

(Mr. Voicu, Romania)

The Romanian delegation, like many other delegations, emphasized the urgent need for our Conference to consider in depth the agenda item entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space". The Conference on Disarmament has been requested by the General Assembly to intensify its consideration of the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects taking into account all relevant proposals including those presented in the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space at its 1985 session and at the fortieth session of the General Assembly. The Conference has been called upon to undertake negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in outer space in all its aspects.

The Romanian delegation believes that questions concerning outer space should be approached on the basis of the recognized principle of the common interest of all mankind in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes. Consequently, the exploration and use of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development, and shall be the province of all mankind. Therefore, the fundamental objective of our efforts should be to stop any use of outer space for military purposes. Effective measures should be taken to prevent all actions to expand the arms race in outer space, and to ensure the complete demilitarization of outer space.

As emphasized in Working Paper CD/545 tabled by our delegation last year, "Romania considers it necessary for the United Nations to shoulder the responsibility for the conclusion of an international treaty on outer space. One possibility which could be envisaged would be the convening of a world conference and, possibly, the creation of a special agency for the defence of outer space". It should be noted that the existing bodies of the United Nations system are not able to ensure access by all States and, in particular, by the developing countries, to peaceful space technology. This highlights the particular importance of establishing a specialized United Nations agency for outer space with the two-fold task of ensuring the widest possible access by all States to space technology and undertaking various control and surveillance operations that are currently being carried out exclusively by the space Powers. Such a body would have to reconcile a wide variety of political, legal, military, economic and commercial requirements and would contribute to the promotion of broad international co-operation in the field of peaceful uses of outer space.

The proposal for the establishment of such an agency is more topical than ever today when all peoples are gravely concerned at the danger posed to all mankind by an arms race in outer space and in particular by the threat of exacerbating the current state of insecurity by developments that could further undermine international peace and security, retard the achievement of general and complete disarmament, and risk creating obstacles to the development of international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

Therefore we strongly support the acceleration of the informal consultations to ensure the re-establishment and beginning of actual work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space.