

Mr. ERDEMBILEG (Mongolia) (translated from Russian): The problem of preventing the spread of the arms race to outer space, that relatively new sphere of human activity, occupies an important place in the set of problems relating to the halting of the arms race and to disarmament.

In the past quarter of a century, since the start of the space era, the international community has been making unceasing efforts to ensure that space is used exclusively for peaceful purposes, for the social and economic progress of peoples.

The Soviet Union's initiative concerning the conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space therefore received wide support at the thirty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Representatives of a large number of States, both in the First Committee and at plenary meetings of the General Assembly, expressed serious concern at the real threat that might be created unless a barrier to the spread of the arms race to outer space was erected in good time. In this Committee, too, many speakers have stressed the timeliness and importance of the Soviet proposal aimed at removing that danger.

In approving by an overwhelming majority resolution 36/99, which was submitted by Mongolia on behalf of the group of socialist countries, the General Assembly recommended the Committee on Disarmament to embark on negotiations with a view to achieving agreement on the text of a treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space.

In its statement in the First Committee, the Mongolian delegation clearly and succinctly expressed its position on this question. During the past twenty or more years, a whole system of treaties and agreements, both multilateral and bilateral, has been established prohibiting the stationing in outer space of nuclear and other types of weapons of mass destruction.

I should like to name the most important among them. They are, first, the 1963 Moscow Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water; the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies; the Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, approved by the General Assembly in 1979; the 1977 Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques, and many others.

However, we are regretfully compelled to note that, according to reports in the western Press, including that of the United States itself, an extensive programme is being developed for the creation of a whole series of systems of weapons to be used in outer space, such as systems of anti-satellite weapons, the deployment of anti-satellite mines, laser weapons and the development of huge anti-missile defence systems based in outer space, etc. Particular attention is being devoted in this connection to reusable vehicles of the "Shuttle" type.