

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

with prohibition. This makes no sense, and in any case is hardly practicable. We therefore consider that the subject of the negotiations should be what really constitutes a threat when it is placed in space, namely, any kind of weapon.

In practice this could include space-object interceptors, based on the most diverse principles, for attacks on individual artificial earth satellites or for eliminating the space systems of an opponent, anti-missile weapons for attacks on intercontinental ballistic missiles and weapons for the destruction of air, sea or land targets from outer spaces.

What I have said applies also to reusable space vehicles. They can, of course, be used for peaceful purposes, but at the same time they can be used to carry a variety of weapons. It is for this reason that they are mentioned in paragraph 1 of article 1 of the Soviet draft treaty.

As regards laser weapons, some delegations have doubted the possibility of their appearance in space at least in the foreseeable future, regarding the whole of this problem as being rather in the realm of fantasy. But such views are in flagrant contradiction with the facts. From the statement, for example, of Mr. J. Millburn, the United States Assistant Deputy Secretary of Defense for research and development of advanced technology, it appears in particular that given the provision of the requisite financial means, the construction in the United States of military facilities for space laser weapons is possible even during the present decade. What fantasy is there in that, gentlemen?

We entirely agree with the argument put forward by the representative of Sri Lanka in his statement on 31 August, and indeed by many other speakers, that it is easier to prevent the appearance of new types of weapons than to eliminate those that already exist.

We therefore consider that the best way of dealing with this problem is to prohibit the placing and stationing in space of dangerous loads consisting of either specially designed or adapted devices and means for acting on objects in order to destroy or damage them, wherever these target objects may be, in outer space, in the air space or on earth.

We have been asked, both at the spring session and at this session, how we would define the expression "weapons of any kind". Obviously, the search for a generally acceptable formulation should proceed roughly along the lines indicated above.

As regards the scope of the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space, our draft treaty prohibits this for any purpose, including testing, development and use. These questions were, as you know, raised at the Committee's spring session by a number of delegations, including those of Italy, the Netherlands and India.

The Soviet delegation would like once more to draw attention to the fact that the Soviet draft, as it is easy to see, does not ignore the problem of anti-satellite systems. Both the Soviet draft treaty and the draft mandate for a working group submitted by the Mongolian delegation at the spring part of our session allow for the possibility of the consideration of the question of anti-satellite systems in the