

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

the "paramount importance" of the anti-satellite systems limitation issue. So what? The provisions contained in the Soviet draft treaty on banning the tests of any anti-satellite systems, on banning the development of new such systems and eliminating those already in existence offer a complete and radical solution to the problem of anti-satellite weapons.

Finally, to facilitate an agreement the Soviet Union already last year declared a unilateral moratorium on the launching of anti-satellite weapons into outer space. In other words, the USSR has taken a unilateral obligation to refrain from launching any kind of anti-satellite weapons into outer space as long as other States, including the United States, also refrain from similar actions. It goes without saying that this obligation extends to test launches of anti-satellite weapons as well.

Veterans of disarmament present in this chamber will agree with me when I say that hardly ever before has the tactical camouflage of a negotiating position been so blatantly disavowed as was the case with the assertion regarding the Soviet Union's "unwillingness" to conduct negotiations on the limitation of anti-satellite systems. As you know, the United States House of Representatives has recently passed an amendment prohibiting the allocation of funds for the testing of United States anti-satellite weapons provided that the Soviet Union and other countries refrain from conducting such tests.

In this connection, the delegation of the Soviet Union would like to use the high rostrum of this Conference to reaffirm the effectiveness of the moratorium declared earlier by the Soviet Union on the stationing in outer space of anti-satellite weapons of any kind. At the same time we regard this moratorium, for all its usefulness, only as a first step towards the complete prohibition of anti-satellite weapons, including the elimination of the systems already in existence. That is why, while continuing to insist on the beginning of a practical discussion at the Conference on Disarmament on the issue of preventing the militarization of outer space, we would like to recall that the USSR is ready immediately to start formal negotiations with the United States to achieve an agreement with regard to anti-satellite systems. This readiness was expressed by Comrade K.U. Chernenko in his answers to questions from the United States journalist J. Kingsbury-Smith, published on 12 June this year. The text of the answers is being distributed today at the request of the Soviet delegation as official document CD/510.

Given a genuine interest in finding effective solutions, any relevant issues, including those of verifying compliance with future agreements limiting the arms race in space, could be successfully resolved to the benefit of all.