

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

to strike not only missiles but a whole panoply of targets, would have been deployed in outer space. The ABM Treaty, which prevented all this, certainly deserves better treatment than its dissolution through a "broad interpretation".

Much has been said and written about the destabilizing consequences of the deployment of weapons -- irrespective of whether we label them defensive or offensive -- in outer space. Any measure will lead to a countermeasure, all advantages gained through the introduction of certain weapons will be nullified by the other side, and not necessarily by the deployment of the same weapons. We presume that all countries actively involved in outer space are clearly aware of the inevitability of this process of action and reaction. It is confirmed for instance by the fact that the United States is intensively increasing the resistance of its space systems against the effects of laser weapons, electronic jamming, electromagnetic impulses created by nuclear explosions, etc. The spiral of the arms race in outer space would continue steadily, as it did on Earth, and no country would ever be in a position to achieve decisive and permanent superiority. Besides, even the most rosy and rather illusory theories about the effectiveness of a multilayer anti-missile defence admit that the penetration rate will amount to at least 0.4 per cent, which, with today's arsenals, represents a huge destructive potential. It would inflict immense damage, especially on civilian populations, and no responsible Government should gamble with such numbers or engage in a course of action that would increase the probability of "testing" defensive shields in practice -- especially not in the hope that after the first nuclear strike the retaliation will be bearable.

It will be very important to evolve appropriate methods of verification which will ensure that outer space is not being used for aggressive military ends. The Montreal workshop I mentioned a while ago dealt with one of the possible approaches, that is verification through satellites. Another possible approach -- inspection of objects launched into outer space -- is reflected in the proposal advanced by the First Deputy Foreign Minister of the USSR, Yuli Vorontsov, at the beginning of our spring session. It is our feeling that a combination of the two approaches, that is verification "from below and from above" might lead to the establishment of an effective and viable verification system for outer space. Much still has to be discussed, especially how practically to combine the use of national satellites with their possible international use for verification purposes. My delegation would be only too happy if the Ad hoc Committee on Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space could also discuss these important problems.

We are following with keen interest the Soviet-United States negotiations on nuclear and space weapons. We find it encouraging that progress has been achieved at these negotiations and there are now real prospects for most dangerous nuclear weapons to be eliminated from Europe. The conclusion of agreements on these matters and their subsequent implementation would undoubtedly be facilitated if the nuclear Powers confirmed their readiness to eliminate the nuclear threat, starting with a halt to the further qualitative and quantitative build-up of nuclear arsenals. An important step in this direction would be the general and complete prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests.