

46. Some delegations noted with satisfaction that at the 1988 session the Ad Hoc Committee gave detailed consideration to concrete proposals for measures aimed at the prevention of an arms race in outer space. In their opinion, the examination of specific proposals had served to identify areas of possible convergence of views and thus provided a good basis for practical work on measures to prevent an arms race in outer space. Recognizing the complexity of the subjects under consideration and the need for further analysis, they held that relevant issues, including those concerning the legal régime applicable to outer space, could be addressed in the context of the consideration of specific proposals. They believed that the work of the Committee should continue in that direction. Some other delegations were of the view that it was necessary to continue the examination of issues relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space that had not been sufficiently explored. They believed that much more detailed examination had to be done before it would be possible to undertake further activities. They considered that given the divergence of views on substantive and political issues, the broad scope of individual topics and the highly technical nature of the subject, the Committee had carried out work which contributed to a better understanding of the subject, but that much remained to be accomplished within the terms of the current mandate and programme of work. They also noted that much of the discussions held on proposals clearly showed the persistence of radically different approaches to the issues and that consensus did not exist on them. Consequently, the Committee needed to continue to study all the subjects covered by the mandate and the programme of work in order to establish a common body of knowledge and understanding, and common definitions of the scope and specific objectives of multilateral efforts for the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

47. Many delegations, while recognizing the importance of substantive consideration of relevant issues, emphasized that such consideration should be an integral part of the multilateral process of elaborating concrete measures aimed at the prevention of an arms race in outer space and that it could be done in the context of considering specific proposals. They reaffirmed that the objectives of multilateral efforts in this field are clearly set out in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. They also recalled the relevant resolutions adopted by the General Assembly. In this context, these delegations stressed the indispensable role of the Conference on Disarmament as the single multilateral negotiating body on disarmament and the inscription of item 5 on its agenda. Delegations of Socialist States shared the views expressed in this paragraph.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

48. There was general recognition in the Ad Hoc Committee of the importance and urgency of preventing an arms race in outer space and readiness to contribute to that common objective. The work carried out by the Committee since its establishment contributed to the accomplishment of its task. The Committee advanced and developed further the examination and identification of various issues relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The discussions held contributed to a better understanding of a number of problems and to a clearer perception of the various positions. It was recognized that the legal régime applicable to outer space by itself does not guarantee the prevention of an arms race in outer space. There was recognition of the significant role that the legal régime applicable to outer space plays in the