. Within the United Nations system, those estimates were used by IAEA and assisted the General Assembly in making health recommendations.

25. Australia welcomed the Committee's intention to develop a long-term strategic plan at its 2008 session. The relevance of its work and the need to disseminate its findings quickly were important in the context of the current energy debate; its assessments of potential harm from chronic low-level exposures among large populations affected the evaluation of future energy options.

26. A lack of funds was preventing the Scientific Committee from publishing significant scientific contributions by Member States. Voluntary contributions to the UNEP general trust fund were not an alternative to providing adequate resources for the Committee secretariat so that it could expedite its work and disseminate its findings before they became outdated. In 2007, six Member States had expressed their desire to join the Scientific Committee but, while the interest was welcome, the extra burden on an already overstretched secretariat could not be overstated, and financial, operational and scientific issues would need to be resolved before it could be decided how new members could effectively contribute.

27. Introducing draft resolution A/C.4/62/L.5 on the effects of atomic radiation, she announced that the sponsors had been joined by the Czech Republic, Egypt, the Netherlands and Pakistan. She observed that the draft resolution endorsed the Scientific Committee's mandate, and encouraged its vital work in providing an authoritative scientific review of the field, and she drew particular attention to paragraphs 3, 12 and 13.

28. Responding to an inquiry from the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran with regard to changes from the previous year's resolution, she said that, apart from text in paragraphs 14 and 15 on the importance of strengthening the secretariat and the issue of new membership in the Scientific Committee, all other updates had been technical in nature.

29. **Mr. Nakano** (Japan) said that Japan had benefited from the work of the Scientific Committee, and looked forward to the publication of its new report. To mark that occasion, the Government was planning to hold a symposium on the Scientific Committee's recent achievements and future directions in radiation research, with the Chairman of the Scientific Committee as a keynote speaker. He called for the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to review and strengthen the current arrangements for the Scientific Committee, and to consider a temporary voluntary-funding mechanism to complement existing ones, so as to ensure its continued ability to discharge its responsibilities.

30. While the participation of the six Member States desiring membership in the Scientific Committee would doubtless enhance its work, his delegation was of the view that the qualification for membership required further clarification in order to maintain the Committee's proper functioning. It also shared the concerns expressed in the Committee's report with regard to the financial and administrative impact of such an increase in its membership.

31. **Mr. Perazza** (Uruguay), speaking on behalf of MERCOSUR and associated States, called for the early issuance of the 2006 report of the Scientific Committee, while noting with satisfaction that according to that report, the risks of exposure to ionizing radiation remained unchanged. Expressing concern regarding the delay in release of reports reviewed in the fifty-third and fifty-fourth sessions of the Scientific Committee, he also encouraged their early completion.

32. Reaffirming the need for UNEP to strengthen support for the Scientific Committee in accordance with General Assembly resolution 61/109, he expressed satisfaction with the financial contribution of UNEP for the publication of the 2006 report and the creation of a trust fund to manage extrabudgetary contributions to the Scientific Committee. However, those measures did not satisfactorily address the need for stable, permanent and regular support for the Committee; in that regard, he expressed support for the Committee's concern expressed in paragraph 5 of its latest report (A/62/46). He called on the General Assembly to reiterate its decision to maintain the current functions and independent role of the Scientific Committee, as stated in resolution 61/109.

33. He welcomed the development of a long-term strategic plan for the Scientific Committee as described in its latest report, but emphasized the need for the

Committee to complete urgent current tasks such as providing information requested by the Argentine Government on low doses of radiation.

34. Enlargement of the Scientific Committee did not seem appropriate at a time when it was experiencing difficulties in fulfilling its mandate at its current level of membership. First, further enhancement of its funding mechanism and administrative structure were required. He called for an early and durable solution to those issues, noting that in the meantime, experts from States not represented on the Committee could nevertheless participate in its deliberations as guests either of other delegations or of the Committee itself under special circumstances.

35. **Ms. Hernández Toledano** (Cuba), underscoring the consistent excellence of the information the Scientific Committee provided to Member States, said that its budget and staffing crisis was affecting the efficiency and timeliness of its work. Alternative funding mechanisms must be found to allow it to fulfil its mandate.

36. Cuba supported the idea of developing a longer-term strategic plan that would establish objectives, expected achievements and associated performance indicators and would serve as a planning tool for programme budgets.

