

(Mr. Ahmad, Pakistan)

It would be only fitting if the Committee on Disarmament, in conjunction with the convening of the Second United Nations Conference on Outer Space, could take some meaningful steps to avert the danger of the arms race spreading to this environment. As a first step, this Committee could propose the universal endorsement of the concept of outer space constituting "the common heritage of mankind". Pakistan shares the view that the Committee should create a working group on this item with an appropriate mandate.

(Mr. Fields, United States)

At this session, some have advocated the establishment of a working group to deal with the issue of outer space. Many among these advocates confess limited knowledge of this complex and highly technical subject and see the working group as a means to educate us. My delegation supports an examination of the outer space issues by this Committee. Substantive discussions can serve to focus the issues and provide an informed basis for any future consideration. Only minimal discussion of the outer space issue has taken place in the Committee and we have not even heard preliminary views from some delegations.

My delegation remains unconvinced that the establishment of a working group would be the wisest course for us at this time. We would, however, strongly support a number of formal or informal plenary sessions being devoted to the subject of outer space. Only after a full airing of all delegations' views and a great deal of substantive preparation can we begin to focus our efforts.

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

Another important item with which our Committee should deal during the summer session is that of the prevention of the arms race in outer space. Indonesia has been and will remain committed to the established legal principles concerning the peaceful uses of outer space. Indonesia is an active member of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The "creeping" use of outer space for non-peaceful purposes by certain space powers, despite the existence of appropriate international legal instruments against such activities, has raised serious concern on our part, as well as, I believe, on the part of the majority of the community of nations. My delegation is of the view that the Committee should agree on the setting up of an ad hoc working group on outer space. In order to facilitate its work on this item, the Committee may consider the possibilities of co-operation and co-ordination with the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Our Committee might also deem it appropriate to take advantage of and to benefit from the Second United Nations Conference on Outer Space (UNISPACE II) now taking place in Vienna.