

(Mr. Morelli Pando, Peru)

As to the subject of the prevention of an arms race in outer space, the delegation of Peru shares the favourable view of other delegations about the work done by the Ad Hoc Committee, despite the limitations of its mandate and the little time made available to it to work out valuable although preliminary conceptual approaches.

On the assumption that a consensus does exist to avoid extending of the arms race to outer space, there is no doubt about the priority in time of maintaining the agreement on anti-ballistic weapons and of concluding other complementary agreements which can be linked, among other matters, to anti-satellite weapons and the specific protection of non-military satellites.

Another indispensable step is to clarify accurately the nature and scope of existing agreements on the use of space and celestial bodies for peaceful purposes, with a view, inter alia, to determining exactly to what extent military activities in space may be compatible with such peaceful use.

As rightly stated by the distinguished delegation of Canada, those agreements, and especially the one of 1967, are open to two dissimilar interpretations, one broad, and the other restrictive, of what is to be understood by uses for peaceful purposes, or even more, by exclusively peaceful purposes.

The delegation of Peru is not only in favour of the first of the aforementioned interpretations. It is convinced of the need for a future legal régime in space to be conditioned by the norms contained in the instruments mentioned, and thus thinks that the régime should be viewed with the same comprehensive breadth as in the case of the negotiations on the Convention on the Law of the Sea.

In other words, it is desirable to have a broad vision that will enable all of the international community to participate in the benefits of the use of space for peaceful purposes, on the understanding that such use for peaceful purposes will not continue to be for the major Powers an entelechy that is difficult to define and which in practice is used only in keeping with their interests, which moreover are dangerously self-contradictory in themselves.

Hence it is necessary to give proper substance to these peaceful activities in space, for from that substance it will be possible to infer the requisite strict limitation of military activities in this domain. Otherwise, it is difficult to see how the concept of space as the common heritage of mankind can be applied. Naturally, all this would entail international consultation and agreement that would be beyond the competence of this forum and would be of the scope favoured, at this session by, among other delegations, the delegation of Peru.