

(Mr. Meiszter, Hungary)

This part of my statement about the priority issues on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament cannot be terminated without mentioning the question of the urgent need to prevent an arms race in outer space. My delegation will seize the opportunity to deal with this problem in a more detailed manner at a later stage. Today I would limit myself to expressing my Government's full support for the untiring efforts of the Soviet Union aimed at resolving the problem of the non-militarization of space. We are firmly convinced that the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the prevention of nuclear war have become inseparable prerequisites of all efforts aimed at curbing the arms race in general. The Hungarian delegation, therefore, deems it an urgent necessity to set up an ad hoc committee to deal with the issue on the basis of the relevant resolution of the last session of the United Nations General Assembly.

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(U Maung Maung Gyi, Burma)

Prevention of an arms race in outer space is also a matter of urgent concern in view of the operational capabilities that are now being developed by the space Powers which, if not prevented in good time, would mean the escalation of the arms race in outer space, and the deployment of ASAT systems would be the forerunner of such a race. The arms race syndrome is such that once it is initiated it would be difficult to halt and reverse it. An arms race in outer space would undermine the prospects of nuclear disarmament, act as a catalyst to stimulate it and increase the risks of a nuclear war.

If mankind is not to be exposed to further dangers of a nuclear war, the route to take is through the reduction of nuclear arsenals on Earth and the prohibition of all weapons in space. It is illusory to think that the deployment of new weapons systems in space can remove the threat that nuclear weapons pose upon Earth.

The responsibility of the international community encompasses the broad dimensions of legal and political objectives that are necessary in accordance with the principles enunciated in the Outer Space Treaty of 1967, which states inter alia that: