

Mr. TEJA (India)

I would like to devote my statement today to the subject of prevention of an arms race in outer space. This new chapter in the unending race for nuclear superiority is not only the most expensive but also potentially the most threatening to the cause of disarmament as we see it. In the Conference on Disarmament, we have a mandate to negotiate and while it is unfortunate that we have been prevented from doing so in the critical area of the nuclear arms race, it would be doubly unfortunate if we did nothing to prevent this new threat that looms over the planet.

We are aware of the diplomatic skills with which Ambassador Bayart of Mongolia, the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee on Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space during 1986, addressed himself to his tasks. We are confident that under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Pugliese of Italy we will be able to register substantial progress on this item during 1987.

Since 1983, there has been rapid progress in the development of anti-satellite weapons and ballistic missile defence systems. Yet in our Conference, there is unfortunately little progress and the Conference seems bogged down in peripheral issues. What lends urgency to our plea for negotiations on this question is our apprehension that the pursuit of space-based defence can lead to a breach of existing arms control agreements,

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