

(Mr. Nazarkin, USSR)

The Soviet Union considers the task of preventing the transfer of the arms race to outer space as one of the most urgent of our time and it intends, as the USSR Minister for Foreign Affairs, E.A. Shevardnadze, emphasized in his statement, to work towards "a strict and universal ban on deployment of any weapons in outer space".

Our proposals for the conclusion of a treaty prohibiting the deployment in outer space of weapons of any kind and of a treaty banning the use of force in outer space and from outer space against the Earth remain on the table.

We have reaffirmed on more than one occasion our willingness to come to an agreement even on partial measures, for example, on the immunity of artificial Earth satellites not carrying weapons of any kind on board and on banning the development of new anti-satellite systems and eliminating the existing ones.

The Conference also has before it a joint document from the delegations of the German Democratic Republic and Mongolia, entitled "Main provisions of a treaty on the prohibition of anti-satellite weapons and on ways to ensure the immunity of space objects" (CD/777 of 31 July this year), which we support.

The views expressed by a number of other delegations also deserve most serious consideration. For example, in his statement on 21 July this year, the head of the Indian delegation, Ambassador Teja, showed the urgent need for the prohibition as soon as possible of the development, testing and deployment of new anti-satellite systems and for elimination of such systems as already exist, and also expressed interesting ideas about ensuring the immunity of artificial Earth satellites. In his statement on 7 July, the distinguished representative of Japan, Ambassador Yamada, also expressed support for the view that "space objects and their activities for peaceful purposes should not be attacked and should be duly protected". We have also noted the readiness expressed by the delegation of China to proceed, as a first step, to negotiations on the banning of anti-satellite systems and we are, of course, in full agreement with Ambassador Fan's view that this measure must be complemented by other steps aimed at preventing an arms race in space. Interesting views on agenda item 5 have been expressed today by the representative of Sweden, Ambassador Ekéus. We shall, of course, study those views attentively.

The socialist countries' proposals, together with the ideas of other delegations, constitute for the Conference on Disarmament useful assets that could serve as a good basis for business-like work on preventing an arms race in outer space.

It goes without saying that agreement on this issue without reliable verification is unthinkable. In this connection, I should like to recall that, on 17 March this year, the Soviet delegation proposed that consideration should be given to the possibility of establishing an international system, to include an international inspectorate, for verifying the non-deployment in outer space of weapons of any kind. Our proposal met with great interest and a number of questions were put to us in order better to understand its essence.