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The data obtained by geodetic satellites are important for mapping natural resources, for the increased accuracy of trajectory measurements, and for the study of our planet. The pictures taken from outer space have demonstrated extensive possibilities for the observation and control of natural resources and for using them wisely, as well as for the solution of environmental protection problems. Rescue satellites that transmit signals from ships and aircraft in distress to ground stations are operating in outer space.

Satellites contribute to the cause of safeguarding peace on Earth. The artificial earth satellites intended for missile-attack warnings, for observation and control, for communications and for other purposes contribute to the maintenance and strengthening of strategic stability. They have special importance in that respect.

In addition to the already established areas of the peaceful use of outer space, new areas will evidently be developed. The successful solution of the tasks that lie ahead in the further development of outer space, and the creation of favourable conditions for international co-operation in that area, are possible when the door is tightly closed to prevent space strike weapons from entering that sphere, and when there is a guaranteed ban on the use of force against manned and unmanned space vehicles. An example of the fruitful co-operation among many countries in the peaceful use of outer space and not for the sake of "star wars" is the successful project for the study of the Haley's comet. An exciting picture of the comet obtained at the Institute for Space Research in Moscow was observed by eminent astronomers from many countries of the world. The Soviet Vega spacecraft carried instruments manufactured not only in the USSR but also in Austria, Bulgaria, Hungary, the German Democratic Republic, Poland, France, the Federal Republic of Germany and Czechoslovakia. The scientific programme of the project is co-ordinated with the studies of Haley's comet carried out by the European Space Agency, the United States and Japan.

In 1983 the Soviet Union proposed that a treaty should be concluded on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from space against the Earth, and submitted a draft of such a treaty (CD/476). It was proposed specifically to prohibit all space strike weapons, including anti-satellite systems. However, for well-known reasons the work of the Conference on the text of such an agreement has not been initiated until now.

Bearing in mind the situation that now exists, the lack of readiness of certain countries to solve the problem of the prevention of the arms race in outer space as a whole, the Soviet Union now proposes that partial measures be taken to strengthen confidence among States in the area of space activities. Specifically, it proposes the conclusion of an international agreement to ensure the immunity of space objects.

Under such an agreement, States could agree not to use force or the threat of force against space objects, including the obligation not to damage or change the trajectory of flight of space objects of other States. It would also be important to envisage in it the commitment not to develop, not to test and not to deploy new anti-satellite systems and to eliminate the already existing ones. In the course of negotiations it would, naturally, be necessary to work out the forms of verification of the implementation of the provisions of such an agreement, the necessary definitions and other elements of an understanding.