37. The Scientific Committee's work had shown that, even 60 years later, nuclear contamination could continue to harm human health. There could be no justification for maintaining nearly 30,000 nuclear weapons in the world, more than 12,000 of them ready for immediate deployment. Cuba was firmly committed to the prohibition and elimination of all nuclear weapons and it absolutely opposed the use of nuclear energy for military purposes.

38. For the past 16 years, her Government had — despite the impact that the harsh embargo was having on the country's health sector and cooperation assistance — been helping Ukraine through a programme to rehabilitate the victims of Chernobyl, most of them children, almost 19,000 of whom, together with over 3,000 adults, had been brought to Cuba for medical treatment. The humanitarian programme had also yielded primary scientific data on internal injuries to infants from the nuclear contamination; and that information had been disseminated appropriately for further study and had been used or cited by United Nations scientific bodies.

39. Her delegation was pleased that the Scientific Committee was thinking of expanding its membership — an issue that must quickly be given careful consideration — and especially that outside scientists had been able to attend its sessions as advisers to member States. United Nations Member States and the relevant agencies of the United Nations system should strengthen their ties to the Scientific Committee, the source of such important and objective information in its field.

40. **Mr. Graça** (Portugal), speaking on behalf of the European Union; the candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; and, in addition, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, said that the report of the Scientific Committee (A/62/46) confirmed its status as the principal international body in its field. The European Union fully supported the Scientific Committee's work and would continue to provide it with all relevant information. It encouraged the Committee to pursue its study of the long-term health and environmental effects of ionizing radiation, as in the case of the Chernobyl accident, and of chronic low-level exposures among large populations; and urged it to continue cooperating and exchanging information with other international organizations.

41. He noted that, since the 1990s, the Scientific Committee's funding, had not seen an increase in predictable resources commensurate with the growing interest in its scientific work and greater international concern about radiation protection. The European Union looked forward to considering the issue of the possible enlargement of the membership at the Assembly's sixty-third session.

42. **Mr. Metelitsa** (Belarus) commended the work of the Scientific Committee, including its cooperation with Belarusian scientists studying the effects of the Chernobyl accident, its ever-expanding cooperation with relevant international organizations and its valuable publications, which had been used in Belarus to elaborate national standards for protecting both the population and the environment from the effects of atomic radiation.

43. The country had borne the brunt of the consequences of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant 20 years previously. Although the world's

media and international community had lost interest in recent years, many tens of thousands of people in Belarus continued to suffer. A million people's homes were still contaminated and hundreds of thousands of people had been forced to relocate. Cancer rates in affected areas were 16 times the world average. Belarus reiterated its willingness to become a member of the Scientific Committee; it had collected unique data and acquired considerable practical experience that it wished to contribute.

44. **Mr. Naik** (India) said that the work of the Scientific Committee had immense implications for the health and well-being of thousands of people and for the environment. His delegation also welcomed the Scientific Committee's latest publications.

45. No appropriate systems for the collection of relevant scientific data existed in many countries, nor was patients' exposure to medical radiation always adequately monitored, although its use was on the rise. The health effects of natural radiation exposure also required continuous monitoring, and laboratories like the one in Kerala, India, which studied the effects of low-dose radiation, should be the focus of detailed scientific enquiry. There was as yet no evidence for any significant deleterious effect of such radiation.

46. The dogmatic adherence to the "linear no-threshold" hypothesis as the cornerstone of international regulation of radiation exposure had put an unnecessary economic burden on the increasing number of countries that sought to develop nuclear power as a cleaner and cheaper option. It was high time to review that approach and to take into account other, non-radiation factors such as smoking and diet in determining the triggers of health effects. Cardiovascular and other non-cancer diseases following radiation exposure should also be analysed when determining exposure limits. Lastly, India supported an increased budget for the Scientific Committee, inter alia to enable it to engage highly qualified scientists.

47. **Mr.** Htin **Lynn** (Myanmar) said that the world faced an ominous threat of nuclear accidents. The Scientific Committee must be allocated the resources to enable it to continue filling its mandate, and States should supply scientists to further enhance its effectiveness.

48. The adverse effects of the Chernobyl accident continued to be felt. More needed to be done to alleviate the environmental, health and economic consequences, and information on healthy lifestyles should be disseminated in innovative ways to affected populations. The courage and perseverance of those populations and their Governments were admirable; the United Nations also played a vital role in alleviating the consequences of the accident and promoting sustainable development. The tragedy had indeed highlighted the importance of focusing on nuclear safety.

