

(Mr. Dubey, India)

these targets. This will be verily a system of policing the world from a space gendarmerie. These technologies can be used not only against the offensive nuclear missiles of the nuclear-weapon States, but also against any other targets on land, sea and in the air. Should the vast majority of the nations of the world accept this total dependence and possible total subservience?

In view of these considerations, it is unrealistic to expect that the non-aligned States would be satisfied with a discussion of an aimless nature of the meanings of words like "research" and "militarization" and of the relevant articles of the existing agreements. For them, their security -- and, indeed, that of the world -- lies in preventing the development of these new weapons. Therefore, the supreme task, a task equalled only by that of the prevention of nuclear war, before the Conference on Disarmament is to negotiate an agreement or agreements for banning the development of such weapons.

One of the space-weapon systems, that is ASAT systems, are already at an advanced stage of development. For my country, as for many others, satellites are a part of a peaceful effort for the benefit of our people. We are directly concerned if weapons are developed to destroy satellites. It is indeed disconcerting for us to see that, in the Conference on Disarmament, instead of undertaking negotiations for an agreement for banning such weapons, efforts are being made to distinguish between the various kinds of satellites and various activities of satellites and demands are being made to have perfect verifiability before considering any ban on anti-satellite weapons. In our opinion, the only sensible course open for us is to ban the testing, development and deployment of all kinds of ASAT weapons and destroy existing such weapons. In such an approach, there is no scope for any partial agreement. We also believe that, if such action is taken before these weapons are further developed, the problem of verifiability will be manageable. In our opinion, the extent of verification is a function of the kind of treaty that is to be negotiated and to be verified. We also feel that, in the ultimate analysis, verification is a matter of trust and political will and therefore it cannot be seen only in technical terms. If we must have foolproof verification before any disarmament treaty can be negotiated, then the very nature of the present weapons system will ab initio render most disarmament efforts fruitless and the prospect for peace in the world indeed very grim. What is worse is that there is an increasing tendency these days, including in the case of a treaty to ban the ASAT-weapon systems, to put the verification cart before the disarmament horse in an attempt to permit the uninterrupted development of the new weapon systems in pursuit of the illusion of deterrence, parity or superiority.

In conclusion, the simple fact is that the arms race in outer space can be prevented only if there is a genuine desire and the requisite political will on the part of those who are developing such weapons and their allies to prevent such an extension of the arms race. This is possible only if these countries decide forthwith to forgo the so-called defensive option and explicitly commit themselves to negotiations of a new agreement or agreements for this purpose.