

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): Mr. President, today the Soviet delegation would like to draw attention once again to the issue of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. No one, I think, would question the fact that this issue has aroused heightened interest at the present session of the Conference. It has been one of the central issues. This year there has hardly been a single plenary meeting at which one delegation or another has not expressed its attitude towards this urgent problem of our time. On the credit side of the session that is now drawing to a close, we must, undoubtedly, place the creation of a subsidiary body on agenda item 5, the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, under the chairmanship of the representative of Egypt, Ambassador Alfarargi. We wish to express our satisfaction with the work of the Committee and our gratitude to its Chairman, who has done a lot for progress in the discussion of the question of preventing an arms race in space.

The Soviet delegation has on many occasions stated its attitude to this problem in general and to specific aspects of it. We have done this at plenary meetings of the Conference and in the Ad Hoc Committee. The participants in the Conference are well aware of the Soviet Union's concrete proposals, including those in the form of draft treaties. Many delegations have expressed their views and comments concerning the Soviet proposals and some of them could, it seems to us, be conducive to further progress in the work of the Conference in this key area.

Today, the Soviet delegation has taken the floor to inform the Conference of a new, important proposal which the Soviet Government made a few days ago.

The USSR has proposed the inclusion in the agenda for the fortieth session of the United Nations General Assembly of the question of "International co-operation in the peaceful exploration of outer space under conditions of its non-militarization" and has submitted a specific draft resolution to the General Assembly. At the request of the Soviet delegation, the texts connected with the submission of that proposal will be circulated as a document of the Conference on Disarmament, CD/639.

In submitting this initiative, our country proceeds from the belief that humanity is today faced with a choice: either outer space will make an ever greater contribution towards improving the living conditions of the inhabitants of the planet Earth or it will become a source of a new mortal danger to them. We are convinced that the only intelligent choice can and must be to prevent the militarization of outer space and preserve it for peaceful activities and broad international co-operation.

To put it briefly, the essence of our new initiative lies in the tabling of a concrete, forward-looking programme for the combining of the efforts of States for the peaceful use of space. We proceed from the belief that large-scale international co-operation in this sphere can become a reality only if there is no militarization of space, if, that is, States renounce the development (including research), the testing and the deployment of offensive space weapons.