49. The Government of Myanmar had enacted a law in 1998 for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. National regulations had also been drafted with a view to ensuring radiation safety.

50. Lastly, he commended the Scientific Committee on its work and reiterated the support of his delegation.

51. **Mr. Ahmad** (Pakistan) said that it was incumbent on the Member States to ensure the timely and efficient provision of adequate resources to the Scientific Committee to enable it to carry out its mandate. Its work should not be hampered by minor administrative or financial constraints.

52. His delegation welcomed the decision of the General Assembly in resolution 61/109 to review the question of membership in the Scientific Committee. Pakistan, along with five other Member States, had expressed strong interest in becoming a member of the Committee; his delegation was satisfied that the draft resolution under consideration constituted a further step towards that goal, and looked forward to participating as an observer in the next session of the Scientific Committee. While Pakistan would have preferred an increase in membership in 2007, it was now hopeful that the financial and administrative issues would be addressed in time for it to assume full membership following the intervening year, and called for the consensus adoption of the draft resolution.

53. **Mr. Al-Janabi** (Iraq), noting the numerous harmful effects of atomic radiation, said that in 2005 his Government had established the Iraqi Radioactive Source Regulatory Authority, which had contacted IAEA with a view to expanding technical cooperation in regulating and monitoring the transit of radioactive sources at border points. Moreover, his country had become a party to the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources.

54. His delegation supported the efforts made by the United Nations to follow up on the levels, doses, effects and risks and called upon all States concerned to cooperate closely with the United Nations and its specialized agencies to protect the planet from those risks and to dispose safely of all radioactive pathogens.

55. **Mr. Taleb** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation had taken note with concern of the Scientific Committee's report (A/62/46). He commended the work of the Committee and affirmed the need for it to continue its current work and maintain its independence. His delegation also supported the Committee's request for continued support from UNEP, which would enable it to perform its functions effectively and inform the General Assembly, the scientific community and the public of its findings, as well as its request to all Member States, United Nations specialized agencies and other international and national scientific bodies to continue to provide reliable information for its reviews.

56. His country based its nuclear policy upon the peaceful use of nuclear technology for development, without selectivity or double standards, and was concerned by the difficulties faced by developing nations seeking to obtain nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, subject to verification and non-proliferation measures. His country had always called for the disposal of nuclear-weapons arsenals, in order to protect humanity from the dangers they posed and to reduce radiation risks, and had been one of the first to call for making the Middle East a region free from weapons of mass destruction, principally nuclear weapons. It had worked seriously towards that end: it had acceded to the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapon in 1969, ratified the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency and contributed to numerous related initiatives, including the submission in the name of the Group of Arab States to the Security Council in 2003 of the draft resolution on making the Middle East a region free from weapons of mass destruction, principally nuclear weapons, in the framework of international monitoring supervised by the United Nations.

57. Israel alone possessed nuclear weapons without international monitoring. Its refusal to accede to the Nuclear-Proliferation Treaty and to implement IAEA guarantees threatened regional and global peace and security and could lead to a catastrophe. Moreover, the Chernobyl incident could happen at any reactor: people and Governments had the right to investigate the type and safety of activities conducted at nuclear reactors. The international community needed to exert maximum pressure on Israel to place all its nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards, in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolution.

58. His country had been calling attention to the serious risks posed by the burial of radioactive waste in developing countries or its disposal at sea, and the negative effect of such actions on the environment. The international silence over Israel's burial of nuclear waste in the occupied Syrian Golan undermined confidence in the talk of nuclear non-proliferation and of the necessity of respecting international agreements on nuclear disarmament. Increased international cooperation was needed on this subject in order to protect humanity.

Draft resolution A/C.4/62/L.5: Effects of atomic radiation

59. **The Chairman** said he took it that the Committee wished to waive the 24-hour rule and take action on the draft resolution immediately.

