

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

We have heard today the statement by the American delegation on agenda item 5 and the Soviet delegation would like to make some comments on the content of that statement.

First of all, the statement by the distinguished representative of the United States, Ambassador Lowitz, painted a frightening and also needless to say, distorted picture of the Soviet military strategic programme and Soviet space programmes. Obviously, this distortion of the facts was intended to frighten the delegations at the Conference. He said that our programmes are a threat to everyone. If we considered it necessary to reply, we could of course do so; but I do not think that it is necessary. The Soviet military programmes are defensive, and the peaceful nature of our space programmes is wellknown and was once again emphasized very recently by the Vega experiments and projects which have aroused the admiration of the whole world. But I should like to ask the following question: are these statements about the "threatening" nature of Soviet programmes sincere? Do their authors themselves believe what they say? I think not. They themselves do not believe them. If the Soviet programmes really represented such a threat to the security of the United States of America and all the States of the world, then obviously elementary logic would require that proposals should be advanced to prohibit those Soviet programmes. And how can any programmes, including Soviet ones, be prohibited? Through negotiations, of course, bilateral and multilateral negotiations. Delegations in the Conference on Disarmament are familiar with the position of the United States of America on a prohibition of offensive space weapons in the bilateral Soviet-American talks, in particular through the comments of the head of the Soviet delegation to the talks on nuclear and space weapons at a meeting with many representatives to the Conference. To put it briefly, it is a negative position which denies the need to ban space weapons. But we are all more familiar with the position of the United States on this question here in this multilateral forum. If the United States was sincere and wished to prohibit the Soviet so-called military strategic systems which "create a threat" in space, then obviously they would be the first to propose the start of multilateral negotiations on this issue in the Conference, with the participation of all those whom the Soviet Union is "threatening", to use Ambassador Lowitz's words. But the United States is not proposing this. If the United States was sincere and actually feared the Soviet space programme, then here in the Conference they would put forward specific proposals both to limit this type of programme and to prevent an arms race in space. I ask you, Mr. President, and through you all the delegations: when has anyone seen specific proposals by the United States here in the Conference which would enable the Conference to begin negotiations for the prevention of this "frightening Soviet threat"? There have never been such proposals, the