

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

ballistic missile defence, by both of the major space Powers. We can ask where that will lead us in terms of the régime to ensure that space remains for peaceful purposes only.

In this context, may I say that my Government places great importance on those who are conducting such research being open and honest with us about it. We know a great deal about the research programme being conducted by the United States. We sadly know too little about that being conducted by the Soviet Union. It would assist us if we were to be told more. We could also continue to work towards, to seek to ensure in this body, that the vital objective of compliance of existing agreements is maintained.

As the utilization of space expands, we can with great benefit look together at what confidence-building measures might be required and what the role of a possible satellite-monitoring agency could be. We could examine, too, the role of an enhanced system for the registration of space objects. We could look at an agreement on the protection of useful satellites.

In this context I must refer to my own Government's proposal for the protection of satellites and their associated ground stations, which contribute to the maintenance of international peace and stability.

These are subjects fitting for this multilateral body, to mention just some of them.

In summary, in our view we face a clear choice. The international community must co-operate, now, on ensuring the maintenance of the peaceful uses of outer space or slide towards chaos later. And let it be clear that co-operation has a direct relationship to the other major objective, which is to ensure -- as both the President of the United States and the General Secretary of the CPSU have said -- that strategic nuclear weapons are radically reduced and ultimately eliminated. No one should doubt the clear link between that objective on Earth and the need to prevent an arms race in space.

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(Mr. Hansen, United States)

The meeting in Moscow between United States and Soviet officials was less successful in dealing with strategic arms and space issues. Nevertheless, basic agreement exists that each side should reduce its strategic arms by 50 per cent. Here we are speaking again of the formula discussed at Reykjavik; that is, no more than 6,000 warheads and 1,600 launchers would be allowed. Both sides will continue to study the question of sea-launched cruise missiles. And both sides agree on the methodology for counting heavy bombers. There is also agreement that verification measures must be stringent and intrusive.

Although not much progress was made on space issues in Moscow, the United States will continue work on this subject in the nuclear and space talks in Geneva with vigour and intensity, and my Government will continue to act in compliance with the ABM Treaty during research to discover the potential of new technologies for use in a defensive system against ballistic missiles.