

(Mr. Imai, Japan)

Outer space is already very much in use, such as for meteorological observation, commercial and other communications, or geological and geophysical observations as represented by activities of the Earth resources satellites. At the same time there is no question that outer space represents the most sophisticated and advanced technologies of our time. Also, the distinction between peaceful uses, military uses, and offensive and defensive systems has traditionally been one of the most challenging and conceptually complicated.

In spite of a considerable degree of complications, technical, legal and financial, we nevertheless feel that outer space has to be jointly and multilaterally administered, based upon a widely accepted legal and technical régime. Mankind's contact with outer space has been so far very limited, while the number of countries with direct access to various Earth orbits has not been large. We suspect, however, that with the expansion of such contact, extensive and complicated work will be required, and if that is the case, we should begin now, and begin with the examination of the broad framework of possible agreements as to what kind of order we would like to see in outer space from the viewpoint of effective prevention of an arms race. In this sense, although disarmament may be our primary concern, we do not need to limit ourselves to the immediate subjects such as ballistic missile defence or anti-satellite weapons. To do so hastily will confuse the issue. In my understanding, many BMDs are technically capable of ASAT functions, while most ICBMs may be BMDs.

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(Mr. Kerroum, Algeria)

The disappointment and frustration are the same as regards outer space. Rather than the possibility of preventing the development of the arms race in outer space while there is still time, the preference seems to be to consider no more than controlling that race.

Despite the numerous commendable efforts that have been and still are being made, this stalemate and this tendency to move backwards cannot, logically, lead to substantive results as regards either the prevention of nuclear war or a comprehensive programme of disarmament.

In politics, the art of the possible, realism is undeniably a fruitful virtue. Now, it may seem more realistic, in a world which is more and more governed by the law of relative might, to focus our energies on controlling the arms race, but that same realism should lead to the realization that sooner or later, with the constant improvement of more and more sophisticated and destructive weapons and the unceasing growth of mistrust, the arms race will inevitably become uncontrollable. That realism ultimately accepts the assertion -- unacceptable because what is at stake is the survival of mankind -- that war, even nuclear war, is a biological necessity. At all events, it contradicts what was said in the joint statement issued after the Reagan-Gorbachev summit to the effect that a "nuclear war cannot be won and should never be fought".