

(Mr. Datcou, Romania)

The Romanian delegation also feels that the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the prohibition of the use of scientific and technological discoveries for military purposes are important and priority subjects for our Committee's work. We are convinced that the establishment of a working group on outer space and the organization of informal meetings, with the participation of experts, on new weapons of mass destruction will provide us with valuable opportunities to discuss these subjects. The Romanian delegation would also like to welcome the decision taken this morning to re-establish the Ad Hoc Working Group on a Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, under the chairmanship of His Excellency Ambassador Alfonso García Robles of Mexico. The informal consultations which are to take place will, we are sure, enable the Committee to start its substantive work on this subject next year with better prospects.

(Mr. Tian Jin, China)

III. The question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The threat to world peace and security posed by the development of weapons used in outer space is causing increasing concern among the world community. The two superpowers are sparing no expense in the development of military technology for use in outer space, and the arms race between them is steadily extending to outer space. As is known, at present only the two superpowers have the means to test, deploy and use weapons in outer space, and it stands to reason that they should undertake the responsibility for the prevention of an arms race in outer space. People should be vigilant against the practice in some quarters of paying lip service to "the peaceful use of outer space" while actually stepping up the development of various types of weapons used in outer space.

China firmly advocates that outer space be used for peaceful purposes and for the good of all mankind and strongly opposes the arms race in outer space, which endangers peace and security. Consequently, it stands for the prohibition of all outer space weapons, including anti-satellite weapons. We are in favour of the establishment of a working group on this subject. With regard to the mandate of this working group, it should, in our view, be the negotiation of a comprehensive treaty on the prohibition of outer space weapons.

(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

The last item on our agenda -- the new item, on the subject of outer space -- has already given rise to statements of substance. Many delegations, including our own, are in favour of the establishment of a working group. We are also in favour of the starting of consultations on the terms of the mandate of such a group. We should also like discussions on the substance of the question to continue so as to shed more light on the various aspects of this very complex issue.