

PEACEFUL EXPLORATION OF OUTER SPACE

Letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR to  
the Secretary-General of the United Nations

Sir,

The Soviet Union proposes that an item entitled "International co-operation in the peaceful exploration of outer space under conditions of its non-militarization" should be included in the agenda for the fortieth session of the General Assembly.

This proposal of the Soviet Union is based on the fact that mankind today is faced with a choice: either outer space will make an ever greater contribution towards improving the living conditions of the inhabitants of our planet or it will become a new source of mortal danger to them. The only intelligent choice worthy of man's space age can and must be to prevent the militarization of outer space and preserve it for peaceful activities.

The issue has become urgent. It must be resolved before weapons penetrate into outer space. The danger of this happening is growing every day. Concrete work is already in progress with a view to developing offensive space weapons. If this process is not halted, the arms race will further expand and intensify in every area, absorbing fresh material and intellectual resources and placing insurmountable obstacles in the path of the joint peaceful space activity of States.

The Soviet Union proposes that the General Assembly should once again resolutely call upon all States, especially those with a major space potential, to reach agreement without delay on effective measures to prevent an arms race in outer space, thus creating the conditions for broad international co-operation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

The Soviet Union proposes the adoption of a set of concrete measures which would help States to join their efforts in the peaceful exploration of outer space and the utilization of space technology for the good of all States, among other things providing developing countries with all-round assistance in this field. It is obvious that the successful solution of this problem, which affects the whole of mankind, will become possible if agreements can be reached effectively ensuring the non-militarization of outer space.

Motivated by the desire to promote rapid progress with regard to ensuring the peaceful exploration of outer space, the Soviet Union submits for consideration at the forthcoming session of the General Assembly a document entitled: "The basic directions and principles of international co-operation in the peaceful exploration of outer space under conditions of its non-militarization (proposals by the USSR)".