

space accomplished a variety of support missions and that they played a vital role in the strategic relationship of the two major Powers, and they rejected the concept of "space strike weapons" for being part of a selective approach which did not give an accurate picture of the threats against space objects and of the military and strategic situation relevant to outer space. They criticized attempts to define categories of "space strike weapons" which were at the same time too broad, because they placed in the same category systems with different functions and implications, and too narrow because they excluded weapons and other means which have the capability to disrupt the normal functioning of space objects. They further noted that outer space was not immune from utilization by existing weapons systems such as ballistic missiles. They considered that, while the Ad Hoc Committee had had very substantial discussions, fundamental divergences persisted and the work was still in an exploratory phase. In their view, the prevention of an arms race in outer space was linked to and should take into account progress in other fields of arms limitation and disarmament, in particular the reduction of nuclear weapons. These delegations continued to underline the importance of issues relating to verification of and compliance with existing and future agreements and held that those issues required a more thorough examination. They also stressed the need for detailed information on national space programmes that have military implications.

11. One delegation considered that the two major space Powers, which were the only ones that at present possessed and were developing space weapons, should assume a special responsibility for halting the arms race in outer space. In its view, they should adopt practical measures by undertaking not to develop, test and deploy space weapons and, on that basis, an international agreement should be concluded through negotiations on the complete prohibition of space weapons. It believed that work in the Conference on Disarmament should centre on the study and solution of the issues that were most directly related to preventing the "weaponization" of outer space.

12. There was general recognition of the importance of the bilateral negotiations between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America. Some delegations, while stressing that there was clear need for the Conference on Disarmament to play a role with respect to problems relating to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, held that nothing should be done that would hinder the success of the bilateral negotiations. Furthermore, they believed that multilateral disarmament measures in this area could not be considered independently of developments at the bilateral level. Other delegations, emphasized that ongoing bilateral negotiations in no way diminished the urgency of multilateral negotiations and reaffirmed that, as provided for in General Assembly resolution 41/53, the Conference on Disarmament, as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, had the primary role in the negotiation of a multilateral agreement or agreements, as appropriate, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects.

13. Some delegations drew attention to a number of issues which, in their view, had been identified in the course of the work carried out in the previous years. Among them, the following were mentioned: that outer space is the common heritage of mankind and should be used exclusively for peaceful purposes, that an arms race in outer space should be prevented, that as yet no weapons have been deployed in space and that agreements that may be concluded