

(Mr. Erdenbilig, Mongolia)

Last week the United States delegation expressed doubts as to whether the establishment of such an ad hoc working group would be the best course at the present stage. It advocated the holding of a certain number of plenary meetings, either formal or informal, on the subject of outer space.

As I stated earlier, the Committee has already decided to devote its plenary meetings on 31 August and 2 September to a consideration of the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. If the Committee decides in addition to hold some informal meetings for the discussion of this question, the Mongolian delegation will have no particular objections.

Such an organization of the work should not rule out the possibility of continuing the consultations and exchanges of views already begun in the Committee on the draft mandate, but should on the contrary stimulate them. The Mongolian delegation is thus in favour of the Committee's using all possible methods and forms of working so that it can reach agreement on the text of a mandate as soon as possible.

We do not see the need to postpone consideration of a mandate for this group until the conclusion of the Committee's discussion of the substantive side of the question at this part of its session. If one delegation does not agree to the setting up of the working group, that is a totally different matter.

The Mongolian delegation appeals to the members of the Committee on Disarmament to pursue intensive consultations so that before the end of the summer part of its session the Committee can take the necessary decision for the setting up of an ad hoc working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

(Mr. Rodriguez Navarro, Venezuela)

Another area of concern to my country is the militarization of outer space and the placing of satellites in synchronous geostationary orbit, to the point of saturation, for purposes that are not exactly peaceful. This directly affects the security of all countries and particularly that of the equatorial countries.

In this connection, it should be said that the world is well aware of the enormous advantages of those countries which have advanced space technologies and which, without considering inequalities, use satellites for military purposes in their disputes with other nations. They thus give free rein to their strategies, paying no heed to the tragic consequences resulting from their use of satellites. In this context, it is sufficient to recall what happened recently in the south Atlantic in order to draw objective conclusions on the matter.

My country shares the views of those delegations which consider it appropriate to establish an ad hoc working group on outer space to identify and consider the problems of its militarization and thereby establish the competence of the Committee on Disarmament in this area.