

42. One delegation stated that the creation and deployment of such ABM systems and the placing of weapons in outer space could lead only to the undermining of strategic stability and a reduction in the level of security, because it would inevitably lead to competition in the field of both strategic defensive arms and strategic offensive weapons - in other words, an arms race on a new and even more dangerous level. This would inevitably also lead to the destruction of fundamental international agreements in the area of arms control. Stability and security in our time could only be reciprocal and were achieved not by the continuation of the arms race but rather through the consistent reduction of strategic offensive weapons together with strict limitations on strategic defensive systems, a ban on the placing of arms in outer space and the expansion of confidence-building and predictability measures.

43. Various delegations were of the view that consideration should be given to the questions of the protection of satellites. Some delegations considered that attempts to establish a protection régime based on a categorization of satellites would give rise to many difficulties and advocated the granting of immunity to all space objects without exception, with the understanding that space weapons would be subject to an unconditional ban. Other delegations were of the view that certain distinctions should be made for the purpose of immunizing satellites and various possibilities were mentioned in terms of their functions, purposes and orbit. In this connection, some delegations held that a protection régime called for improvements in the system of registration of space objects to permit the identification of the nature and missions of protected space objects. Some delegations stressed in particular that immunity should not be extended to satellites that perform military missions.

44. One delegation, in an expert presentation, described the legal régime for outer space as general, precarious and unevenly ratified. It considered that any provisions limiting or prohibiting weapons or activities were only exceptions to the possible use of outer space on the basis of self-defence and that the principle of peaceful use only excluded aggressive uses of space. To improve the peaceful uses of outer space, it deemed particularly important to utilize the verification potential offered by outer space and to strengthen the security of space activities. In this respect, it recalled its proposal for an Agency for the Processing of Space Images (APSI) put forward in 1988. Since it considered that the diversity of ASAT systems made it practically