

(Mr. Dubey, India)

for anyone to see, particularly in the light of the statement from an authoritative source in the USSR that offensive weapons can very cheaply overwhelm any new ABM system which can be created.

We are faced with a situation where transition is far more crucial than the final point of arrival. For inherent in the transition is mistrust and hence an accelerating arms race and instability. If we decide to plunge into such a transition, the chances of our surviving and reaching the haven of the ideal offence-defence mix are indeed very slim.

No matter how we describe the first part of the transition -- research or weapons development -- there is no doubt that, so long as the option to develop space weapons is kept open, a renewed arms race both in outer space and on Earth is inevitable. This has been brought home by recent allegations being traded by the United States and the USSR regarding each other's intentions and capabilities with regard to the development of new weapons systems. This has effectively come in the way of any progress in their bilateral negotiations. The account given by each side about the progress of the negotiations confirms this conclusion. In fact, one of the eminent advisers to the United States team on bilateral negotiations advised the Western allies that they must not panic "even if it (i.e. the United States) does not achieve any agreement with the Soviet Union in the next four years".

As non-aligned nations, we are clearly not overly concerned about the demise or the bolstering of the doctrine of deterrence which is likely to follow the development and deployment of the new ABM system or about the fear in Europe that an American defence system will decouple the defence of Europe from that of the United States. These fears and expectations flow from the premise that nuclear weapons are weapons of war and can, therefore, be used to guarantee national security. We are fundamentally opposed to this position and we believe that nuclear weapons can never be used as weapons of war. They are weapons of mass destruction. The manner in which the super-Powers have gone about developing their nuclear arsenals and the doctrines and strategies for their use make it very difficult to distinguish between their use as a deterrent and their use for waging a nuclear war. As a matter of fact, the new defence system will have the potential of dramatically enhancing the usability of the present nuclear arsenals. This will be so because of the reduced fear of retaliation and because of the general uncertainty and instability that the development of these weapons is going to create. Professor Sydney D. Drell of Stanford University, a well-known expert in this field, has very rightly said: "A mixed defence-offence posture designed to deprive the opponent of first-strike capability is itself likely to look -- in motivation and in capability -- uncomfortably like a first-strike posture". There is also a possibility that a total or partial assurance of invulnerability may lead to localized nuclear wars, especially as the third-generation nuclear weapons are developed.

The technologies associated with the new ABM system will give the super-Power possessing the system an unrestrained capacity to watch and manipulate events in the world from outer space. The super-Power concerned will acquire foolproof systems to kill satellites and to hit any target on the surface of the Earth. It will also acquire laser or particle-beam weapons to destroy