

(Mr. Ahmad, Pakistan)

achievement of a comprehensive ban on space weapons, certain interim or partial measures could also be profitably negotiated. Priority in this regard could be given to the questions of a moratorium on the development, testing and deployment of ASAT weapons, and the immunity of space objects.

The United States-Soviet ABM Treaty of 1972 imposes important though limited restrictions on the development of space-based ABM systems. There have recently been disquieting reports that the restraints imposed by this agreement may be weakened. Such a development would be fraught with extremely serious consequences. Without these restraints, there would be an unrestrained arms race in both offensive and defensive systems. We therefore call upon the two parties to adhere strictly to its terms. Pakistan's proposal last year for an international instrument to supplement the ABM Treaty was made with the objective of strengthening the restraints contained in this treaty and making them applicable to all technologically advanced States.

There are some who maintain that the functions performed by many satellites have a stabilizing effect as they contribute to crisis management, early warning, communication and the verification of arms control agreements. My delegation does not wish to quarrel with this argument, except to point out that information gathered by reconnaissance and surveillance satellites has also been used in support of military operations. However, if the functions performed by reconnaissance and surveillance satellites are as benign as they are sometimes made out to be, one may well ask why this capability should remain the monopoly of the space Powers. Should we not entrust surveillance and reconnaissance activities by satellites to an international agency in order to monitor compliance with disarmament agreements? In this context, the proposal for the establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency deserves serious consideration. Such a multilateral verification capability could supplement and support bilateral arrangements and national technical means of verification.

The Registration Convention of 1974 provides a useful instrument as a confidence-building measure. The present system of declarations could be strengthened and, if properly implemented, could give greater transparency to outer space activities. So far the space Powers have not described the military functions of their satellites, although it is a well-known fact that most of these are performing such functions. The Review Conference of the Registration Convention which is to be held in 1989 could provide a useful opportunity for strengthening this Convention.

Mr. President, I will now turn to the last item on which I would like to express the views of my delegation, namely the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament. The Ad hoc Committee on the Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament did some useful work during the spring part of the session under the dedicated leadership of Ambassador García Robles, but was unable to complete its work in accordance with General Assembly decision 41/421. While we recognize the complexity of some of the remaining issues, we do not think it is impossible to resolve them if the necessary good will and flexibility is demonstrated by all sides, especially some nuclear-weapon States. Regrettably, this spirit does not seem to be much in evidence on the part of some of the delegations which have begun to question parts of the Programme earlier agreed upon by consensus and to reopen issues which appeared to have