CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

PREVENTION OF AN ARMS RACE IN OUTER SPACE — FINAL RECORDS (PV) 1979-1984

PV

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PREFACE

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT - 1985 SESSION

This book is a compilation of final records of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and its predecessors from 1979 to 1984, relating to the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space. It has been compiled and edited to facilitate research on the Outer Space issue and is a compendium of the more significant material made available to the CD.

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1980

(Mr. Cordero di Montezemolo, Italy)

Another item still outstanding is the draft additional protocol to the Outer Space Treaty, presented by Italy at the last session, the aim being to supplement and amplify existing legal rules with a view to avoiding the emplacement in space of any type of weapon. The Italian delegation hopes that the draft itself can be examined in detail at an appropriate stage of our work.

1981

Mrs. THORSSON (Sweden):

First, however, a few words on another and deeply troublesome issue that has recently become an acute warning signal to the disarmament community, i.e., the threatening possibility of space warfare.

The recent, first and successful space shuttle voyage has been hailed, probably rightly, as new evidence of the triumphs of technology. In the background, however, expressions of unease have been heard. The important military elements of this venture have been directly referred to. In the aftermath of this technological success, rumours tell us about ambitious plans in one of the Superpowers to establish, in various ways, a permanent and active military presence in space. Understandably, the leader of the other Superpower a few days ago suggested a complete ban on the militarization of outer space. This suggestion would, of course, have been all the more welcome had that Superpower not for years been pursuing equally active technological preparations for the military use of space.

A source of immediate concern is the development of so-called anti-satellite systems for which, as we understand it, research and development is ongoing in both Superpowers, but press reports have also appeared about the possibility that other weapons systems, inter alia in the ABM field, may be under consideration.

I mention these facts because they present, in my view, another warning signal to this Committee. We should prepare ourselves for considering, at short notice, the urgency of preserving outer space, another "common heritage of mankind", for peaceful activities in accordance with paragraph 30 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and of keeping intact, in letter and in spirit, the Outer Space Treaty.

1982

(Mr. Fein, Netherlands)

During the thirty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly the Netherlands delegation actively worked for the adoption of a draft resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, in conformity with the relevant provisions of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. The General Assembly decided to entrust this important matter to the Committee on Disarmament. We would suggest that the Committee should adopt a two-phase approach to this complicated and rather sensitive problem. The first phase, during the Committee's spring session, would consist of a mapping effort aimed at establishing an inventory of all the problems which might crop up. To that end, next to giving statements in plenary and submitting working documents, the CD delegations might be well advised to hold a series of informal meetings with experts. After that, in the second phase, which might coincide with the CD summer session, further appropriate action could follow, e.g. the establishment of an ad hoc working group.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

This year mankind will celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the start of the exploration of outer space -- one of the greatest achievements of science and technology in our century. Unfortunately it has to be noted that outer space is becoming not only a sphere for the peaceful efforts of States in exploring and utilizing it but also the arena of an ever increasing military confrontation.

Since the very beginning of the space era the Soviet Union has consistently urged and it continues to urge that outer space should remain for ever clear and free from any weapons, that it should not become a new arena for the arms race and a source of aggravation of the relations among States. In the opinion of our country the conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space would promote the achievement of these goals. We suggest the starting in the Committee on Disarmament of negotiations on this issue, as is recommended in resolution 36/99 of the United Nations General Assembly. The draft of such a treaty submitted by the Soviet Union at the thirty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly could serve as a basis for the negotiations.

We would not object if the mandate of the working group were to include also the recommendations in General Assembly resolution 36/97 C concerning the negotiation of an agreement on the prohibition of anti-satellite systems. At the same time it must be clear that the main task facing the Committee is to solve the whole problem of the cessation of the arms race in outer space and therefore the question of anti-satellite systems must be examined in the context of other measures directed towards the achievement of this goal.

(Mr. Onkelinx, Belgium)

The question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space formed the subject of a useful debate at the last session of the General Assembly. Belgium, which was a co-sponsor of resolution 36/97 C, therefore hopes that the Committee on Disarmament will take up that question at the present session, bearing in mind its current priorities. At this stage we feel that the holding of informal meetings of the Committee attended by experts might facilitate a first examination of the problem as a whole, subject to the eventual setting up of an ad hoc group of experts similar to the one set up for the detection and identification of seismic events.

(Mr. Strucka, Czechoslovakia)

3. The prevention of the proliferation of the arms race in new spaces explored by man

(a) The conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space.

(b) Further measures to prevent the conversion of outer space into a sphere of military confrontation.

(c) Further measures to prevent an arms race on the sea-bed and the ocean floor and the subsoil thereof.

(d) Further measures on the inadmissibility of military or any other hostile use of environmental modification techniques.

(Mr. De La Gorce, France)

There are two new items on our agenda for this session: the cessation of the arms race in outer space, and our report to the special session.

With regard to outer space, the General Assembly resolution which we co-sponsored calls for priority consideration of the question of anti-satellite systems. We hope that this can be done during the first part of the session.

(Mr. Alessi, Italy)

Other important questions traditionally appear on the Committee's agenda and will doubtless continue to appear thereon. My delegation intends to use the time set aside specifically for the consideration of those items to give its views on them. However, I should like to take this opportunity to express the hope that this year a suitable place will be given in the agenda and programme of work of the Committee for a new item concerning further measures to be adopted to prevent an arms race in outer space.

One of the special features of the discussions at the thirty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly was, in fact, the interest shown in the problems of arms control and disarmament in outer space. The many speeches made on this subject highlighted the conviction that the international community should urgently take further efforts to prevent an arms race in this new sphere of man's activity.

This interest led to the adoption of two resolutions which, for the first time, indicate the General Assembly's desire that the Committee on Disarmament should deal with this question, which is wholly in keeping with paragraph 80 of the Final Document.

Resolution 36/97 C, of which Italy was a sponsor, in its paragraph 3 requests the Committee on Disarmament "to consider, as from the beginning of its session in 1982, the question of negotiating effective and verifiable agreements aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space". It would be perfectly appropriate to envisage an initial exchange of views, in plenary, during this part of the session.

After such a survey or preliminary consideration of this very complex and sensitive issue, we shall be in a better position to decide on the most suitable procedures for taking concrete steps to follow up the discussions in the General Assembly. The rapid development of space technology in recent years raises clear and precise threats: some applications are no longer in the domain of scientific hypothesis but have already begun to be included in military arsenals. These must be identified, and efforts must be made to remedy this situation through the speedy negotiation of concrete, verifiable and effective measures.

That, in our view, is the meaning of the request made by the General Assembly to the Committee, the multilateral negotiating body in matters of disarmament, and the role which it could play in this field.

It would be vain to think it possible to resolve at once and effectively all the problems involved in the prevention of an arms race in space by means of some few articles of a treaty of a general character. Such an approach would merely delay our efforts and draw us away from our objective.

In this connection resolution 36/97 C, to which I have already referred, suggests the path to be followed: in its paragraph 4 the Committee on Disarmament is requested "to consider as a matter of priority the question of negotiating an effective and verifiable agreement to prohibit anti-satellite systems, as an important step towards the fulfilment of the objectives set out in paragraph 3 above".

It is generally acknowledged that the most threatening development, and the one that calls for the most immediate action, is the development of anti-satellite weapons systems. If this development were to remain uncontrolled, the basis for an arms race in outer space would already exist. This prospect should spur us to make a determined effort to avert, before it is too late, the real and immediate risks which exist in this field.

