

27. Some delegations stated that further specific measures aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space will not detract from the importance of the existing legal régime just as certain arms control measures currently in force did not do so in the terrestrial environment. It was also pointed out that the fact that an arms race has not yet materialized in outer space cannot be attributed to the adequacy and sufficiency of the existing legal régime.

28. Some delegations, stressing the urgency of forestalling the introduction of weapons in space, discussed comprehensive proposals for the prevention of an arms race in outer space, such as those calling for a treaty prohibiting the use of force in outer space or from space against the Earth, a treaty prohibiting the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space and amendments to the 1967 Outer Space Treaty. In this context, some of these delegations considered that the various definitions of space weapons that had been put forward provided a good basis for working towards a comprehensive prohibition of weapons that were not yet outlawed under the existing legal régime. They also suggested that with the assistance of experts it should be possible to formulate a definition that would not only describe space weapons but also list their components. A proposal was submitted (CD/851) to amend Article IV of the Outer Space Treaty so as to make its prohibition applicable to any kind of space weapon and to include a prohibition on the development, production, storage and use of space weapons. That proposal also provided for a definition of space weapons. It was envisaged that those amendments to the Treaty would be complemented by a protocol establishing appropriate verification machinery to ensure compliance with the complete prohibition of space weapons. Another suggestion called for an amendment to the Outer Space Treaty to broaden its scope to cover any type of weapon, combined with the multilateralization of the ABM Treaty and a ban on anti-satellite systems other than space-based systems.

29. Some other delegations were not in favour of such approaches on the grounds that they did not give an accurate picture of all the threats confronting space objects and overlooked other significant factors of the military and strategic situation relevant to outer space. These delegations also held that proposals should be examined bearing in mind questions relating to compliance, verifiability, practicability and utility.

30. Some delegations, noting that existing legal restraints did not preclude the emergence of non-nuclear ASAT weapons, stressed the importance of a ban or limitations on anti-satellite weapons. A number of issues that would have to be addressed in the consideration of such a ban or limitations were identified - for example, scope of the ban, definition of ASAT weapons, the problem of dual-purpose spacecraft, means of verification. In that connection, some delegations considered that the participation of experts would assist the Ad Hoc Committee in clarifying the problems involved in those issues. Various proposals and ideas were discussed, such as: a general treaty supplemented by specific protocols applicable to different categories of satellites; prohibition of systems capable of attacking satellites in high orbit; prohibition of dedicated anti-satellite systems; a treaty that would ban the use of force against any space object, prohibit the deliberate destruction, damage or interference with the normal functioning of space objects; proscribe the development, production or deployment of ASAT weapons and provide for the destruction under international control of any existing ASAT weapons and to prevent the utilization and modification of any space