

(Mr. Rose, German Democratic Republic)

Today I would like to make some observations on item 5 of our agenda, "Prevention of an arms race in outer space". But, before I come to that, let me comment briefly on the most recent developments regarding the envisaged elimination of medium-range and operative-tactical missiles.

All relevant statements at this Conference have made it clear that we are well aware of the far-reaching implications an accord between the USSR and the United States in that area would have for the entire disarmament process and the strengthening of international security. Everyone is agreed about that. The German Democratic Republic believes the successful conclusion of the negotiations currently under way would literally constitute the key with which the door to disarmament can be opened wide. The impact on the work of the Conference would unquestionably be a positive one, since the mere commencement of the negotiations brought about a significant improvement in the political climate.

A few days ago, General Secretary Gorbachev granted an interview to the Indonesian newspaper Merdeka, in which he presented a new offer aimed at giving a fresh impetus to the negotiations and bringing them closer to a conclusion. The Soviet Union is totally renouncing medium-range and operative-tactical missiles, based on the concept of the double-zero option. Given reciprocity, it will, therefore, no longer insist on retaining 100 warheads for medium-range forces in its Asian territory, as was agreed in Reykjavik. Thus, it does appear comprehensible that the Soviet Union expects the United States not to increase its nuclear presence in certain regions of Asia. It is up to the other side now to remove the remaining stumbling blocks obstructing progress in the bilateral negotiations. And this would have to include the destruction of United States warheads for Pershing-1A missiles.

In making this new proposal, the USSR has met the wishes of Asian nations. At the same time, it has drawn our attention to the need for, and the concrete possibilities of, promoting disarmament security and confidence in the Asian and Pacific region. Obviously, this is of special interest to the countries in that part of our planet. The very discussion about the global double-zero option has, however, seen all sides stress the worldwide dimension of disarmament and security. That is why my delegation welcomes all relevant efforts not only in Europe, but also in other parts of the globe.

Let me come back now to item 5. In a few months, it will be 30 years since the signals of Sputnik 1 were first received, signals which ushered in the space age. The striving to put weapons in outer space and to create regional SDI offshoots is today casting shadows over the prospects space is holding out in terms of peaceful uses. There is not much time left to ensure, through international agreements, the exclusively peaceful use of outer space including the immunity and protection of satellites.