

(Mr. Sy, Senegal)

My delegation wishes to join its voice to those which have expressed concern at the tendency to extend the arms race to outer space.

Until quite recently, space had been relatively spared by the arms race. There had been reason to be optimistic in that regard, since a set of agreements and treaties, both multilateral and bilateral, had made it possible to curb its militarization or the introduction of weapons of mass destruction. For example, the Outer Space Treaty, the partial nuclear-test ban treaty and the 1979 Treaty relating to the Moon are the most prominent examples in that regard. Similarly, the agreements concluded by the United States and the Soviet Union within the framework of the limitation of strategic weapons and the prevention of a nuclear war have played a positive and stabilizing role in that sphere.

Those agreements augur well for the possibility of space activities for the good and in the interest of all countries, whatever their stage of economic and social development.

Unfortunately, those positive factors are now threatened by certain advances in military space technology, particularly by the development and deployment of anti-satellite weapons and particle-beam weapons.

Outer space is thus becoming an area of military preparations with every passing day. Plans and programmes and considerable resources are being devoted to the development and deployment of weapons systems in outer space and from space against the Earth.

The immediate effect of anti-satellite weapons and other particle-beam weapons is to spur on the arms race, to increase international tension and to threaten the security of all countries in the world. As if land and sea were not sufficiently encumbered by dangerous weapons, the threat from outer space is now to be held over the heads of the peoples of the Earth.

They can only watch, in impotent anxiety, the ineluctable process of the deployment of anti-satellite and anti-missile weapons, soon followed by anti-anti-satellites and anti-anti-missile weapons, until the day when this dangerous escalation escapes the control of its creators and ends in the dreaded catastrophe.

The new space weapons are undermining the policy of deterrence of the Superpowers, since by making possible the destruction of their advanced warning systems, they thereby make possible a first strike. Who can say what temptations can arise in such a situation.

All those who are interested in the question will be able to consult the full text of this resolution in the document which the Secretary-General transmits to us every year and which contains, in an annex to his letter, all the texts of the resolutions adopted by the Assembly on disarmament matters. This document is CD/A25. Nevertheless, in order that those who may not wish to take the trouble to consult this document can find in the pages of today's Bulletin the main provisions of resolution 34/70, I shall take the liberty of reading them out now.