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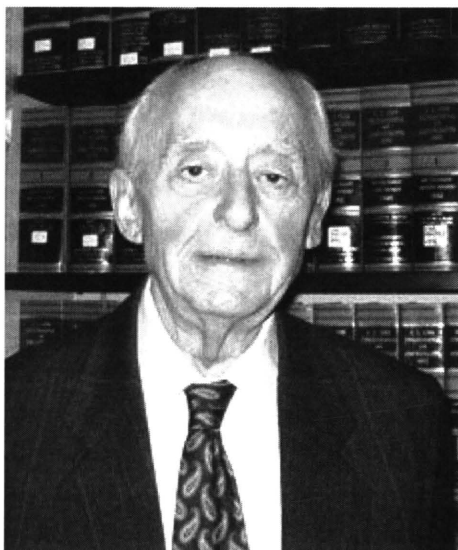
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A Tribute to Vladimir Kopal (1928–2014)



Vladimir Kopal. Credit: IAF.

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

As a delegate of his country, and later as a United Nations (UN) officer, he participated in many sessions of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) and its subcommittees, starting in 1962 and continuing throughout his life.

He was Chairman of the COPUOS Legal Subcommittee between 1999 and 2003. In 2008, he was re-elected Chairman of the subcommittee for another biennium 2008–2009.

During the 1980s, 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 Divi-

sions. He participated in all the UN Conferences on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (1968, 1982, and 1999) and also in the UN General Assembly five-year review of the implementation of the Third UN Conference (2004) recommendations. He lectured and chaired UN workshops on space law and other UN meetings. As a delegate of his country, Kopal also participated in the Seabed Committee and between 1974 and 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, Prague. He was a founding member and scientific secretary of the Commission on Astronautics of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences (1959–1980).



Vladimir Kopal. Credit: IAF.

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. He served as the 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, including: member and Legal Counsel

of the International Academy of Astronautics (IAA); Foreign Associated Member of the Air and Space Academy of France; Fellow of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA); honorary member of the German Society for Air and Space Flights Liliental-Oberth; member of the French Society for International Law; headquarters member of the International Law Association, and member of its Space Law Committee; Individual Associated Member, CO-SPAR; member of the European Centre for Space Law; and member of the International Council of Environmental Law.

Kopal lectured on general international law, 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. He is also co-author, together with Professor I. H. Ph. Diederiks-Verschoor, of a manual titled “An Introduction to Space Law” (Third Revised Edition, Kluwer Law International, 2008).

Kopal received an IAF award for his dedication to the development of international cooperation in space activities for peaceful purposes; the IAA Social Science Award; a certificate of the International Institute of Space Law (IISL) 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.

International Astronautical Federation