

Fourteenth Session, it proved to be exceptionally difficult to reach common accord on the composition of the Committee. Nevertheless, after diligent and lengthy examination of this contentious issue, a number of delegations, including that of Canada, succeeded in evolving acceptable compromises on the question of membership and on the terms of reference of the Committee. As a result, Resolution 1472 was adopted without opposition.

In company with most other countries, Canada had great hope that, after the initial period of hesitancy, the United Nations would at last be able to expedite its important work. To the very deep regret of Canada, agreement could not be reached on the designation of officers for the Committee, and for the international conference it was expected to prepare.

As time passed, a further element of discord began to assume greater importance. That was the Soviet insistence that all action in the Outer Space Committee, in its proposed scientific and legal sub-committees and in the executive of the proposed international conference must be on the basis of unanimity. In effect, this was a demand for the right of veto over progress in any of the vital directions along which the General Assembly had unanimously urged the Outer Space Committee to proceed as quickly as possible. Thus, despite unopposed acceptance of the composition and unopposed recognition of the importance and urgency of the Committee's responsibilities, no progress was, in fact, made throughout 1960 and most of 1961.

As far as Canada is concerned, this was an intolerable and seriously disturbing situation. In our view, the working arrangements of the Committee were clearly governed by the applicable Rules of Procedure of the Assembly. We cannot accept that the views of one or two countries should prevent the meeting of Committees which the General Assembly has seen fit to appoint. This is especially so in a field of such vital concern to all nations as that of outer space.

Canada is deeply convinced that the world community cannot long afford to permit the United Nations responsibilities in respect of outer space to remain unattended. Canada has, therefore, been one of the countries pressing consistently for a meeting of the Outer Space Committee. We were very gratified that the Committee did, in fact, at long last meet on November 27. We were also glad that all of its members attended.

In the time available, attention could not be given in the Outer Space Committee in any meaningful way to the substantive questions within its terms of reference. Nevertheless, the meeting of November 27 served to emphasize two points of exceptional significance. First, it reinforced the view that the authority of the General Assembly in creating a committee must be respected, whether or not all of its members are in full agreement as to the arrangements for the conduct of its business. Secondly, the discussion in the Committee served once again to emphasize the widely shared concern of all countries for the importance and urgency of United Nations action in the field of outer space. My dele-