

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

In this connection, the Mongolian delegation notes with concern that the United States Administration has adopted a negative stand on the Soviet Union's proposal, setting preliminary conditions essentially aimed at linking the negotiations on outer space with the consideration of questions of strategic weapons and medium-range nuclear weapons in Europe.

Such an approach can only be viewed as torpedoing the start of important bilateral negotiations on outer space, not to mention the obstructionist line of certain western countries in the matter of organizing multilateral negotiations within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament.

The question of prevention of an arms race in outer space is relatively new in terms of its consideration at the Conference on Disarmament. That does not mean, however, that the holding of specific negotiations on this priority issue can be relegated to the background without any serious grounds for doing so.

That being so, the Mongolian delegation cannot but express its concern at the fact that the start of negotiations and the setting up of an ad hoc committee on agenda item 5 continues to be blocked in this multilateral negotiating body.

Our delegation takes a resolute stand against any attempt, under any pretext whatsoever, to impede the start of practical negotiations at the Conference with a view to the conclusion of an agreement or, respectively, agreements on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. If particular delegations have their own specific ideas or constructive proposals on the substance of the issues as a whole, or on specific separate questions -- for example, the applicability of existing international treaties and agreements in this field -- or, say, if they have certain doubts concerning particular approaches by other delegations, such issues can be considered precisely in the course of negotiations within the framework of the future ad hoc committee on the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Mr. ALESSI (Italy):

In the domain of arms control in outer space, encouraging news reaches us from outside. I refer to reports of the United States acceptance without preconditions of a Soviet call for talks on preventing an arms race in outer space to be held in Vienna. We consider this development a very positive one and hope that a final agreement can be worked out as soon as possible.

Bilateral talks between the two major space Powers seem indispensable in order to advance the task of preventing an arms race in outer space. It is also legitimate to hope that such talks may facilitate parallel progress on other issues of fundamental concern, in particular nuclear disarmament. The Italian Government made known its position in this regard on 3 July, wishing that the Vienna talks "may mark a more constructive phase of international relations leading to a gradual resumption of a dialogue on issues relating to arms control and disarmament".