

Mr. ISSRAËLYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian):  
Mr. Chairman, first of all allow me, on behalf of the Soviet delegation, to welcome you to that office, eminent Mexican diplomat and statesman as you are, and known throughout the world as a champion of the cessation of the arms race and one who has done much for the attainment of that goal. I wish you success in your tasks and promise you the co-operation of the Soviet delegation. We should also like to express our gratitude to Ambassador Maina of Kenya who successfully guided the work of the Committee during August.

The Soviet delegation would like today to express its views on the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space and also to touch on questions relating to the prohibition of chemical weapons.

The Soviet Union attaches exceptionally great importance to the prevention of an arms race in outer space in view of the general interest in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes. As Mr. Brezhnev, the head of the Soviet State, said in his message to the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space:

"Co-operation in outer space should unite people and develop an awareness of the fact that we all live on the same planet and that peace and prosperity on earth depend on all of us.

"The Soviet Union consistently declares that outer space should remain an arena of peaceful co-operation, that the infinite expanses of outer space should remain free from weapons of any type. The attainment of this great humanitarian objective by joint efforts is not only feasible but is also a vital need for the sake of the future of all mankind."

At the request of the Soviet delegation, Mr. Brezhnev's message has been distributed as a document of the Committee on Disarmament.

As you know, during the 1960s and 1970s, through the efforts of our country and of other States, international treaties and agreements were drafted and concluded which closed off a number of possibilities for the appearance of weapons in outer space and these have already been recalled by delegations in their statements. However, the restrictions thus existing are not complete, for an effective international legal barrier has not yet been created for the prevention of the stationing in outer space of those types of weapons which do not fall within the definition of weapons of mass destruction. There thus remains a danger -- a danger which has recently increased -- of the militarization of outer space.

The Soviet Union believes that we should not allow this to happen. Furthermore, the overwhelming majority of the other States of the world are evincing an equally serious concern on this score. This is shown in particular by the decision adopted at the recently concluded United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which urged the competent bodies of the United Nations and the Committee on Disarmament to give due attention and attach the highest importance to the serious concern of the international community at the extension of the arms race to outer space.