

space nor to use that environment as an arena to station its instruments of destruction, endangering the security and integrity of other States. It was also stressed by that delegation that in the opinion of the majority of countries, the Outer Space Treaty has a serious juridical vacuum, inasmuch as it does not cover other weapons, different to nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction, which are being developed for their incorporation in strategic defence systems. The same delegation further stressed that as a result of this vacuum, the Outer Space Treaty has not been sufficient to stop certain countries from initiating activities which may lead to the launching of an arms race in outer space. That delegation concluded that the Treaty does not contain provisions capable of putting a check to the effort currently being deployed to create elements of a strategic defence which will work from space, or will accomplish their missions in space.

22. Some delegations pointed out that as a result of the work accomplished in the past years, the Committee had at its disposal a sound analysis of the existing international law of outer space and a number of constructive proposals. Three delegations belonging to the group of socialist States submitted a document entitled "Survey of international law relevant to immunity and protection of objects in space and to other basic principles of outer space activities" (CD/933-CD/OS/WP.34). The document was aimed to show that, though the existing legal régime for outer space was adding to the protection of space objects, it did not guarantee all-embracing protection and it was crucially important that all States strictly comply with these agreements. Further codification and development of existing rules of international law relating to the protection of space objects would contribute an essential step towards preventing an arms race in outer space. These additional measures could encompass steps providing for building confidence and for prohibiting the weaponization of outer space.

23. One delegation pointed out that the legal régime in outer space continued to be the object of considerable interest and concern as many nations had not ratified or acceded to existing international agreements pertaining to outer space, thus raising questions regarding the extent and coverage of that legal régime. Despite widespread recognition that the current régime placed some legal restraints on most types of weapons in outer space, there remained concern that the task of precluding the introduction of destabilizing military options into space had not been completed. The purpose of work in the legal field should be to analyse the arms control and disarmament implications of