

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

The Mongolian delegation would like to speak today about item 7 of the agenda, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

A number of statements have been made on this question since the Committee first added this new item to its agenda at its spring session this year. My delegation has been following the course of the discussion with the greatest interest. It has also expressed its views on the subject both here in the Committee and in the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly. We believe that the Committee has on the whole reacted positively to the two resolutions on the subject adopted by the General Assembly at its last session.

At the last session, the delegation of Mongolia introduced resolution 36/99 in the First Committee on behalf of its sponsors.

Both during the spring part and during the present part of this session the Mongolian delegation, like many other delegations, has repeatedly advocated the orderly and structured consideration of the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the setting up of an ad hoc working group on this subject to begin concrete negotiations for the adoption of effective measures towards the elaboration of an international treaty in this connection.

As I have already reminded the Committee more than once, the Mongolian delegation formally submitted the working paper in document CD/272 which proposes a draft mandate for an ad hoc working group on this question.

As you know, an exchange of views on this question was held in formal meetings. The Committee has been discussing item 7 of its agenda this week at its plenary meetings. During the discussions both at informal and at plenary meetings it has unfortunately become clear that certain delegations intend to maintain the absence of consensus on the question of the setting up of an ad hoc working group on this matter. I will say frankly that we do not quite understand this obstructionism.

We believe that the time has come for concrete negotiations on this important and urgent question in an ad hoc working group. We know perfectly well that a very small number of States are playing the principal part in the exploration and use of outer space. Nevertheless, in view of the extremely dangerous consequences of an arms race in outer space for the peace and security of all, the Committee is obliged to take a vital interest in the consideration of this question and the urgent drafting of an international legal instrument on the subject. The overwhelming majority of the world's States demand this.

This was confirmed in particular at the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which recently ended in Vienna. The Conference urged the competent bodies of the United Nations and in particular the General Assembly and also the Committee on Disarmament, in considering measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space, to give appropriate attention and high priority to the serious concern of the international community at the extension of the arms race to outer space.