

could promote such a development. It thought that the risk of an arms race in outer space could be partly attributed to the fact that the existing body of international law was not sufficient to prevent such a development. In the view of this delegation, various bilateral agreements between the two major powers indicated the vital stabilizing function attributed by them to securing, inter alia, the protection of early warning satellites. It suggested that the existing de facto moratorium by the two major space Powers on testing of dedicated ASAT systems should, as an immediate measure, be formalized and that production, as well as deployment of dedicated ASATs, be prohibited without delay and that such existing systems be dismantled. Furthermore, the delegation proposed that an agreement should be negotiated to ban the testing in an ASAT mode of various types of non-dedicated systems. The delegation stated that the question of verification of compliance with the proposed measures was of crucial importance and should be systematically studied by experts in the field, with on-site inspection, satellite tracking and data collection being examples of methods of verification. It believed that the establishment of an international system for monitoring satellites should be the focal point of studies by experts. The delegation had earlier proposed the setting up of an expert group under the auspices of the Conference on Disarmament. It considered that the proposals concerning confidence-building measures, including rules of the road, which had been made in the Conference, and more recently, by experts in the Committee, should be given systematic consideration. It maintained that because of the risks of vertical and horizontal proliferation of dedicated and non-dedicated ASAT capabilities, as well as the dangers posed by possible non-intentional harmful interferences with satellites, the Committee should, as of its next session, assume a new sense of direction to promote the task before it. The proposals made by the delegation were supported by many delegations.

46. Another delegation noted that its objective in bilateral negotiations was to manage a stable transition to increased reliance on effective defences that threaten no one. It further stated that, together with a 50 percent reduction in strategic weapons, a robust defence against ballistic missiles would enhance strategic stability by rendering a first strike ineffective. This delegation also noted that in the ASAT area another significant space Power has had the operational capability to attack satellites in near-Earth orbit with a ground-based orbital interceptor. This delegation noted that his country did not possess a comparable operational capability.