

(Mr. Calderón, Peru)

With respect to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, it is clear that first of all a verifiable distinction must be drawn between the placing of objects in orbit with hostile military intent and the placing of those with non-hostile military intent. Under article IV of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, the prohibition, which extends only to objects carrying nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction, applies once the object is placed in orbit, in other words once a circuit around the Earth has been completed. On that basis Peru supports all initiatives aimed at amending the 1967 Treaty as a means of finding a partial solution to the problem, but it would advocate the simpler amendment of prohibiting the placing in orbit of any object carrying any type of weapon whatsoever. We do not think it would be necessary to introduce new elements such as the concept of "space weapons", as what defines the prohibition is non-placement in orbit. Nor is it possible to accept new criteria concerning the length of time the objects remain in orbit, because the approach followed in the 1967 Treaty is much more appropriate in that it prohibits even the temporary presence of a delivery system in outer space, provided it completes a circuit around the Earth.

Now, in so far as an amendment of this type would not involve weapon systems that can destroy objects in outer space from the air, land or sea through direct hits or using the principle of directed energy or other principles of physics, it is clear that their viability will depend on the concurrent effort being made to multilateralize the basic obligations of the Treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union on the Limitation of

(Cont'd)