

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

Paragraph 5, in which the Assembly "Requests the Conference on Disarmament to consider as a matter of priority the question of preventing an arms race in outer space".

Lastly, Mr. President, paragraph 7, which is perhaps the most pertinent for us, in which the Assembly, "Further requests the Conference on Disarmament to establish an ad hoc working group at the beginning of its session in 1984, with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space".

If what I have just recalled is examined and compared with the draft mandate which was submitted by the Group of 21 on 29 February 1984 and which is reproduced in document CD/329/Rev.1, it will be seen that this draft faithfully reflects that resolution, adopted, let us not forget, by 147 votes in favour, and not 10 years ago but on 15 December 1983.

I should like, in concluding this statement, and in order to facilitate the comparison to which I referred, to read out this draft in its entirety. It is very brief and says the following:

"Reaffirming the principle that outer space - the common heritage of mankind - should be preserved exclusively for peaceful purposes, and in order to prevent the extension of an arms race to outer space, and prohibit its use for hostile purposes; the Conference on Disarmament decides to establish an Ad Hoc [subsidiary body]" - there it said a subsidiary body, but we know now that it is to be an ad hoc committee - "with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement, or various agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space. The Ad Hoc Committee will take into account all existing proposals and future initiatives and report on the progress of its work to the Conference on Disarmament."

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(Mr. Cannock, Peru)

Furthermore, we also regret that in spite of the great efforts made in this Conference by many delegations, it has not yet been possible to achieve the consensus necessary to set up an ad hoc committee on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. This situation exists in spite of General Assembly resolution 38/70, adopted by an overwhelming majority of countries, with the sole exception of one country whose vote prevented a consensus.

My delegation attaches special importance to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, considering that it is a question of using as another area of militarization an environment which should serve peaceful purposes exclusively. It would, moreover, be simpler and preferable to prevent an arms race rather than to become involved later in a more arduous task of trying to disarm outer space, in which vast quantities of money are being invested for military purposes.

I do not wish to let slip this opportunity to congratulate very sincerely the delegations of Sweden and Argentina on their statements of 22 and 27 March last respectively for having drawn attention to important relevant elements in this field, which will undoubtedly help our future work in the Group of 21 and in the Conference itself.