

(Mr. Fan Guoxiang, People's Republic of China)

Though the re-establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee on Outer Space was relatively late this year, it is a positive result of the current session. Under the able guidance of Ambassador Bayart of Mongolia, this Ad Hoc Committee has engaged in extensive and in-depth discussions on issues relating to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Delegations have further examined the existing international legal instruments on outer space, held preliminary discussions on the definition of space weapons and put forth various proposals and programmes on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

It is clear from these deliberations that the existing international legal instruments, notwithstanding certain positive significance, all have their limitations and are thus inadequate for the prevention of an arms race in outer space. It is therefore necessary to conclude new international legal instruments. More and more delegations agree that at the present stage the Conference should proceed to negotiations with the emphasis on prohibiting all space weapons. Many delegations proposed to start with the prohibition of ASAT weapons. Such a proposal, in our view, merits consideration. In so much as the importance and urgency of the prevention of an arms race in outer space have already been widely recognized, we are of the view that at the beginning of the next session the Conference should re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee on Outer Space at an earlier date, so as to enable it to address substantive issues as soon as possible.

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(Mr. Ruth, Federal Republic of Germany)

In discussing Conference on Disarmament matters, I have concentrated on the topics of chemical weapons and nuclear testing. At the same time we attach great importance to the discussion of other topics, such as the prevention of war and outer space, as shown by our contributions here and in New York.