Mr. WEGENER (Federal Republic of Germany):

While the Committee on Disarmament is an autonomous international forum, the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly has, of course, an important bearing upon the work of this session. Apart from other relevant results the General Assembly, in one important new field, namely, measures to prevent an arms race in outer space, has given this Committee a new and significant assignment which my delegation is looking forward to debating at an early point as a follow-up to resolution 36/97 C, of which my country was a sponsor.

CD/PV.151
19

(Mr. Okawa, Japan)

In accordance with the resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly last year, this year the Committee on Disarmament is also to consider further measures to prevent an arms race in outer space. My Government has a deep interest in this question and my delegation hopes to be able to make a positive contribution to our discussions on this item.

CD/PV.152
14

(Mr. Rostow, United States)

At the last session of the General Assembly, the question of controlling arms in outer space was the subject of a lively debate which resulted in the adoption of two resolutions, both of which put the problem on the agenda of this Committee. The United States believes that this was an appropriate step. This is a difficult, complex issue that cannot be separated from broader arms control issues. Because of the magnitude of the problems involved, we must not expect immediate progress in this area. The problem is one that must be approached with extreme care. The ramifications are legion; so are the pitfalls. Too quick a plunge without adequate prior reflection could be fatal to our objective of achieving a stable environment in outer space. At this stage, the United States is prepared to discuss the issue in an informal and general way at informal meetings of the Committee where various points of view and proposals could be thoroughly vetted before any further steps are taken.

CD/PV.152
20

(Mr. Tellalov, Bulgaria)

Our delegation is convinced that the Committee should concentrate its attention on and contribute to the elaboration of a treaty for the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space. We fully support the proposal made by the head of the Soviet delegation, Ambassador Issraelyan, concerning the setting up of an ad hoc working group to negotiate with the aim of reaching agreement and the text of such a treaty.

CD/PV.152
23

(Mr. Sani, Indonesia)

As to the agenda, my delegation has no problems with the draft as proposed by the secretariat. We agree with the inclusion of further measures to prevent an arms race in outer space as a new item on the agenda. We feel, however, that, in view of the limited time available, the Committee should determine carefully the order of priority and the time to be allotted to the discussion of each of the agenda items, in order that the Committee will indeed be able to make a worthwhile contribution to the second special session. Accordingly, the programme of work should be drawn up in such a way that the maximum amount of time is allotted to negotiations on items which, in the opinion of the Committee, have the best chance of producing concrete results to be submitted subsequently to the General Assembly at its second special session for consideration and, hopefully, for adoption, such as, for example, the comprehensive programme of disarmament.

CD/PV.152
37-38

(Mr. Ijewere, Nigeria

Permit me now to offer some few comments on the inclusion of new items on our annual agenda. My country is one of those that has expressed deep concern about the increased militarization of outer space. The increase in the use of anti-satellite weapons, high-energy lasers and particle-beam weapons make outer space a battlefield of the future. In view of the fact that this development runs counter to the spirit and the letter of the outer space Treaty of 1967, which seeks to promote its peaceful uses for the benefit of mankind, my delegation believes that the subject needs to be given the status of consideration within the context of the priority items listed for examination in the Committee.

(Mr. De Gueiroz Duarte, Brazil)

In the present stage of the debate on the agenda, the supporters of the secretariat's draft have stated, as the basis for proposing the inclusion of the item on outer space, the fact that two resolutions of the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly have requested that the Committee on Disarmament be seized of this question. Although the two resolutions differ slightly in their treatment of the subject, thus originating divergent views last Friday, it seems possible to arrive at a compromise on the formulation of the proposed new item. The stand of the Brazilian delegation, however, is based on other, and to our mind very fundamental, considerations. We have no quarrel with the request made by the General Assembly to this Committee, and indeed we did not object to the substance of either resolution at the time of their discussion and vote at the Assembly. Brazil has always considered that the decisions of the General Assembly must be complied with by this Committee, and that delegations represented here have an obligation to abide by such decisions. I would only like to recall that during the last session of the General Assembly, the representative of Brazil in the First Committee, Ambassador Souza e Silva, had the following to say with regard to the two draft resolutions on outer space, tabled respectively by some socialist and by some western delegations: "Brazil, together with other Member States, has advocated for many years now the need for prompt action in assuring the demilitarization of outer space. It is high time for responsible multilateral efforts to ensure that outer space is preserved for peaceful uses alone". In the same statement, Ambassador Souza e Silva discussed the request to the Committee on Disarmament to take up the question with the following words: "We would only argue that the Committee on Disarmament is currently seized with six substantive questions on its annual agenda, including two subjects to which the General Assembly has repeatedly assigned the highest priority: the nuclear test ban and the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament". The Brazilian delegation to the First Committee even considered proposing amendments to the two draft resolutions suggesting that the question of outer space be entrusted to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, rather than to the Committee on Disarmament. In our exploratory contacts on the idea of such an amendment we met with sympathy from the group of sponsors of one resolution, but with resolute objection from the group of sponsors of the other. We finally decided not to move any amendment, and voted in favour of both resolutions with an explanation of vote that set forth our thoughts about the best available forum to ensure effective and speedy negotiation on the substance of this issue.

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(Mr. Tian Jin, China)

The resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session call upon the Committee to consider at its current session the question of preventing an arms race in outer space. In recent years, the two superpowers have been energetically developing military technology used in outer space. They have in their hands some outer space weapons which are near the operational stage. The fact that the arms race between them has already extended into outer space is another salient feature in the new round of their arms race.

The development of outer space weapons poses an additional threat to world peace and security and has aroused anxiety and vigilence in the international community. It is appropriate for the Committee on Disarmament to consider the issue of preventing the militarization of outer space. We hold that outer space, the common heritage of mankind, should be used for peaceful purposes in the interest of humanity. We are opposed to any military activities in outer space which jeopardize peace and security. At the same time, we are opposed to the practice of paying lip service to the prevention of the militarization of outer space while actually working hard to develop various types of outer space weapons.

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(Mr. Summerhayes, United Kingdom)

Among the other items of business before the Committee to which we attach much importance is a subject commended to our attention by General Assembly resolutions 36/97 C and 36/99, namely, the question of further measures of arms control in outer space. My delegation hopes that this subject is to be included in the agenda of the Committee for this session and that time will be allocated in our work schedule for discussion of the technical issues which will have to be addressed in this new area of work.

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(Mr. Sadleir, Australia)

Australia, in part because of geographical circumstance, has long been involved in the adventure of exploring outer space. It is a source of concern to us that that new frontier of man should not be abused. It was for this reason that Australia, at the recent General Assembly, co-sponsored resolution 36/97 C. We consider that, in this first half of its 1982 session, the Committee could best advance its work on the issue of outer space by engaging in a broad exchange of views on the question in all its aspects. This would enable the Committee to take, at a later stage, a more informed approach in dealing substantively with the topic.

(Mr. Erdembilegt, Mongolia)

A quarter of a century has passed since man first began to explore outer space. His concern to prevent that space from being used for military purposes dates from that very same time. More than one international agreement has been elaborated and adopted prohibiting any objects equipped with nuclear weapons or other types of weapons of mass destruction from being placed in orbit around the Earth or stationed in outer space by any other method.

