

(Mr. Bayart, Mongolia)

the necessity to start serious substantive negotiations with a view to preventing the extension of the arms race to outer space. We are convinced that the Conference on Disarmament is capable of carrying out this task. This sole multilateral negotiating body has on its table a considerable number of initiatives and proposals which could serve as a solid ground for further concrete negotiations.

Prevention of an arms race in outer space is one of the jointly agreed priority goals of the Conference. Unfortunately, not all States have yet come to realize this sine qua non. A number of countries, while speaking in favour of preventing an arms race, are in fact blocking the immediate start of the multilateral negotiations in the framework of the Conference on Disarmament, and are attempting to replace the negotiations by purely general discussions around the problem.

Such is the thrust of statements to the effect that it would be appropriate to keep the Ad hoc Committee's programme of work in its present form for the next year. In this context, references are being made to the fact that during the discussion of the programme of work it was not possible to arrive at generally agreed positions. This is not in the least surprising, given the positions currently taken by certain States which reject even such proposals as the idea of distinguished Ambassador Cámpora of Argentina about the inclusion in the Conference's report of declarations by States members of the Conference on Disarmament that they do not possess weapons in space deployed on a permanent basis. I would like to state that the socialist countries have no difficulties with this proposal, and we are ready to include a relevant formulation in the Conference's report. In our opinion, the idea expressed at the last meeting of the Ad hoc Committee -- that the annual report should be divided into three parts corresponding to the items of the programme of work -- would facilitate a clearer reflection of the positions of all groups and a better understanding of the essence of these positions.

Now, when we come to the report-writing stage, it is necessary to give serious consideration to ways and means of making the work of the Ad hoc Committee more substantive and its activities more practical. The work of the Ad hoc Committee should be oriented to the future rather than to the past. In this respect, we believe that the work of this Ad hoc Committee should be concentrated on the existing proposals and initiatives aimed at the prevention of an arms race in outer space, which would no doubt make the work more substantive. In other words, we all should do our utmost so as not to be compelled tomorrow to talk, ex post facto, about disarmament in space.

My Government continues to consider that in the present situation, which requires immediate and redoubled efforts for the prevention of an arms race in outer space and its cessation on Earth, every State, especially those with major space capabilities, should refrain from actions contrary to this endeavour. Following this logic, we cannot but express our regret at the fact that the Government of Japan has taken a decision to allow its companies to participate in the United States' Strategic Defence Initiative, widely known as the "Star Wars" programme.