

(Mr. Birbaum, Austria)

The need to prevent the spreading of the arms competition to outer space is another priority concern which we share with many delegations here. Exploration and use of outer space have been reserved for the benefit and interests of all countries by the Outer Space Treaty. Its peaceful use is already yielding significant results. Satellites used for reconnaissance purposes can contribute to stability and achieve confidence-building effects by verifying compliance with arms-control agreements or diminishing the chances of military surprise moves, thus playing an essential role in the existing arms control set-up.

These gains must be preserved. Building upon them, international co-operation in the peaceful use of space will undoubtedly intensify, in the interest of all countries. In order to protect these common interests, the network of treaties concerning space needs to be strengthened and complemented with a view to preventing the introduction of weapons into space. We hope that the repeated efforts, within this Conference, to tackle this problem will be successful in the near future. The proposals introduced, in this field, by the French delegation on 12 June of this year, commend serious study, as the subject matter calls essentially for multilateral negotiations, even though the solution of some questions in bilateral negotiations would be a welcome achievement.

Mr. ALESSI (Italy) (translated from French): Mr. President, document CD/527, dated 30 July 1984, which has just been circulated, contains a draft mandate for an ad hoc committee on item 5 of our agenda, entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space".

This document is co-sponsored by the delegations of Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States, as well as by my own delegation.

It is on behalf of those delegations that I would like to introduce it briefly today. The draft mandate it contains reflects, rather than the positions of the sponsors, the result of the consultations undertaken throughout this session on