

47. In this connection another delegation stated that its country did have a land-based ASAT system, the testing of which was not complete and which, therefore, could not be called operational. In 1983 this country declared a unilateral moratorium on putting into space anti-satellite weapons of any type, which it continues to observe. It had proposed several times to the other major space Power that they should negotiate a mutual ban on the development, testing and deployment of ASAT systems and eliminate such systems that these Powers possessed. However, this proposal was not accepted.

48. Some delegations considered that there were inherent difficulties in proposals for a ban or limitations on ASAT weapons and referred, in particular, to the diversity and characteristics of the potential threats to space objects, the existence of weapon systems that had an ASAT capability, the limitations of various notions for purposes of defining and prohibiting ASATs, problems of verifiability and the close link between questions relating to ASATs and matters under consideration in the bilateral negotiations. Beyond that, one delegation also elaborated on the various legal restraints that the existing legal régime already imposed on the nature, deployment and use of ASATs.

49. Various delegations were of the view that consideration should be given to the questions of the protection of satellites and a number of proposals and ideas were examined. Some delegations considered that attempts to establish a protection régime based on a categorization of satellites would give rise to many difficulties and advocated the granting of immunity to all space objects without exception, with the understanding that space weapons would be subject to an unconditional ban. Other delegations were of the view that certain distinctions should be made for the purpose of immunizing satellites and various possibilities were mentioned in terms of their functions, purposes and orbit. In this connection, some delegations held that a protection régime called for improvements in the system of registration of space objects to permit the identification of the nature and missions of protected space objects. Some delegations stressed in particular that immunity should not be extended to satellites that perform military missions.

50. One delegation, in introducing a working paper (CD/OS/WP.35), made a presentation at the expert level on the use of outer space for monitoring and verification and on satellite immunity. It first considered that the general conditions for the prevention of an arms race in outer space ruled out measures, such as a comprehensive ASAT ban, which would be delusive or