

(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

made known our views on this issue in this very forum and, on 12 June, the French delegation set them out in a more comprehensive manner, specifying the points on which, in its view, a concerted international effort should be made.

I repeat the four points which the proposals addressed:

(1) The very strict limitation of anti-satellite systems, including in particular the prohibition of all such systems capable of hitting satellites in high orbit, the preservation of which is the most important from the point of view of strategic balance;

(2) The prohibition, for a renewable period of five years, of the deployment on the ground, in the atmosphere or in space of beam-weapon systems capable of destroying ballistic missiles or satellites at great distances and, as the corollary to this, the banning of the corresponding tests;

(3) The strengthening of the present system of declaration as established by the Convention of 14 June 1975 on the registration of space objects, with each State or launching agency undertaking to provide more detailed information on the specifications and purposes of objects launched so as to improve the possibility of verification; and, in conclusion,

(4) A pledge by the United States and the USSR to extend to the satellites of third countries the provisions concerning the immunity of certain space objects on which they have reached bilateral agreement between themselves.

The reasons which led the French Government to introduce these four proposals in particular and to regard it necessary to embark on a multilateral dialogue on the subject of limiting the military uses of space have lost nothing of their topicality; quite the contrary.

The public exchanges which have taken place since the early summer on the proposed United States-Soviet meeting in Vienna in September have naturally caught our delegations' attention.

The French Government has, indeed, constantly stressed the importance of bilateral contacts in this field. It mentioned this again on 12 June, even before any meeting had been proposed. Such a meeting does not preclude multilateral discussion, on the contrary. I note that Ambassador Alessi made the same point in his statement on 19 July.

The French Government therefore regrets that at this stage the possibility of a meeting in Vienna still seems so uncertain. It hopes that the difficulties raised will be overcome and that prior conditions, if such exist, will be waived so that the meeting, which was agreed to at the outset by both parties, will in fact take place.

The persistence of the difficulties in the way of direct bilateral negotiations would not make it any less important to keep open the possibility of wider