

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

Proceeding from this premise, the socialist countries consistently strive for the adoption of effective and practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the creation, to that end, of additional barriers in international law. This approach of principle forms the basis of the highly important proposals by the Soviet Union, which in 1981 and 1983 submitted two draft documents, namely, a treaty on the prohibition of stationing weapons of any kind in outer space and a treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from outer space against the earth.

Of exceptional importance to the preservation of universal peace and the peaceful utilization of outer space is the Soviet Union's new constructive proposal to start bilateral negotiations with the United States of America on the prevention of the militarization of outer space and to establish, on a mutual basis, starting from the date of the opening of negotiations, a moratorium on the testing and deployment of space weapons. As is known, as far back as last year the Soviet Union unilaterally assumed the obligation not to place anti-satellite weapons in outer space as long as other States, including the United States of America, refrain from placing in space anti-satellite weapons of any kind.

The new Soviet proposal, in our view, represents a logical continuation of the Soviet Union's principled policy on the prevention of the militarization of outer space. In the declaration by the Soviet Government it is stated: "... weapons of any kind -- conventional, nuclear, laser, particle beam or other -- whether on piloted or non-piloted systems, must not be placed in outer space and stationed there. Space weapons, wherever they may be based, must not be developed, tested or deployed either for anti-missile defence, nor as anti-satellite weapons, nor for use against targets on earth or in the air". The declaration of the Soviet Government states further: "An approach whereby a whole category of weapons -- space strike weapons, including anti-satellite and anti-missile space-based systems, as well as all earth-, air-, or sea-based means intended to attack objects in outer space -- would be prohibited and eliminated, would make it possible to ensure reliable verification of the fulfilment of the parties' obligations".

It seems to us that the Soviet Union's new proposal to start negotiations with the United States of America is exceptionally timely under present conditions, when the threat of development of space weapons and of their potential use has sharply increased. We believe that the policy and actions of the present United States Administration in this field are directly connected with this threat. It is in the United States of America that official plans of the development and use of weapon systems have been announced, plans fraught with the danger of the emergence of a new area of the arms race -- outer space -- which is no less dangerous than the nuclear one. After all, the development of weapons intended to strike not only at targets in outer space but also at land, sea and air targets has been proclaimed as one of the main objectives of United States military policy.