

11. A group of Socialist States held also the view that in the period of growing sensitivity about the Earth's atmosphere, depletion of ozone layer, increasing fears about unintended climatic changes, any plans of testing and stationing of weapons in outer space for possible use, must take into account also their probable negative consequences for the Earth's delicate and still poorly understood atmospheric chemistry. These delegations believed that these questions required reflection in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee.

12. There was general recognition of the importance of the bilateral negotiations between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America and it was stressed that bilateral and multilateral efforts were complementary. Many delegations emphasized that those negotiations did not diminish the urgency of multilateral negotiations and reaffirmed that, as provided for in General Assembly resolution 42/33, the Conference on Disarmament, as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, had the primary role in the negotiation of a multilateral agreement or agreements, as appropriate, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects. They also stressed that the scope of the work of the Conference on Disarmament was global and larger than the scope of the bilateral negotiations. Some other delegations, while recognizing the need for the Conference to play a role with respect to problems relating to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, stressed that nothing should be done that would hinder the success of the bilateral negotiations. Furthermore, they believed that multilateral disarmament measures in this area could not be considered independently of developments at the bilateral level.

13. One delegation stated that outer space, as the common heritage of mankind, should be used only for peaceful purposes and in the interests of human welfare. It considered that to halt the arms race in outer space has become a new priority item in the field of disarmament. It believed that the development of space weaponry has caused a qualitative escalation in the arms race, which constitutes a new threat to international security and stability. It considered that the prohibition of space weaponry is an effective way to halt the arms race in outer space. It reiterated that the two major space powers, which possess the greatest space capacity and are engaged in developing space weapons, should commit themselves not to test, develop, produce and deploy space weapons and to destroy all their existing space weapons and on such a basis, an international agreement on the complete prohibition and destruction of space weapons should be concluded. It was of the view that at the present stage, work in the Conference on Disarmament should centre on the solution of the problems that were directly related to preventing the "weaponization" of outer space.

14. Many delegations were of the view that as a result of the work carried out in previous years, at the 1988 session, attention should be devoted to proposals for measures to prevent an arms race in outer space. They believed that the various ideas and suggestions that had been advanced provided sufficient points of convergence to move forward in that area. Accordingly, many delegations held that the Ad Hoc Committee should proceed with a more structured and goal-oriented examination of the subject. In this context, they welcomed the informal paper of the Chairman, dated 23 August 1988, containing a list of existing proposals relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, as a useful basis for such a work. Some other delegations considered that, while the work of the Committee since its establishment had