

(Mr. Yamada, Japan)

Mutual trust among States is a key element in arms control and disarmament efforts. This applies in outer space as well. To strengthen mutual trust, it is indispensable that all States should adhere strictly to the principles of the United Nations Charter and to the principles of international law concerning the maintenance of international peace and security. It is also necessary to free disarmament discussions from political propaganda.

The necessity for objective information for confidence-building among States is set out in the first operative paragraph of last year's General Assembly resolution 41/59 B, in which the Assembly "reaffirms its conviction that a better flow of objective information on military capabilities could help relieve international tension and contribute to building of confidence among States on a global, regional, or subregional level and to the conclusion of concrete disarmament agreements". It goes without saying that our deliberation on the basis of objective information is a prerequisite for fruitful results. Above all, the United States and the Soviet Union, the leading States in space developments, have a very important role to play in providing information. We note in this context that the substantive information provided thus far by the Soviet Union is, in our view, far from sufficient. It is hoped that this situation will be remedied.

The proposal to formulate a code of conduct as one of the confidence-building measures touches on the fundamental issue of how we go about regulating or controlling the activities of States in outer space, which is singularly different from the Earth. It would entail highly complex problems to try to apply an order or rules based on the relationships among States on the Earth to activities outside the atmosphere or even beyond the solar system, where physical conditions are quite different from those on the Earth. We need to proceed carefully and thoughtfully in examining the adequacy or limits of such application in the context of reviewing the international laws on arms control and disarmament in outer space.

In connection with the necessity for objective information, the deliberations on the expansion or strengthening of the reporting requirement under the 1975 Convention on Registration of Objects Launched in Outer Space are of considerable significance. My delegation supports the basic idea behind such a proposal. As is clear from General Assembly resolution 1721 B (XVI), entitled "International co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space", article IV of the Convention was drawn up on the basis of the understanding that the independent judgement of each country should be respected and taking into account how information was actually provided by the countries concerned in accordance with the General Assembly resolution.

The items listed for obligatory reporting under article IV are therefore limited to the minimum necessary for the identification of space objects. It is true that such a registration régime based on the Convention is not necessarily complete, but on the whole it has probably been effective with respect to the peaceful use of outer space. My delegation believes it necessary for us to examine fully from various aspects whether this proposal