However, these measures have been insufficient to avert completely the danger of the militarization of outer space. For use has been made to this end of the absence, in the relevant international agreements, of any provision banning the stationing in outer space of types of weapons which do not come under the definition of "weapons of mass destruction". As you know, various military preparations and a whole range of programmes for conducting war in outer space are being elaborated in the United States. Such attempts to turn outer space into an arena for the arms race are fraught with far-reaching consequences for peace and international security.

In the interests of the future peaceful use of outer space for the good of all mankind, and averting the danger of an arms race in outer space, the Soviet Union has put forward an important proposal for the conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space.

In our view, the Soviet proposal is based on a comprehensive approach to the solution of the problem. General Assembly resolution 36/99 requests the Committee in unambiguous terms to embark on negotiations with a view to achieving agreement on the text of such a treaty.

(Mr. Jayakoddy, Sri Lanka)

Item 7 of the draft agenda suggests that we discuss further measures to prevent an arms race in outer space. My delegation fully supports all measures designed to safeguard outer space as the common heritage of mankind that should not become the scene for an arms race the like of which we are unable to control here on earth. My delegation can therefore live with this item being on the agenda. But, we would like to underline the need for this Committee to give the highest priority to the items that have already been before us for so long. Whilst recognizing the emergence of new dangers, we must not overlook our failure to tackle serious dangers, that have been with us for so long. My delegation therefore hopes that we can arrive at a mutually agreeable decision on item 7 without protracted debate.

(Mr. El Reedy, Egypt

For more than 20 years, specifically in the wake of the launching of the first space satellites, Egypt has, together with the group of non-aligned countries, been in the forefront of nations calling for the use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes.

Although my delegation believes that the best way to handle this question is to establish a legal rule or international legislation prohibiting the use of outer space for other than peaceful purposes, the logic thus being the remittance of the issue to the Legal Sub-Committee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, in response to the preference shown by many delegations for considering the subject in the Committee on Disarmament, we have agreed to its inclusion in our agenda. We would, however, like to emphasize two points:

First, the objective of our endeavours would be to reserve outer space for peaceful uses and to safeguard against its militarization. Consequently, we have to avoid the risk of finding ourselves being dragged into an exercise that may lead to the legitimization of some military uses of outer space.

Secondly, the consideration of this item should not be at the expense of the priority items on our agenda, particularly the questions of a nuclear test ban and the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament.

In this connection it might be useful if the secretariat, at the proper time, could prepare a compilation of the relevant background material, including the various proposals made which may be of help to us in the consideration of this question.

(Mr. Terrefe, Ethiopia)

My delegation is pleased also that under your leadership, consultations have led to a consensus on the inclusion of the item concerning outer space. In view of the great speed with which space research and technology is progressing, it is high time that we should be concerned at the growing dangers of the military use of outer space, while other United Nations bodies consider concomittantly the legal aspects and the question of the peaceful uses of outer space, for herein lies an unlimited chance for mankind to direct its universal knowledge to benefit all countries of the world in the solution of their economic and social problems, particularly in the field of communications and the exploitation of natural resources. In the Committee on Disarmament, our immediate task is to negotiate measures of preventing the nuclear arms race from being extended into outer space, for the use of satellites for early warning system against nuclear attack and other uses of outer space suggest the likelihood of space war in the future. This concern, however, should not detract the Committee from pursuing its priority items.

(Mr. Bagbeni, Zaire)

My delegation is pleased to note that agenda item 7 will be considered separately from the other agenda items.

(Mr. Saran, India)

Let me now turn to the section entitled "The prevention of the proliferation of the arms race in new spaces explored by man" in the statement of the representative of Czechoslovakia. Under this section, one of the measures listed is "the conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space". At the thirty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly, my delegation stated that any treaty for the prevention of an arms race in outer space must cover the development, testing and deployment of weapons of any kind in outer space.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): Allow me first of all to welcome the new representatives in the Committee on Disarmament: our friend, Ambassador Milos Vejvoda of Czechoslovakia, who is well known to all of us for his great competence in matters of disarmament. I believe that his participation in the work of the Committee will be useful to us all. I should also like to welcome the new representative of the Netherlands, Ambassador van Dongen.

I should like today to make some comments on a number of items on the agenda of the Committee on Disarmament. I shall begin with item 7 of the agenda.

This year mankind will observe the twenty-fifth anniversary of the beginning of the conquest of space, which is one of the greatest achievements of science and technology in our century. The progress in this area achieved today cannot be

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

separated from general progress on our planet. The use of outer space in connection with communications, meteorology, navigation, the study of the earth's natural resources and for other purposes is of the greatest value to mankind.

Unfortunately it has to be admitted that outer space is becoming not merely an area for the peaceful efforts of different countries through its exploration and use, but also the arena of an ever-growing military confrontation.

Reflecting the concern of the world community in connection with the danger which the militarization of outer space represents for the whole of mankind, the United Nations General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session adopted a resolution calling for the conclusion of an appropriate international treaty to prevent the extension of the arms race to outer space and requesting the Committee on Disarmament to initiate negotiations with a view to agreement on the text of such treaty.

The outer space problem occupies a special place in the spectrum of disarmament issues. What is most important here is the prevention of a new and even more dangerous spiralling of the arms race in another sphere of vital interest to the whole of mankind. In this connection the implementation of the numerous projects which have appeared in recent years for the creation of a whole series of space weapons designed to carry out strikes on targets in outer space, in the atmosphere and on the surface of the earth would be especially dangerous. Among them the most threatening are the projects the implementation of which might upset the strategic balance that exists in the world and thus increase the danger of the outbreak of a nuclear war. Foremost of these are the plans for the deployment in outer space of anti-missile systems, based, in particular, on the use of the latest scientific and technical advances in the field of laser and accelerating technology. In the opinion of an authoritative committee of the American Senate, the deployment of laser and so-called "particle-beam" weapons in outer space will provide "the unique potential for changing the strategic balance between the United States and the Soviet Union".

No less dangerous are the plans for the creation of multiple-use manned spacecraft, capable also of carrying out purely military tasks such as the placing in orbit of reconaissance, communication, navigation and other satellites for military purposes, and also the testing of new types of outer space weapons and the inspection and destruction of satellites.

It would be a dangerous error, distinguished colleagues, to suppose that if weapons make their appearance in outer space, then the latter will be the sole firing ground and "battlefield", in the spirit of science fiction.

The essentially "earth" character of the outer space armaments under development is evident. This would still further increase the danger of a nuclear conflict, with all its frightful consequences for the whole of mankind, particularly as military space programmes are accompanied by the promulgation of doctrines and concepts proclaiming the admissibility and acceptability of nuclear war. the permissibility of the use of nuclear weapons.

There is another aspect to this matter. It is difficult to imagine how much it would cost to create even a small potential for the conduct of military operations in the area of space close to the earth. According to the estimates of experts, the cost of launching a weapons system into orbit is several times greater than the cost of deploying it on the earth's surface. And all this is taking place when, over a considerable part of our planet, people lack the barest essentials for a normal existence.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

Then, why do some circles need a new spiral of the arms race in outer space?

The American magazine Business Week gives the following answer to this question: "Whoever manages to seize control of outer space -- the main arena for future wars -- will be able decisively to change the balance of power and this will mean the establishment of world supremacy".

