

(Mr. Franceschi, Italy)

At its 1985 session the Conference on Disarmament established an Ad Hoc Committee on the prevention of an arms race in outer space under a mandate which offered plenty of opportunities for in-depth discussion of the most important issues related with that question. This mandate was agreed by the Conference bearing in mind the text of the relevant paragraph of resolution 39/59 of 12 December 1984 which was identical to the text of paragraph 9 of resolution 40/87.

The Ad Hoc Committee did not have the time during the 1985 session of the Conference to go beyond a preliminary discussion of the issues it had been requested to consider. That mandate has enabled us to make a beginning, but it has by no means been exhausted. This continues to be the view of the Italian Government. In 1985 the mandate was attained only with great difficulty, skill and perseverance. Attempts to re-negotiate it would probably involve further lengthy discussion at the expense of substantive deliberation. Moreover, the political and negotiating context in which the mandate was agreed has not appreciably changed. Indeed, while the United States and the USSR are seriously coming to grips with the negotiating objectives they have set for themselves, including the prevention of an arms race in outer space, we need to ensure that our deliberations although primarily responding to the interests of peace and progress, and ultimately to those of mankind, are complementary to, and not disruptive of, those negotiations.

The Italian delegation considers it therefore reasonable for the Conference on Disarmament at its current session to reconvene the Ad Hoc Committee under its previous mandate, leaving it to the Committee to formulate concrete suggestions on its future activities on the basis of the progress achieved in its consideration of issues related to the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

(Mr. Bayart, Mongolia)

The Conference is now halfway through the first part of its 1986 session, but it must be said that so far it has not succeeded in making tangible progress on the most pressing priority issues on its agenda. These are primarily the question of the complete and general prohibition of nuclear-weapon testing, the prevention of an arms race in outer space and other items. The international community's attention is focused on these paramount problems.