

(Mr. Pugliese, Italy)

I have the pleasure today to submit to the Conference the report of the Ad hoc Committee on Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space. After its re-establishment, at the end of February, the Ad hoc Committee began its work on 13 March and held its last meeting on Monday, 24 August. In accordance with the agreement reached, the Committee pursued its activities this year on the basis of a programme of work comprising the following three items relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space:

- (a) Examination and identification of issues;
- (b) Existing agreements;
- (c) Existing proposals and future initiatives.

The substantive part of the report reviews the points of view that were expressed about these three items. The purpose of the final part, entitled "Conclusion", is to indicate a consensus in the Committee on essential points, emphasizing once more the importance and urgency of preventing an arms race in outer space and the consequent need to make every effort to ensure the resumption, on an adequate basis, of the substantive consideration of this agenda item at the next session of the Conference.

The work of the Committee, and the intense consultations held by the Chair to find a basis of agreement, have certainly not been easy. The efforts of the Committee reflected once more the importance of the agenda item on outer space. At the same time, our vigorous and often intense discussions revealed the difficulties involved in treating an issue that is directly and deeply connected with bilateral negotiations between the United States and the USSR, as well as a subject heavily affected by significant and rapid technological developments.

I believe that the Committee's endeavours have helped to advance its task and to lay the foundation for its work at future sessions. I think it is a fact that the Ad hoc Committee has achieved some useful work in this session and has, in particular, given a wider opportunity for a deeper examination of various important issues.

In concluding, I wish to express my gratitude and appreciation to all the delegations for their valuable contributions to the Committee's work and, in spite of all the differences and dialectical exchanges, for the spirit of flexibility and co-operation which at the end emerged. Without this basic good will, we would not have been able to achieve the results obtained. I have to mention the co-operation and endeavours of the group co-ordinators, but our gratitude and appreciation are also due to Miss Aida Levin, the Committee's Secretary, and to the other members of the secretariat whose devoted co-operation and efficiency were instrumental in facilitating the Committee's work.