The Soviet Union has constantly opposed the conversion of outer space into an arena for the arms race, and it continues to do so. On 18 April 1981, President Leonid Brezhnev stated: "Let the boundless ocean of space be unsullied and free from weapons of any kind. We wish by joint efforts to achieve a great and humane goal -- the prevention of the militarization of outer space".

At the thirty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly, the Soviet Union made a proposal aimed at preventing the extension of the arms race to outer space and the conversion of outer space into a source of aggravation of the relations between States. To that end it urged the conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space. We propose that States undertake not to place in orbit around the earth objects carrying weapons of any kind, not to install such weapons on the celestial bodies and not to deploy them in any other manner, including on reusable manned space vehicles of an existing type or of other types which may be developed in the future.

The draft treaty also deals with the question of the prohibition of anti-satellite systems, the solution of which is urged by a number of States. Article 3 of the draft treaty proposed by the Soviet Union contains an undertaking not to destroy, damage, disturb the normal functioning of or change the flight trajectory of space objects of other States parties to the treaty, if these objects were placed in orbit in strict accordance with the provisions of the treaty.

We propose the initiation of negotiations on this matter in the Committee without delay and the establishment of an ad hoc working group to this end. We would not object if the mandate of the working group were to include also the recommendations in resolution 36/97 C of the General Assembly with respect to negotiations on the prohibition of anti-satellite systems. At the same time we believe that the Committee's main aim should be to solve the problem of the elimination of the arms race in outer space as a whole, and therefore the question of anti-satellite systems should, of course, be discussed in the context of other measures aimed at achieving this goal.

(Mr. Hollai, Hungary)

Before concluding this review of my Government's position on some of the major problems of arms limitation and disarmament, I wish to mention that we fully support the proposal made by the Soviet Union at the thirty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly for the earliest possible conclusion of an international treaty aimed at preventing outer space from becoming a new arena of the arms race. We hope that all the members of the Committee realize the great danger that would face mankind if another sphere of vital interest to all States got involved in the arms race.

Mr. CABRAS (Italy): Mr. Chairman, I would like, on behalf of the Italian delegation, to speak about item 7 of our agenda entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space".

Two resolutions dealing with arms control and disarmament in outer space were adopted by the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session; both requested the Committee on Disarmament to take action on that issue. Our Committee has accordingly agreed to include a new item in its annual agenda and has scheduled two informal meetings for a first airing of the subject. These are welcome developments which prompt my delegation to place on record some preliminary views on the subject.

We believe that the informal meetings and the more substantive discussion which we expect to take place during the second part of the session could serve three main purposes:

Firstly, to offer a general overview and an evaluation of what has been achieved so far in terms of stemming a military competition in outer space;

Secondly, to proceed to an assessment of the activities taking place in outer space and of scientific and technological developments liable to threaten the preservation of outer space as a peaceful environment;

Thirdly, to identify those "further measures" and "appropriate international negotiations" which, in the words of paragraph 80 of the Final Document, are to be undertaken in order to prevent an arms race in outer space.

Both resolution 36/97 C and resolution 36/99, adopted by a very large majority at the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly, refer the question of preventing an arms race in outer space to the Committee on Disarmament. It is -- in our view -- a recognition of the fact that this question cannot be treated in total isolation from the complex issues of security on Earth and the global process of disarmament. We have noted with satisfaction that delegations with a long-standing interest in the subject, like the delegation of Sweden, have indicated that the Committee on Disarmament has now the primary responsibility for efforts in this field.

It is all to the credit of the United Nations, and in particular of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the motive force in international co-operation, that progress in space sciences and technologies is being achieved in an orderly manner and benefiting mankind as a whole. These results are highly commendable, and the work of the Committee and other bodies such as the Outer Space Affairs Division remains essential. The international community has now appealed to the specific expertise and role of the Committee on Disarmament to complement that work from another angle, that of arms control and disarmament proper.

(Mr. Cabras, Italy)

My delegation understands the concern expressed by the distinguished Ambassador of Egypt at the plenary meeting of 18 February not to lose sight of the goal of preserving outer space for peaceful uses only, in the interests of all peoples of the world.

This should indeed remain our common goal, in keeping with the principles set forth in resolution 1962 (XVIII) unanimously adopted by the General Assembly at its eighteenth session. The Committee on Disarmament should make its contribution towards the achievement of this goal in the field which is proper to this negotiating forum, concentrating on the specific objective we have set for ourselves, that is, the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

My delegation feels that the problems of outer space cannot be effectively solved through an all-embracing approach of the kind devised in 1961 for the Antarctic. The earliest of the post-World War II arms limitation agreements could hardly provide, in 1982, a suitable pattern for a comparable treatment of outer space.

We share the opinion, widely supported also in the scientific community, that such an approach would result merely in the delaying of urgently needed, more limited measures which are within the bounds of feasibility and can effectively curb the most immediately threatening developments. To tackle effectively the disarmament issues relating to outer space, we have to place them in a forward-looking perspective and identify priorities. These issues are not stationary: they evolve at the pace of technology which, in the case of outer space, is particularly rapid. Some of them cannot wait for over-all progress on all fronts. Without establishing an order of priorities we may just be creating a storehouse of highly volatile problems with potentially harmful consequences for the future of our endeavours.

The two States with major space-capabilities seem to have established an order of priorities for themselves when, between 1978 and 1979, they held three rounds of bilateral talks on the limitation of anti-satellite systems. The work in the First Committee last year showed that a growing number of countries appear to be aware that the testing and deployment of physical and technical means to destroy, damage or interfere with space objects constitutes the most immediately threatening development.

A survey of specialized literature indicates that this is also a largely shared opinion among experts and scientists.

Let us dwell for a moment on this aspect.

The existence of many public sources describing in detail the activities currently performed by satellites saves my delegation from having to refer to this aspect at length, at least at the present stage. One such source is the "Study on the implications of establishing an international satellite monitoring agency", drawn up by a group of governmental experts and annexed to document A/AC.206/14 of 6 August 1981. It offers a very useful general survey.

(Mr. Cabras, Italy)

Even a cursory reading of this study suffices to give a good idea of the efficiency of satellites and of their extreme versatility. Their use extends to fields as diverse as meteorology, cartography, geodesy, communications, reconnaissance, navigation, early warning, etc. Reconnaissance satellites provide the most effective means of verifying compliance with certain disarmament agreements and play a stabilizing role in crisis-monitoring. The use of early warning satellites contributes to international security and confidence.

Many current and potential uses of satellites are of great importance for the economic and social development of all countries, particularly the developing countries.

The relevant technology is no longer the monopoly of two States; other nations possess a national capacity in this field, while a number of others participate in the implementation of space programmes through organs of international co-operation.

The importance of satellites and the dependence of States, of all States, on them are likely to increase: in many instances, satellites provide unique capabilities, capabilities that cannot readily be duplicated by ground-based systems; for certain other missions they are cost-effective or perform with higher efficiency.

These very characteristics, together with their vulnerability, make satellites, virtually all satellites, tempting targets. Outer space is at present a medium still mainly free from kill-mechanisms. Yet the deployment of anti-satellite systems marks the beginning of a trend that, unless checked, can introduce the arms race into this new dimension.

