

(Mr. Afande, Kenya)

The realm of outer space and the rules to apply to its peaceful uses is another important item on our agenda in which there is a widespread legitimate public anxiety. In the preamble to the Outer Space Treaty, the international community has proclaimed mankind's common interest in the progressive research and uses of space for peaceful purposes. Today, however, it has become apparent that there is an overriding necessity to arrest the process of militarization of outer space from assuming irreversible proportions. The adoption of steps effectively to block all possible channels for the militarization of outer space and progress towards the limitation and reduction of nuclear weapons would serve as the starting point for solving the task of preventing nuclear war. It is, therefore, regrettable that the consideration of this matter by the Conference has met with apparently insurmountable difficulties, especially in reaching an understanding over the framework of the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee on the item. This impasse only postpones any chance of reaching acceptable and binding legal instruments that would ensure that outer space is preserved as the common heritage of mankind and not another arena of military competition. The international community is legitimately interested in preserving outer space for peaceful purposes. Consequently, I trust that the Conference will be able, in its deliberations, to contribute to the achievement of mutual understanding and agreement. My delegation is of the view that consideration of this subject, like that of nuclear war and nuclear testing, illustrates very clearly the close linkage between bilateral and multilateral disarmament negotiations at the present time. Everything should be done to ensure that the approaches in one, strengthens the prospects of progress in the other. The statement which has been made so often in the Conference that an arms race in outer space will end on Earth is not a hypothetical phenomenon but a statement of fact. No country, organization or individual is competent to announce the winner of the race -- in a game which has neither rules nor a designated point as its end.

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(Mr. Kornienko, USSR)

Mr. President, may I, at the outset, carry out the instructions of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, M.S. Gorbachev, and read his message addressed to the Conference.

"Message from the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, Mikhail S. Gorbachev, to the Conference on Disarmament

"I extend greetings to the representatives of States who have gathered for a regular session of the Conference on Disarmament.

"The Soviet Union takes a most responsible approach to its participation in the Conference on Disarmament, because it understands that disarmament is the main avenue towards establishing new and equitable international arrangements and building a safe world. It is precisely disarmament which, by releasing enormous material and intellectual resources, would permit their use for constructive purposes, for achieving economic development and prosperity.