

prevention of an arms race in outer space as soon as possible. That delegation believed that, though the work of the Ad Hoc Committee had scored some achievements, it had failed to make substantive progress. 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.

18. Some delegations maintained that they had been and continued to be supporters of using outer space for peaceful purposes and implementing far-reaching and comprehensive initiatives aimed at the prevention of an arms race in outer space, which would include such important measures as prohibition of ASAT systems and space-to-Earth arms, and creation of a system of control over the non-placement of arms in outer space. One delegation reiterated its conviction that a world secure for all could not be built on the basis of extending the arms race to new spheres, in particular to outer space. Weaponization of space would lead to a dangerous rivalry in the field of space arms, which would have irreversible consequences for international peace and security and for maintaining strategic stability. It would impart a qualitatively new nature to the arms race, would undermine existing agreements and endanger the disarmament process as a whole. Of greatest importance for preventing such an outcome was strict compliance with the ABM Treaty.

B. Existing agreements relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space

19. The Ad Hoc Committee recognized that activities in the exploration and use of outer space should be carried out in accordance with international law. The importance of the principles and provisions of international law relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space was stressed.

20. Some delegations underlined the central role that the Charter of the United Nations played in the legal régime applicable to outer space. In that connection they stressed the special significance of paragraph 4 of Article 2 and Article 51. They noted that Article 2(4) prohibits the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State. Complementing Article 2(4), Article 51 permits States to exercise their inherent right of individual or collective self-defence. These delegations thus concluded that when read together, these two Charter provisions strictly prohibit the use of force in all instances except self-defence. Accordingly, they believed that these provisions afforded a substantial degree of protection to space objects. Other delegations