

Mr. CARASALES (Argentina) (translated from Spanish): I shall be very brief. The Conference has just taken a decision, or is about to conclude doing so, on various drafts relating to the establishment of an ad hoc committee of this Conference on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, with their respective mandates. Unfortunately, the outcome is negative.

In this connection, we are all aware, through the press, and I emphasize through the press, that there is a kind of bilateral dialogue going on between the two space Powers. The coexistence of bilateral and multilateral efforts in disarmament may be accepted, but it is undeniable that such efforts are complementary and not contradictory or utterly separated one from the other. It is essential that there should be some type of link between the two. My delegation has therefore considered, and continues to consider, that the Conference has the right to expect that the two Powers concerned should provide it as rapidly as possible with some information on the progress of the dialogue between them, especially taking into account that this is a question specifically included in the agenda of the Conference, on which very intense efforts have been made for some time to reach agreement on a suitable manner in which to undertake the substantive consideration of the issue.

This multilateral approach cannot reasonably be agreed upon in an appropriate manner in utter ignorance of what is or is not happening on the same topic in the bilateral sphere.

Mr. FIELDS (United States of America):

As to the question of outer space, the one of our immediate concern: the Soviet Union invited the United States to negotiations to begin 18 September 1984 in Vienna. We shall be there! My question is, will the Soviet Union have a delegation there, or will that also go into the ledger book of days which shall be remembered forever as another lost opportunity for disarmament.

Mr. ALESSI (Italy) (translated from French): It is with great regret that we must note the absence of any agreement on the subject of the prevention of an arms race in outer space, a matter of undisputed importance, and thus an agreement which during the intersessional period appeared within reach is escaping us. The best has once again been the enemy of the good, and the desire to obtain a more ambitious mandate has played against the possibility of beginning our work immediately on a realistic and perhaps acceptable basis.

We now note the lack of consensus on the draft mandates contained in document CD/329/Rev.2 and CD/529. A third draft mandate submitted by 10 countries of the Western Group is contained in CD/527. As I had occasion to say when introducing it, this draft reflects, rather than the view of its co-sponsors, a stage, I would now say the last stage, in our long consultations. We would have wished that it could have received a better welcome, for it represents a serious and constructive effort. The co-sponsors consider that it should remain available to the Conference in the hope that it may be a useful basis for pursuing our work on this subject. That is why they are not asking for a decision to be taken on the draft mandate at this stage in our work. My delegation, as well as all the delegations on behalf of which I am speaking, remain ready to resume work on this subject as rapidly as possible, in a consultative spirit, until we can achieve the result which we all desire.