

(Mr. Imai, Japan)

Peaceful outer space is obviously a very important item, to which Japan attaches high priority. However, as far as we are concerned, except for a limited knowledge and experience regarding exploration of outer space for peaceful uses, we have to confess that our understanding and knowledge of the related space activities are not at all based on our own experience. It is very difficult, therefore, for us to engage in detailed discussions on space arms control on the basis of published and often popular information. We believe that the examination of the problem of outer space starting from an exploratory approach at the outset, with those in a position to know providing information, would be most appropriate and meaningful.

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Mr. ROSE (German Democratic Republic): Mr. President, today, my delegation would like to dwell upon agenda item 5, "Prevention of an arms race in outer space".

In the efforts for achieving international security and disarmament, developments in outer space have increasingly entered the minds of the peoples during the past few years. These developments are playing an ever more important role in the policy of States. The time is now ripe to set a course in the interest of peace. Either we will be able to maintain and strengthen freedom for the peaceful exploration and use of outer space, to the benefit of all States, or outer space will be included in the arms race, with all its dangerous consequences.

The launching of the first artificial earth satellite by the Soviet Union almost 30 years ago opened up the age of practical exploration and use of outer space. Utopian ideas of former generations came true. In international treaties, States undertook to use outer space for peaceful purposes. People all over the world followed with great sympathy the sensational success of scientists and cosmonauts. New dimensions for co-operation between States having different social systems became apparent. In particular, the joint space venture of the USSR and the United States was regarded as a promising sign in this respect.

However, the United States is now doing an about-turn: it is undermining world-wide consensus on freedom and peace in outer space by including space in its adventurous policy. Relevant facts have already been outlined here, there is no need to repeat them. We share the view that such activities cannot be separated from the deployment of Pershing-2 and Cruise missiles as nuclear first-strike weapons in Europe. Our continent is regarded as a potential nuclear battlefield, whereas the United States should be shielded by a large-scale and space-based anti-ballistic missile system against a retaliatory strike. Those plans and actions are now as before dominated by the doctrine of a limited nuclear war proceeding from the assumption that such a war is wageable and winnable.

The extension of the arms race into outer space cannot be justified by any argument whatsoever. On Thursday last week, the delegation of the United States has reiterated pretexts, which it has put forward for years now, against the conclusion of international agreements.

We have the following observations to make upon that statement. Firstly, it is remarkable that the representative of the United States confined his statement to the question of anti-satellite systems, i.e., he referred only to one aspect of his country's military activities concerning outer space. Once again, the attempt was made to allege an advantageous position of the Soviet Union in this field. Only the naive can believe that, for instance, the Shuttle project has nothing to do with military activities including actions against satellites belonging to other States. We also recall that in 1979, the United States broke off negotiations with the Soviet Union on anti-satellite weapons. This is another proof of the endeavour