

(Mr. Jessel, France)

With regard to outer space, I will confine myself to one brief point. The subject has been tackled repeatedly in our plenary meetings, but also last year and this year in the Ad hoc Committee, in which we have this session conveyed our thoughts on the legal aspects of the problem and tried to determine the headway made in the existing legal régime, as well as its shortcomings, and it seems to us that it would be opportune to go deeper into the legal aspects of the limitation of the military use of space. More generally, and as you know, France has on a number of occasions over the past 10 years made various proposals on this matter and we hope that, in due course, the seed thus sown will germinate and bear fruit.

I should also like in connection with this work on outer space to make a remark in passing, a more pragmatic remark. The Ad hoc Committee, as stated at the beginning of this meeting, held some 10 meetings this year. Nine were held last year, but this year had much more time, something that brings us face to face with the budgetary restrictions we have had to bow to. I think this should give us some thought for the future.

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(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

The Soviet Union, consistently working for a radical solution to the problem of preventing an arms race in space, which is essential if we wish to remove the danger of nuclear war, has expressed its readiness to elaborate and conclude a multilateral agreement to ensure the immunity of artificial Earth satellites and to ban anti-satellite systems as a partial measure. In this instance again our proposals have been supported by unilateral steps. A unilateral Soviet moratorium on anti-satellite weapons has been in force for more than three years.

Although the Ad hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space was not provided with a negotiating mandate, who could deny that within the framework of that Committee negotiations have in fact started, whether the opponents of these negotiations like it or not? About a dozen States submitted definitions of the term "space strike weapons" and expressed their opinion of the legal aspects of a future agreement for the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Specific proposals submitted by delegations will undoubtedly be used in future work on this important area of disarmament talks.