

(Mr. Wegener, Federal Republic of Germany)

Mr. President, the purpose of my statement today is to underline the urgency of an early resumption of our substantive work on agenda item 5, prevention of an arms race in outer space, and to offer a number of perspectives, that, in the view of my delegation, ought to be taken into account in the Conference's work on outer space.

Let us recall, as a starting point, that the Conference itself, in adopting the conclusions of the Ad Hoc Committee on Outer Space in its 1985 Annual Report, has solemnly undertaken to resume its activities on agenda item 5 at the earliest possible time. In that report it is acknowledged that the relevant Committee had had a wide-ranging discussion that contributed to clarifying the complexity of a number of problems and to a better understanding of positions. But the Committee also recognized the importance and urgency of preventing an arms race in outer space and agreed that, consequently, all efforts should be made to assure that substantive work on the agenda item be continued at the 1986 session of the Conference.

The urgency of such work is further heightened by the fact that the bilateral negotiations between the two Major Powers on nuclear and space matters are now in full swing. We in this Conference all agree that the elaboration of further international legislation in outer space, including measures for the prevention of a future arms race in that environment, cannot be entrusted to these bilateral negotiators alone. More and more States -- many of them represented in this Conference -- are themselves outer-space Powers or participate in important programmes for the exploration and utilization of outer space; all States would be threatened by a military misuse of the outer space potential.

It is widely agreed that in view of the dynamic technological developments many aspects of a future outer space legal order inevitably necessitate comprehensive regulation by the international community as such. Global security issues need global solutions. The domain of outer space is one of those where by the very nature of the subject matter only global regulation can provide durable solutions, and where it would be futile for the bilateral partners to substitute themselves for the world community at large.

Yet, the existing outer space legal régime is manifestly incomplete. International law, as it relates to outer space, is a relatively young discipline, and its accomplishments so far do not enable it to limit, or channel, armament in outer space in a manner conducive to the maintenance of