

---

Ad Hoc Committee on  
Prevention of an Arms Race  
in Outer Space

Proposals by Sweden relating to prevention of an arms  
race in outer space

The Swedish delegation has the honour to submit the following proposals on the basis of its plenary statement on 11 July 1989:

Both of the leading nuclear and space powers continue to devote considerable resources to research on ballistic missile defences, which may have adverse implications for the ABM Treaty, and probably also for the ongoing nuclear and space talks. Another source of concern is the emphasis on ASAT programmes. As pointed out by SIPRI in its 1989 Yearbook, a major increase has taken place in the number and capabilities of operational military satellites in several categories. This expansion also involves an increased integration of various space-based systems with land, sea and air forces, thereby enhancing their capabilities in several respects.

Given the fact that it may be relatively easy to develop various types of ASAT-weapons, other States, too, may consider strengthening their military capacities by acquiring such weapons. Already the spread of advanced missile technology could promote such a development. Increased dedicated or non-dedicated ASAT-capabilities represent new risks already of accidental interference with satellites, which could have serious implications for international security.

The risk of an arms race in outer space has been partly attributed to the fact that the existing body of international law is not sufficient to effectively prevent such a development.

Article 2:4 of the Charter of the United Nations outlaws the use of force and the threat of use of force. It should be observed that Article 51 of the Charter cannot be interpreted as permitting attacks on non-military space objects. The Outer Space Treaty prohibits the placing of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in earth orbits and on celestial bodies, but