60.*It was so decided.*

61. **Mr. Zhang** (Secretary of the Committee) said that under the terms of paragraphs 7, 12, 13, 14 and 16 of draft resolution A/C.4/62/L.5, the General Assembly would (i) emphasize the need for the Scientific Committee to hold regular annual sessions so that its report could reflect the latest developments and findings and thereby provide updated information for dissemination among all States, and endorse on an exceptional basis the intention of the Scientific Committee to convene its fifty-sixth session for seven days in order to finalize its next substantive report; (ii) request UNEP to continue providing support for the work of the Scientific Committee and for dissemination of its findings; (iii) appeal to the Secretary-General to take appropriate administrative measures so that the secretariat could adequately service the Scientific Committee in a predictable and sustainable manner, and facilitate the use of the invaluable expertise offered to the Committee by its members in order that it could discharge its mandate; (iv) urge UNEP to review and strengthen the present funding of the Committee, pursuant to paragraph 13 of resolution 61/109, and to continue to seek temporary funding mechanisms to complement existing ones, and

took note of the establishment by the Executive Director of UNEP of a general trust fund for voluntary contributions to support the Committee's work, and encouraged Member States to consider making voluntary contributions; (v) request the Secretary-General to provide a comprehensive and consolidated report to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session, to be prepared in consultation with the Scientific Committee as appropriate, addressing the financial and administrative implications of increased membership, staffing of the professional secretariat and methods to ensure sufficient, assured and predictable funding.

62. Were the draft resolution to be adopted by the General Assembly, it was estimated that additional requirements in the amount of $63,100 would arise in servicing the fifty-sixth session of the Scientific Committee for seven days, instead of the five-day period over which its sessions were usually held, as called for in paragraph 7, namely: (i) under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management ($60,000); (ii) under section 28F, Administration, Vienna ($100); (iii) under section 33, Safety and security ($3,000).

63. The Secretary-General had reviewed the implications of the draft resolution and proposed to meet the additional requirements within the provisions of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009, provided the Scientific Committee was flexible on the dates for holding the session.

64. Provisions had been made in the programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 for implementing the terms of the resolution. Therefore were the Fourth Committee to adopt draft resolution A/C.4/62/L.5, there would be no requirement for additional appropriation, as the necessary expenses would be accommodated within existing resources. In formulating his proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009, the Secretary-General had reviewed the resources necessary to service the Scientific Committee and it was considered that the resource requirements contained in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 were adequate to respond to the terms of paragraphs 12, 13 and 16 of the draft resolution, notwithstanding the additional resources referred to above.

65. With regard to paragraph 14, he drew attention to General Assembly resolution 45/248 B, which reaffirmed that the Fifth Committee was the appropriate Main Committee entrusted with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters, and reaffirmed the role of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

66. As at 25 October 2007, the level of voluntary contributions pledged and paid to the trust fund to support the work of the Scientific Committee amounted to $90,000 and a pledge of $5,000 had been made for 2008.

67. He further cited the following editorial changes in the text of the draft resolution: the comma after "Brunei" in the list of sponsors was to be deleted; the words "the fact" were to be deleted from the first line of paragraph 15; the word "have" was to be inserted after "Ukraine" in the second line of paragraph 15; and the word "provide" was to replace the word "submit" in paragraph 16.

68. **The Chairman** said that, in addition to the sponsors listed in the draft resolution, the following countries had also become sponsors: Brazil, Greece, Monaco, Slovakia, the Sudan, and Turkey.

69. **Mr. Metelitsa** (Belarus), speaking in explanation of his delegation's position before action was taken on the draft resolution, said that his delegation had joined the consensus in order not to cause confrontation, despite its reservations on the text. Only four States had seriously suffered the lethal effects of atomic radiation. Of those, Japan and Russia had been members of the Scientific Committee for more than 50 years, while Belarus and Ukraine continued to be denied the opportunity of contributing fully to its work. Belarus' scientists had unique practical experience of the effects of atomic radiation. An expanded membership would breathe new life into the Committee, which would benefit individual countries and the international community as a whole. Belarus' well-founded request for membership was continually postponed on spurious grounds.

70. In a spirit of compromise, however, his delegation had agreed that consideration of that request should be postponed for a further year. However, it understood paragraph 15 to mean that the General Assembly approved the declaration by six States of their desire to become members of the Scientific Committee; and paragraph 16 to instruct the Secretary-General to prepare comprehensive information in a

timely fashion in order to enable the General Assembly to take a decision on the issue at its sixty-third session.

71. **The Chairman** said he took it that the Committee wished to adopt draft resolution A/C.4/62/L.5 without a vote.

72. *Draft resolution A/C.4/62/L.5 was adopted.*

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.