

(Mr. Yamada, Japan)

critical impact on our discussions in the Conference on Disarmament. Japan therefore urges both the United States and the Soviet Union to make yet further efforts for early progress in their negotiations. At the same time, outer space is open to all and is not a possession of any country. An arms race in outer space would directly affect the security not just of the two Powers but of all other countries in the world as well. We cannot afford to be indifferent to this important issue. In view also of the rapid progress in space development recently made by countries other than the United States and the Soviet Union, we should proceed with our work in the Conference on Disarmament to examine fully what kind of multilateral agreements would be useful.

What concrete approach should we take in the Conference on Disarmament to the question of that prevention of an arms race in outer space? Arms control and disarmament have a direct and important bearing on the security of each country. My delegation's approach to the work of the Conference on Disarmament is therefore based on the recognition that our disarmament objectives should be realized in a manner which will ensure and enhance the security of each country. We feel that we should work towards effective and realizable goals, instead of preoccupying ourselves with political declarations. This is how we should approach the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space as well.

First, we need to know fully and objectively how outer space is actually being used. For example, early-warning satellites no doubt have military functions, but they may also play a useful role in preserving strategic stability. On the other hand, meteorological satellites collect meteorological data over vast areas of the earth and serve important non-military purposes -- in agriculture, fisheries and transport -- but they may also be used for a military purpose. These factors need to be seen in perspective.

We should endeavour to find what measures would eventually best ensure our security in consideration of these many aspects. It would not be in consonance with reality to take, without delving into such issues, a sweeping, generalized approach in the name of the non-militarization or the prevention of the militarization of outer space. To do so would not ensure our security. Instead, the approach we should take is to intensify our efforts to gain an accurate grasp of exactly how outer space is being used in many areas. It is only on the basis of a solid grasp of the facts that we can formulate an objective judgement as to what kinds of activities in outer space may endanger international peace and security. We may then proceed to consider what measures may be mutually acceptable, effective and realizable on a multilateral basis.

Based on the concept of our approach that I have just described, I would like to make some observations on the main issues being discussed in the Ad hoc Committee on Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space.