

(Mr. van Dongen, Netherlands)

Another item the Committee should come to grips with during this summer session is that of arms control in outer space. The Netherlands was one of the sponsors of resolution 36/97/C requesting the Committee on Disarmament to consider, as from the beginning of its session in 1982, the question of negotiating effective and verifiable agreements aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space. The General Assembly also requested the Committee to consider, as a matter of priority, the question of negotiating an effective and verifiable agreement to prohibit anti-satellite systems, as an important step towards the fulfilment of the above objectives. After the preliminary exchange of views during the spring session, the Committee should now establish the required infrastructure to deal with this agenda item in a businesslike manner. I listened with great interest to what my distinguished colleagues from Brazil, Canada, China, France, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, the United States and the USSR recently had to say on this matter. The General Assembly resolution I referred to a moment ago provides suitable elements for the mandate of an ad hoc working group under item 7 of the agenda.

(U Maung Maung Gyi, Burma)

With the rapid rate of advance in the development of space technology, the arms race now threatens to enter the realm of space. It is, therefore, urgently necessary to prevent outer space being used for warlike purposes before it is too late, as the consequences of such use are likely to have a destabilizing effect on earth itself. This delegation, therefore, supports the consideration of this item within a working group as first suggested by the delegation of Sweden during the last session.

(Mr. Ijewere, Nigeria)

The prevention of the arms race in outer space is another key issue on the Committee's agenda. We see its urgency in the over-all process of nuclear disarmament. The increased militarization of outer space manifests a more dangerous trend in the arms race, and my delegation stands firm in the conviction that outer space constitutes a common heritage of mankind to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes. While we favour the establishment of an ad hoc working group on the subject, it is our view that the scope of the convention must be comprehensive enough to cover anti-satellite weapon systems.