Without, for the time being, going into the complex details of the various anti-satellite systems, be they at the experimental stage or at the operational stage, it is sufficient to note that in this sector the ingredients for a military competition seem to be present: the importance of satellites as targets, the development of a panoply of physical and technical anti-satellite means which would give the holder a considerable advantage, the difficulties of protecting satellites by making them less vulnerable, etc. -- all these factors could set in motion the reactive cycle which characterizes an arms race.

It is easier to forecast an arms race in the anti-satellite system sector than to indicate its likely consequences. It seems clear, however, that it would be extremely costly, strategically "destabilizing", and disruptive for the orderly exploitation of outer space in the interest of all mankind. Resolution 36/97 C describes the negotiation of an agreement on the matter as "an important step" towards preventing an arms race in space and assigns priority to it. Its consideration would be an appropriate task for the Committee on Disarmament, as it would constitute a genuine disarmament measure, entailing a ban on systems which are in existence, which form part of military arsenals, which are deployed.

It would be premature to undertaken even a preliminary analysis of the issues involved in the question of anti-satellite systems. It would, however, be useful to try to glimpse the complexity of some of these to demonstrate that a serious consideration of them would already constitute a formidable task in itself.

(Mr. Cabras, Italy)

Foremost among these issues is the definitional question of what constitutes an "anti-satellite system". The vulnerability of satellites to an array of weapons and techniques makes a solution particularly arduous. How broadly is the term "anti-satellite system" to be construed? Should it only encompass weapons specifically designed to damage or destroy a satellite and their components? Should it also comprise any weapon constructed and deployed for an ASAT role, or tested in an ASAT mode? Would it be possible or desirable to identify the various types of ASAT systems?

In addition, the even more difficult issue would arise of what constitutes an "anti-satellite activity". In fact, without necessarily damaging or destroying the satellite, it is possible to interfere with its functioning, for instance through electronic jamming or by blinding it with lasers or by moving it from its orbit, etc.

Adequate verification, which is an essential requirement of any arms control and disarmament agreement, would, in this case, be very difficult to achieve. Even a limited ASAT capability, acquired or retained in evasion of an ASAT ban, could be significant. For this very reason, a comprehensive consideration of the problem could not avoid the question of disarmament per se. Operational capabilities in this field are already a reality. The issue of dismantling procedures for existing ASAT systems and their components, and the related verification procedures, would be yet another very complex issue.

Any draft treaty or proposal purporting to deal with the problem of ASAT systems should be judged in the light of the whole range of issues involved in this highly sensitive area and on the basis of the answers it provides to them.

What, for instance, would be the value, in terms of arms control and disarmament, of an agreement that amounted to a "no-use" arrangement? If ASAT systems can be freely tested or deployed, would not each side anticipate that they might be used, and take appropriate measures? It can be argued that anything less than a prohibition of testing, deployment and use would be seriously flawed.

The opportunity before us is ripe, but perishable. As a result of the broad examination that we are going to commence on this item, we need to identify our real priorities, lest we disperse our energies. If we want to keep outer space free from any kind of weapons, should we not start with those weapons that already exist, that have been deployed?

We are aware that this would be only a step, a first step, in a process.

Consistent with its long-standing interest in the field, the Italian delegation stands ready to contribute further to the work of the Committee on item 7, but most of all it stands ready to listen, to learn and to give serious consideration to any suggestion or proposal which can serve to advance our common endeavour.

(Mr. Onkelinx, Belgium)

The second question I wish to refer to today is that of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. We are pleased that the Committee on Disarmament has placed this item on its agenda and that it has agreed to hold informal meetings on the subject in the near future.

Having said this, we recognize that not all the items on the Committee's agenda offer the same possibilities for negotiations. This question is a new item, which the Committee is taking up for the first time, and it is important because of its implications for the security of our States. It is necessary, at this initial stage, for the Committee to explore the subject.

The obligation to take up this question arises from paragraph 80 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly. As early as 1979, Italy proposed that the matter be taken up when it submitted document CD/9. At the last session of the General Assembly two resolutions were adopted -- neither of them gave rise to any objection, and one of them, resolution 36/97 C, was co-sponsored by Belgium -- requesting the Committee on Disarmament to take up this matter for consideration.

Our objective ought therefore to be to try gradually to fill the gaps in the existing international legislation.

At present, such legislation rests principally on the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies. It would also be useful to take into account the implications for outer space of the 1963 partial test-ban Treaty and the 1972 Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems.

We ought further to consider the possible connections between the prevention of the arms race in outer space and the establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency, which was the subject, in particular, of General Assembly resolution 34/83 E, co-sponsored by Belgium.

We believe that initially the main aim of the Committee's work should be the question of the negotiation of an effective and varifiable agreement prohibiting anti-satellite systems. At the present stage, such systems constitute the greatest identifiable destabilizing threat.

In fact, anti-satellite weapons could seriously compromise the mechanisms designed to ensure respect for arms control and disarmament agreements.

Particular attention ought also to be given to methods of verifying such a prohibition, with reference again, to the subject of the prohibition. This would imply, among other things, a definition of the concept of arms in relation to outer space. My delegation hopes that at the informal meetings we are shortly to hold it will already be possible to clarify some of these questions.

It would also be useful, I think, if the Committee could consider, in the light of its priorities, the most appropriate procedural arrangements to enable us to begin substantive discussions in the most effective manner possible at our summer session.

(Mr. Lidgard, Sweden)

I am going to speak today on item 7 of the agenda, the issue of preventing an arms race in outer space.

The peaceful uses of outer space are now, 25 years after the start of the space age, manifold and bring great benefits in areas such as communications, navigation, meteorology and remote sensing of the earth. It is no doubt of great importance further to advance the peaceful uses of this environment. Simultaneously, however, the opening and closing of our meetings. Secondly, I shall seek your collaboration to keep interventions in the Committee and in informal meetings, as well as in informal consultations, as concise and to the point as possible. Thirdly, I wish to remind you of my suggestion last year that we could perhaps do with a little less formality in our proceedings, although I certainly do not wish to deprive my predecessor of the praise he so rightly deserves.

I count on your understanding, your co-operation and your support to enable me to steer our spring session to a successful conclusion.

The Committee continues today its consideration of item 6 of its agenda, entitled "comprehensive programme of disarmament". In any case, members wishing to make statements on any other subject relevant to the work of the Committee may do so in accordance with rule 30 of the Rules of Procedure.

I have on my list of speakers for today the representatives of Sweden, Argentina, Cuba, Australia, Morocco, China and Indonesia.

I now give the floor to the first speaker on my list, the representative of Sweden, His Excellency Ambassador Lidgard.

Awareness of the threatening evolution as far as outer space is concerned is certainly not new. Several attempts have been made to bring this matter to the attention of this Committee. I have in mind particularly the thoughtful contributions made by Italy and the Netherlands and, of course, the two resolutions adopted by the General Assembly last autumn, where the Soviet Union, as well as the western countries I just mentioned, played an important role in promoting multilateral negotiations on this issue.

It is a fact, well-known to all of us here, that disarmament negotiations are often outstripped by the pace of developments in military technology, which make warfare possible in environments which have so far been spared from militarization. This is a matter of great concern to my Government and no doubt to many other Governments represented in this Committee.

Efforts have already been made in this respect. One example is the Outer Space Treaty, which prohibits the emplacement of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction in outer space and reserves the use of the moon and other celestial bodies exclusively for peaceful purposes. Its provisions are, however, not sufficient to prevent a general arms race in outer space. Further efforts must be made in this regard.

This matter is now before the Committee on Disarmament. My delegation welcomes the fact that these important and, in some respects, urgent questions will be dealt with in the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. We consider that, after the initial exploratory talks taking place during the first part of this year's session, an ad hoc working group of the Committee should be established with an appropriate mandate in the summer of 1982.

The two Superpowers play a predominant role in the military and civilian exploitation of outer space. It is therefore a welcome development that they have already held bilateral talks on the problem of avoiding an arms race in this environment. It is regrettable that these talks have been suspended. In the view of my delegation, it is highly desirable that they should be resumed as soon as possible.

(Mr. Lidgard, Sweden)

However, outer space is a common province of mankind and its use or abuse is therefore a matter that concerns all countries. Even if the Superpowers have a clear technological lead, an increasing number of other countries will gradually be in a position to make use of outer space. It is also for this reason natural that the prohibition of an arms race in this domain should become the subject of multilateral negotiations.

It should be noted in this connection that satellites can make a very useful contribution in the disarmament field by providing the means for non-intrusive verification and surveillance. It is a well-known fact that surveillance by satellites has been tacitly accepted as a means of verification in the SALT context. Similar ideas are the basis for the timely and valuable French initiative on the establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency. This initiative is all the more valuable and forward-looking in that it envisages a multilateral body which would play a crucial role in international verification, since it is unlikely that the verification techniques which are available to a small fraction of the countries of the world would achieve universal acceptance.

Our immediate concern, however, is, in accordance with the wording of item 7 of our agenda, how an arms race in outer space should be prevented. For a number of reasons, it is extremely difficult to define at the outset in exact terms the scope of limitations and prohibitions one should aim at in order to achieve an effective prohibition that would prevent undesirable developments without hampering legitimate activities in outer space. One problem is that some space systems have both military and civilian applications. Another is that some military systems may primarily have stabilizing effects and others may have destabilizing effects.

A fundamental question will be to consider whether efforts should concentrate on banning or limiting various weapons systems in space or on banning or restricting certain activities or actions which would constitute interference with or an attack against space objects. Perhaps a combination of both approaches is called for.

It seems appropriate initially to determine the extent to which existing provisions in treaties such as the 1963 Outer Space Treaty and the 1972 ABM Treaty and its subsequent Protocol need to be completed in order to cover existing and expected developments in outer space warfare.

As a matter of principle, it must be agreed at an early stage whether a prohibition should cover all military satellites or concentrate on those space systems which are primarily and increasingly integral parts of terrestrial warfare systems.

Another matter of principal importance is the extent to which it would be possible and desirable to limit research on and the development, testing and production of military space systems.

A third issue which must be dealt with initially is whether one should aim at a comprehensive convention or apply a step-by-step approach. If the latter alternative is chosen, it would seem appropriate to establish a list of priorities according to which the most threatening developments would be subject to negotiations first. It is, for example, quite conceivable that the problem of anti-satellite warfare should be addressed at a very early stage. This question also comprises complicated problems of definition, as so pertinently illustrated by the distinguished representative of Italy last Tuesday.

(Mr. Lidgard, Sweden)

It would seem to my delegation that, primarily, all devices that have the purpose of hampering the stabilizing uses of outer space should be prohibited. Verification through technical means must not be interfered with. At the same time one must also be aware of the problem of asymmetry which may arise in military conflicts between space Powers and other countries as far as space communications for military purposes are concerned. A considerable number of existing satellites are designed to give early warning of attacks. If they were to be eliminated, the adversary might well react in an unpredictable way. Such destabilizing undertakings should, in the view of my delegation, be prohibited.

It is Sweden's view that outer space itself, as is already the case for the moon and other celestial bodies, should be reserved for exclusively peaceful purposes. However, it is a well-known fact that military uses of outer space are frequent and far-reaching. It therefore becomes a matter of paramount importance to prevent such activities from having a hampering effect on existing and future civilian and peaceful uses of outer space.

It is obvious that the monitoring of military activities in outer space and the verification of compliance with future limitations and prohibitions will entail a number of difficult political and technical problems. My delegation attaches great importance to this matter and wishes to stress the need to strive for multilateral solutions to these problems.

General knowledge of what is going on in terms of current and potential military developments is particularly limited as far as outer space is concerned. Here, as in other areas of the global arms race, excessive secrecy is one of the main driving forces behind the race. If the leading space Powers are really interested in reaching agreements with prospects of universal adherence, they should be forthcoming in providing information and answering the questions which will no doubt be put to them in this Committee. My delegation therefore urges them not only to resume their bilateral talks on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, but also to give a comprehensive report to the Committee on the issues and problems of substance they are faced with in these talks. This will enable the Committee on Disarmament to address the issues and to make progress in parallel with the bilateral efforts by the leading military Powers.

There can be no doubt that the space Powers and, especially, the leading among them bear special responsibility for preventing an arms race in outer space. Developments in the field of space technology are such as to widen the gap between the leading powers and most members of the world community. It would be a mistake, however, to believe that the present oligopoly will last forever. The sooner this is realized and accepted, the better the prospects for progress in the forthcoming negotiations, for the benefit of us all.

It is not too late to avoid a fruitless arms race in outer space, which would waste enormous resources and make our planet still more insecure. But time is a crucial factor in disarmament negotiations. The longer we wait, the more difficult it will be to tackle the many complex problems we shall face.

(Mr. de Souza e Silva, Brazil)

The consideration of the new item introduced this year in the agenda of the Committee, the prevention of an arms race in outer space, again reflects the confrontational aspect of the relationship between the two Superpowers, already evident in the formulation of the two resolutions adopted by the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly on the matter. Each resolution seeks to prohibit the development of specific space activities in which each side perceives the other as holding a technological edge. Brazil cautioned the First Committee last year about the possibility that the introduction in our agenda of an item on outer space might prove detrimental to the pursuit of efforts towards a structured treatment of item 2 (Nuclear disarmament) in the Committee. It seems now clear that our fears were not ill-founded. Last year, this Committee held an interesting, albeit inconclusive and oddly secretive, debate on item 2 of its agenda. During this first half of the 1982 session, however, the treatment of this priority item has gone no further than its mention in statements in plenary. My delegation, for one, views this development with the utmost concern, since the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament have been assigned the highest priority by the United Nations. We would again urge the Committee to devote adequate time to item 2 of its agenda at the forthcoming second part of the 1982 session.

Mr. van DONGEN (Netherlands): I should like to avail myself of the provision of rule 30 of the Rules of Procedure to refer to agenda item 7 on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

The Netherlands welcomes the decision of this Committee to put this item on its agenda. We hold that the time is more than ripe to take up this subject; further delay would only increase its complexity, which is, even now, awesome. In his statement of 2 February 1982, Ambassador Fein outlined our approach to it. Having listened attentively to the arguments put forward by certain delegations, we acquiesced in its absence from the programme of work for the Committee's spring session. At the same time, we welcomed the decision to hold informal meetings to consider item 7; I hope that, on that occasion, I made our constant interest in the matter abundantly clear.

We are of course aware that a few nations play a preponderant role in the exploration and the use of outer space and that, for other members of this Committee, many of the technical aspects are hard to grasp. At the same time, the fact that possible arms competition in outer space would directly affect the military balance and therefore our joint security confers on us the right and even the duty to speak out.

When I do so today, my primary objective is to encourage further discussion and continued awareness that the major contribution can only come from the two great Powers and that a lasting solution is feasible only if the two of them can come to agree with one another.

The military use of outer space seems to have three main aspects:

(a) Military satellites are increasingly being used to fulfil functions of direct military relevance such as observation, navigation, communications and crisis monitoring;

(b) As a result, the same satellites are becoming high-priority military targets, since their elimination will directly affect the adversary's military capabilities. This has resulted in increased research, development and, in some cases, even tests of so-called interceptor satellites in orbit;

(c) Increased research in the field of directed-energy weapons, both high-energy laser and particle-beam weapons, has made it conceivable that they may be used both for space-based ballistic missile defence and as anti-satellite weapons.

We are, of course, aware of the fact that, since the 1960s, a number of international agreements have been concluded restricting the military use of outer space; of these, the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, deserves special mention. This Treaty prohibits the placing in orbit around the earth of any objects carrying nuclear weapons of mass destruction, the installation of such weapons on celestial bodies and the stationing of such weapons in outer space in any other manner. It also calls for the complete demilitarization of the moon and other celestial bodies. Though it is an important step forward, the Outer Space Treaty leaves room for a variety of military activities in outer space. I note by way of illustration that none of the three ways of militarizing outer space which I outlined earlier is prohibited by the provisions of the 1967 Outer Space Treaty.

(Mr. van Dongen, Netherlands)

How can we fill this gap? There is, of course, the Soviet draft treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space. We have, however, stated on several occasions that it is our considered opinion that this draft treaty does not meet our requirements. On the one hand, it seems that the complexity of arms control in outer space calls not for one comprehensive treaty, but, rather, warrants several instruments dealing with specific subject-matters. On the other hand, the Soviet draft treaty seems to allow for dangerous and inadmissable a contrario arguments that could undermine the provisions of the draft and indeed those of treaties already in force. The verification provisions will have to be scrutinized for their adequacy. Furthermore, the draft contains some baroque ornaments that have no place in a legal text.

For example, draft article 3 raises many questions about the character of the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space. It seems to leave open the possibility of disabling space objects of other States parties if such objects are not placed in strict accordance with article 1, paragraph 1, of the draft treaty. Furthermore, the prohibition applies only to the space objects of other States which are parties to the treaty. These restrictions, together with the wording of article 1, paragraph 1, referring only to stationing, mean that the Soviet draft treaty does not prohibit the development, testing or production of "objects carrying weapons of any kind" or even their use under certain circumstances.

Another important point in this connection is that a clear definition of the term "weapon" is lacking.

With regard to the verification provisions of this draft treaty, it can be asked why the verification of the implementation of this treaty should be left exclusively to so-called "national" technical means of verification. These means were recognized for the first time as a legitimate method by the United States and the Soviet Union in the SALT agreements. However, what is adequate in a bilateral context is not necessarily adequate or acceptable in a multilateral context. And since we are talking about a multilateral draft treaty, it should in any case leave open the possibility of the further internationalization of the verification of this treaty.

Another observation with regard to the proposed verification régime is that it does not provide for recourse of any kind to international bodies in case of doubts or complaints about compliance or non-compliance with the treaty.

I would like to make some further observations on this subject.

First of all, in our view, the military uses of space by satellites can, thus far, on balance, be described as rather of a stabilizing nature. When we consider possible further measures to prevent an arms race in outer space, we can therefore not ignore developments in the elaboration of anti-satellite weapon systems, which should be regarded as a serious danger because of their destabilizing effect on international peace and security. The more satellites are used as the eyes and ears of modern military forces, the more crippling will be their loss through attacks with anti-satellite weapons. It is therefore entirely justified that General Assembly resolution 36/97 C, in addition to the provisions I referred to earlier, requested this Committee to consider, as a matter of priority, the question of negotiating an effective and verifiable agreement to prohibit anti-satellite systems as an important first step.

(Mr. van Dongen, Netherlands)

We are aware of the fact that anti-satellite weapons systems are now being developed and even tested. Achievements in the field of ballistic missile defence may also serve for the development of an anti-satellite capability. Is this not then the right moment for endeavours towards further arms control in outer space? Conversely, must we fear that the possibilities are diminishing or have already ceased to exist? To find the answer, we must investigate the rationale for developing an anti-satellite capability.

Two main arguments are usually put forward. One stems from a competitive and reactive concern: to deter the use of anti-satellite weapons by the other side and to prevent an imbalance in military capabilities. The other stems from a concern of the first party with the growing use of satellites by the other side with a view to enhancing its military capability; the growing use of satellites is then perceived by the first party as constituting a sufficient threat to justify an anti-satellite programme.

It seems to us that a verifiable agreement banning anti-satellite weapons altogether will constitute a durable solution for averting arms competition in outer space only if each side's anti-satellite programme is commensurate with, not a reaction to, the other's, whether real or anticipated. We would then be dealing with the question whether we should opt for mutual satellite vulnerability or for mutual satellite invulnerability.

The choice in favour of the former, the anti-satellite weapons option, could lead to a very expensive arms race in outer space with no guarantee for increased stability, probably quite the contrary. As I mentioned before, present research efforts in the field of directed-energy weapons, both high-energy laser and particle-beam weapons, have already made it conceivable to use these new weapons for space-based ballistic missile defence. It stands to reason that such developments will have serious implications for the present international situation.

As to the question of the priority to be given to the elaboration of a prohibition of anti-satellite weapons, it is our firm belief that the prerequisites for an agreement seem to exist: no State yet seems to possess a commanding lead in the relevant technology.

In choosing the option to ban anti-satellite weapons, one would have to consider that such a ban would be a step in the right direction from an arms control point of view, but that, at the same time, it would offer protection to satellites fulfilling vital military functions. I must admit that we have to think further about that side of the coin and decide whether a mutually acceptable solution can be found. Another complicating aspect is that satellites for observation, communications, navigation, meteorology, etc. can be used both for military and for civilian purposes. We are well aware that this dual-purpose character of satellite technology does not simplify our complicated task.

These are the observations I should like to limit myself to at this stage. We hope that the results of the informal discussions that are taking place can be evaluated during the period in May and June when the Committee on Disarmament does not meet. During the summer session, the Committee on Disarmament could then deal more formally with agenda item 7 and consider setting up an ad hoc working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Mr. ERDEMBILEG (Mongolia) (translated from Russian): The problem of preventing the spread of the arms race to outer space, that relatively new sphere of human activity, occupies an important place in the set of problems relating to the halting of the arms race and to disarmament.

In the past quarter of a century, since the start of the space era, the international community has been making unceasing efforts to ensure that space is used exclusively for peaceful purposes, for the social and economic progress of peoples.

The Soviet Union's initiative concerning the conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space therefore received wide support at the thirty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Representatives of a large number of States, both in the First Committee and at plenary meetings of the General Assembly, expressed serious concern at the real threat that might be created unless a barrier to the spread of the arms race to outer space was erected in good time. In this Committee, too, many speakers have stressed the timeliness and importance of the Soviet proposal aimed at removing that danger.

In approving by an overwhelming majority resolution 36/99, which was submitted by Mongolia on behalf of the group of socialist countries, the General Assembly recommended the Committee on Disarmament to embark on negotiations with a view to achieving agreement on the text of a treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space.

