

MR. VLADIMIR KOPAL

Professor of International Law, Plzeň University

Dr. Vladimir Kopal is now Professor of International Law at the Faculty of Law, West Bohemian University in Pilsen, Czech Republic.

As a delegate of his country, and later on as a UN Officer, he participated in many sessions of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its Subcommittees since 1962 up to date.

He was Chairman of the COPUOS Legal Subcommittee from 1999 through 2003. In 2008, he was reelected as Chairman of the Subcommittee for another biennium 2008-2009.

During the 1980's, he served as Principal Officer of the United Nations in New York and Secretary to the COPUOS Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, and from 1983 through 1988 as Chief of the UN Outer Space Affairs Divisions. He participated in all the UN Conferences on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (1968, 1982, and 1999) and also in the five-year review by the General Assembly of the implementation of the recommendations of the Third UN Conference, which took place in 2004. He lectured and chaired at UN Workshops on space law and other UN meetings. As a delegate of his country, Dr. Kopal also participated in the Seabed Committee and during the period 1974 through 1980 in the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea.

Prior to his admission to the United Nations, he was chief of the Department of International Law and Organizations in the Institute of Law of the Czech Academy of Sciences and Professor of International Law at Charles University of Prague. He was a founding member and scientific secretary of the Commission on Astronautics of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences (1959-1980).

Professor Kopal has been Conciliator and Arbitrator under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and has also held different positions in non-governmental organizations, e.g. that of General Counsel of the International Astronautical Federation (IAF) and Vice-President of the International Institute of Space Law (IISL). He has been member of several foreign and international societies dealing with space matters and international law: Member and Legal Counsel, International Academy of Astronautics; Foreign Associated Member, Air and Space Academy of France; Fellow, American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics; Honorary Member, German Society for Air and Space Flights - Lilienthal-Oberth; Member, French Society for International Law; Headquarters Member, International Law Association, and member of its Space Law Committee; Individual Associated Member, COSPAR; Member, European Centre for Space Law; Member, International Council of Environmental Law.

Professor Kopal lectured on general international law, the law of international organizations, space law and the law of the sea at several universities in his home country and abroad, at many international conferences and other institutions. He is author of more than 250 monographs, articles and other papers. Recently, he has become co-author, together with Professor I.H.Ph. Diederiks-Verschoor, of a manual "An Introduction to Space Law", Third Revised Edition, Kluwer Law International, 2008.

Professor Kopal received an award of the International Astronautical Federation for his dedication to the development of international cooperation in space activities for peaceful purposes; a certificate of the International Institute of Space Law as distinguished author and participant in the development of international space law; a golden medal of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences for his contributions to the progressive development of international law; and a golden medal of the Hermann Oberth Society for the development of international cooperation in space activities.