

(Mr. Sene, Senegal)

In paragraph 80, the Final Document states that in order to prevent an arms race in outer space, further measures should be taken in accordance with the spirit of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and other Celestial Bodies.

The risks of the militarization of outer space have become greater with the appearance of anti-satellite systems. Given the important role that satellites can play in international co-operation in such fields as communications, meteorology and navigation, it is essential for steps to be taken to prevent outer space from becoming an area of military confrontation.

Here again, the lack of any results from the bilateral discussions between the Soviet Union and the United States has left the matter in the lap of the Committee.

The proposal to set up a working group on outer space seems to us a sound one, since such a group could help the Committee in its consideration of the question of the negotiation of effective agreements to prevent an arms race in outer space.

(Mr. Tellalov, Bulgaria)

I would like to touch briefly now on the question of the "Prevention of an arms race in outer space", that being the subject for our meeting today. We have only one plenary meeting for the discussion of this issue, but the series of informal meetings during the spring and the summer session have amply demonstrated the growing interest in the problem, as well as the urgent need to establish appropriate organizational structures for negotiations and the elaboration of agreements in this field.

When taking up the subject of the prevention of the spread of the arms race to outer space, we should first of all stress the fact that the cosmos is being turned more and more into a constant field of human activity that is of ever-growing importance to the over-all development of mankind. In the quarter of a century that has elapsed since the first Soviet "sputnik", a number of agreements regulating the exploration and the utilization of outer space have been elaborated, including a treaty banning the stationing of any kind of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction in outer space.

While including this item in our agenda and programme of work for 1982 we are aware of the responsibilities of the Committee on Disarmament for the elaboration of a universally acceptable international legal instrument designed to erect a solid barrier to the extension of the arms race to outer space. Such a course of action would be in full conformity with and would constitute a natural continuation of the existing agreements in this domain of international law.