

Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems (1972), the Agreement Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Prevention of Nuclear War (1973), the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space (1975), the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques (1977) and the Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and other Celestial Bodies (1979). In the examination of existing agreements, some delegations referred to documents CD/OS/WP.6 and 7.

17. It was noted that under the multilateral agreements in force: (1) it is prohibited to place in orbit around the Earth any objects carrying nuclear weapons or any other weapons of mass destruction and to install such weapons on celestial bodies or station them in outer space in any other manner; (2) the Moon and other celestial bodies are to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and the establishment of military bases, installations and fortifications, the testing of any type of weapons and the conducting of military manoeuvres on celestial bodies are forbidden; (3) the testing of nuclear weapons or any other nuclear explosions in outer space is prohibited.

18. Various delegations, while acknowledging the value of the restraints imposed by the existing legal régime, which placed some barriers to the arms race in outer space through limitations on certain weapons and military activities in that environment, reiterated that in some areas there were loopholes. They noted that the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, because of its limited scope, left open the possibility of the introduction of weapons in space, other than nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction, in particular anti-satellite weapons and space-based anti-ballistic missile systems. Furthermore, in their opinion, current developments in space science and technology, coupled with ongoing military space programmes, underscored the inadequacy of existing legal instruments to prevent an arms race in outer space. They, therefore, held that there was an urgent need to supplement and amplify the existing legal régime and that, consequently, it was urgent to strengthen, improve and broaden the legal régime applicable to outer space with a view to the effective prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects. Some other delegations stressed that as long as the analysis of the existing legal prescriptions remained restricted to the continuously repeating and deploring of deficiencies and lacunae without attempting to agree upon the real need for and adequate approach to the improvement and completion of a comprehensive legal régime, the work of the Committee would remain selective, deliberately incomplete and without substantial reward.

19. One delegation stated that it proceeds from the necessity to preserve the ABM Treaty in its integrity as a document of unlimited duration, forming the necessary basis for agreement on substantial cuts in strategic offensive weapons. Such cuts would be impossible without preserving the Treaty in its integrity. It offered practical measures to strengthen the régime of the ABM Treaty, above all, an agreement between the parties concerned not to use the right to withdraw from the Treaty for at least ten years, while strictly complying with all its provisions. It also noted that the system of the ABM Treaty provisions does not allow to develop, test or deploy a large-scale ABM system with space-based elements. Article I(2) of the ABM Treaty explicitly prohibits the deployment of ABM systems protecting the entire territory of a State party to the Treaty. Article V(1) of the Treaty explicitly prohibits the development, testing or deployment of ABM systems