

(Mr. Turbański, Poland)

discussion on the present legal order applicable to outer space when this order and the discussion on it do not seem to deter States -- one today and probably others tomorrow -- from the "weaponization" of outer space.

The only conclusion must be that if we really want -- as we declare we do -- to put an effective barrier to this danger, we should concentrate our efforts on what is the main task entrusted to the Conference in this field by the United Nations General Assembly -- namely the elaboration of an agreement or agreements preventing an arms race in all its aspects and ensuring that outer space is used exclusively for peaceful purposes. We hope for serious and goal-oriented work by the Conference in this field during the next session. Appropriate recommendations should appear in this year's report of the Ad hoc Committee.

An encouraging element of our work on outer space problems has been that a number of valuable suggestions relating to both comprehensive and partial arrangements in this field were presented, which should be the main focus of the future work of the Committee. My delegation is open to any constructive solutions, though our preference clearly goes in the direction of comprehensive agreements which would effectively prevent an arms race in outer space. This is why we have expressed our strong support for the ideas contained in Soviet drafts on prohibiting the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space and prohibiting the use of force in outer space and from space against the Earth. During this session we have noted with attention the reappearance of the idea of widening the scope of the existing arrangements, and in particular the 1967 outer space Treaty.

The adoption of this Treaty defining principles governing the activities of States in the exploration and use of outer space was undoubtedly one of the most encouraging events in disarmament and disarmament-related negotiations. In fact, it can and should be both the inspiration and the starting-point for further efforts. The work undertaken by our predecessors more than 20 years ago, with such prescience of future dangers, should be completed today by us now that the picture of those threats and dangers has become so much clearer.

Our attention during the present session has also been drawn to a number of partial solutions. There seems to be a growing consensus regarding the idea of an arrangement on the immunity of artificial satellites combined with a ban on anti-satellite weapons. Poland welcomes in particular the outline of basic provisions of such an agreement presented recently to this Conference by the German Democratic Republic and Mongolia. Such an agreement would be an important step in creating a comprehensive legal régime for the peaceful uses of outer space. It would also introduce an important element of confidence, and could establish the basis for necessary co-operation in cases of satellite collisions, the risk of which is increasing with continued tests and growing amounts of man-made debris in outer space.

The work of the Conference has not only brought forth ideas for possible international agreements, but has also helped to outline crucial elements of such agreements. This applies in particular to the problem of verification, which so many speakers on so many occasions have described as the "heart of the matter".