

(Mr. Lowitz, United States)

leave the Soviet Union with a virtual monopoly in advanced strategic defence efforts that could be dangerous for the strategic stability. Both the United States and the Soviet Union have recognized for many years that offence and defence are inescapably interrelated, and that it is deterrence, involving both offensive and defensive efforts, that is essential to keeping the peace. Unilateral restraint by the United States in the defence area could, therefore, undermine our deterrent capability.

The United States believes that there are considerable opportunities for equitable, and I stress the word equitable, trade-offs. For example, we are proposing that the Soviet Union join us in an "open laboratories" arrangement under which both sides would provide information on each other's strategic defence research programmes and provide reciprocal opportunities for visiting associated research facilities and laboratories.

What is lacking in the Soviet arguments is a willingness to take into account Western interests and not just their own. Greater progress would be possible in the bilateral nuclear and space talks if that position were to change.

Mr. President, I note the remarks in the Soviet statement of 13 March concerning a possible proposal for negotiating in this Conference partial measures such as a new agreement intended to ensure the immunity of space objects. We have previously heard such ideas proposed by the Soviet Union, if in somewhat different form. Once again, my delegation would ask how States understand their obligations to refrain from the use of force under the Charter of the United Nations and the Outer Space Treaty. Do they take full account of the need for arms control proposals to be clearly defined, significant, equitable and verifiable? Moreover, do they share our view of the continuing imperative to distinguish clearly between the role of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and arms limitation efforts? The 1985 mandate of the Conference's Outer Space Committee provides, of course, for the consideration of existing and future proposals. The Soviet Union also has the opportunity to contribute constructively in the bilateral defence and space negotiations, aimed at the prevention of an arms race in outer space, and we urge them to do so now.

In my remarks today, I have addressed only a few of the topics which fall under agenda item 5. My delegation hopes that the Conference will re-establish its Ad hoc Committee under this agenda item and with its 1985 mandate in order that further in-depth consideration of these and other issues can be continued.