In its statement in the First Committee, the Mongolian delegation clearly and succinctly expressed its position on this question. During the past twenty or more years, a whole system of treaties and agreements, both multilateral and bilateral, has been established prohibiting the stationing in outer space of nuclear and other types of weapons of mass destruction.

I should like to name the most important among them. They are, first, the 1963 Moscow Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water; the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies; the Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, approved by the General Assembly in 1979; the 1977 Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques, and many others.

However, we are regretfully compelled to note that, according to reports in the western Press, including that of the United States itself, an extensive programme is being developed for the creation of a whole series of systems of weapons to be used in outer space, such as systems of anti-satellite weapons, the deployment of anti-satellite mines, laser weapons and the development of huge anti-missile defence systems based in outer space, etc. Particular attention is being devoted in this connection to reusable vehicles of the "Shuttle" type.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

According to the United States review "Aviation Week and Space Technology", reusable spacecraft have been given the role of a connecting link between military centres on Earth and orbital operational stations, programme development for which has already entered the final stage.

From Press reports it transpires that the Pentagon strategists have also assigned the "Shuttle" programme a substantial role in the activation of military reconnaissance from space. Use will be made for this purpose of artificial satellites placed in orbit by a remote manipulator.

In short, there exists a real danger of the unleashing of an arms race in space. The world community naturally cannot remain indifferent in the face of such an escalation of activity to implement plans for the militarization of outer space designed to undermine the existing military balance and to initiate yet another spiral of the arms race including space weapons.

It should also be pointed out that the stationing of new types of weapons in outer space would have the most negative effect on co-operation among States in the exploration of outer space for peaceful purposes, the fruits of which the international community is enjoying on an ever-increasing scale. In that connection, I should like particularly to emphasize the great importance of the results of the activities of socialist States within the framework of the "Intercosmos" programme.

A year ago, there occurred an event of special significance in the life of the Mongolian people — the joint Mongolian-Soviet space flight, as a result of which successful scientific research of exceptional importance to Mongolia's national economy was carried out.

In the light of the foregoing, the Mongolian delegation considers the Soviet Union's proposal to be timely and appropriate to the demands of the existing situation.

In saying this, I should like to stress that, in our view, this proposal pursues, inter alia, the important aim of halting the arms race as regards its main trend, that of the further qualitative refinement of weapons through the use of scientific and technological progress.

As is known, the General Assembly also approved resolution 36/97 C, which includes, inter alia, a request to the Committee on Disarmament to consider the question of conducting negotiations on the prevention of an arms race in outer space and, in particular, the prohibition of anti-satellite systems.

In that connection, my delegation shares the view of those who have expressed a wish to examine the question of anti-satellite systems in the context of other measures aimed at an over-all solution of the problem of preventing the spread of the arms race to outer space. That question is, moreover, taken into consideration in article 3 of the draft treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space as submitted by the Soviet Union and referred to in General Assembly resolution 36/99.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

The Committee on Disarmament, taking into account the aforementioned recommendations of the General Assembly and the desire of the international community to create a reliable barrier to the transformation of outer space into an arena of the arms race, has included a new item on this question in the agenda of its 1982 session.

We have the impression that there is in the Committee broad understanding and agreement concerning the commencement, during the second part of the Committee's 1982 session, of concrete negotiations with a view to adopting effective measures aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space through the conclusion of an appropriate international treaty. The Mongolian delegation is in favour of an immediate start to such negotiations, and proposes the establishment of an ad hoc working group within the framework of the Committee. In that connection, I should like to recall that the group of socialist countries proposed the establishment of an ad hoc working group on this question in document CD/241.

We consider that the Committee could take a decision to establish the group, preferably before the completion of the work of the first part of the present session. In order to facilitate the speedy establishment of the ad hoc working group, the Mongolian delegation has submitted for the Committee's consideration working paper CD/272 containing draft terms of reference for the ad hoc working group, as follows:

"The Committee on Disarmament decides to establish, for the second half of its 1982 session, an ad hoc working group for the purposes of conducting negotiations on item 7 of the agenda, 'Prevention of an arms race in outer space' and agreeing on a text for a corresponding international treaty, taking into account all existing proposals and future initiatives in that respect.

The ad hoc working group shall submit a report on the progress of its work to the Committee on Disarmament before the completion of the second half of the Committee's 1982 session."

The draft treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space submitted by the Soviet Union, which could serve as a good basis for negotiations, is before the Committee.

We believe that in the continuing discussion of item 7 at informal meetings of the Committee, parties' positions are emerging. This may later facilitate preparations for the start of negotiations on this question at the Committee's summer session.

The Mongolian delegation is prepared to engage with interested delegations in consultations and exchanges of views on the elaboration of appropriate terms of reference for the ad hoc working group on the basis of document CD/272 with a view to reaching agreement on this urgent issue.

(Mr. Wegener, Federal Republic of Germany)

My delegation has followed the debate on problems of outer space with great interest. In our view, the Committee has made a good beginning in approaching this topic in response to the relevant resolutions adopted at the last session of the General Assembly, one of which was co-sponsored by my delegation. The debate has quite clearly shown that there is a considerable difference of views concerning the method to be used in future work. Many delegations have subscribed to a pragmatic, gradual approach by which concrete negotiating steps would, in a first phase, be taken to deal effectively with the most threatening and destabilizing weapons systems, i.e. anti-satellite weapons, especially since such systems have already been tested and made operational by at least one country; anti-satellite technology is available and deployment may already have taken place. There is another approach which aims at a purpotedly broader, non-specific ban on all arms in outer space, but places very little emphasis on real effectiveness. It is also difficult to see in what order of priority the various complex issues involved would be treated under this approach. While my delegation is in favour of every possible step designed to exclude non-peaceful uses of outer space, it would appear logical and appropriate to us to adopt a step-by-step approach and to build upon the existing body of international regulations in this field. The establishment of a working group to take this work in hand in the coming summer session of the Committee would be welcomed by my delegation, if the mandate reflects this approach. I would like to remind the Committee in this respect that General Assembly resolution 36/97 C specifically requests the Committee on Disaramement to consider, as a matter of priority, the question of negotiating an effective and verifiable agreement to prohibit anti-satellite systems. The mandate of a future working group would have to reflect this and, in our view, the Committee, acting accordingly, will have to avoid clogging the agenda of a working group with broad and hazy projects which would not allow the Committee to deal with concrete problems in a limited time and not aim at a really effective peaceful space régime.

My delegation has already given its view on outer space problems in a more comprehensive manner during one of the informal meetings devoted to the subject; the text of our statement has been made available to delegations in an informal manner. Now that I have the opportunity to speak on the subject in a formal meeting, allow me to reaffirm one clarification. The draft treaty of 10 August 1981 contained in document A/36/192 and referred to in General Assembly resolution 36/99 does not appear to my delegation to be a suitable basis for negotiation in this Committee. We have already pointed out the many contradictions and inconsistencies which this draft treaty displays. In this connection, my delegation has asked a certain number of questions which so far have found no reply. We, like the Italian and the Dutch delegations, still wait for the necessary elucidation from the authors of that draft. In addition to the lacunae and ambiguities of the draft to which we have already drawn attention let me briefly mention two others. Article III of the draft makes it legitimate to intercept space objects if these are not operated for peaceful purposes. However, the determination and decision whether interception should take place lies with the interceptor alone, who would thus take on the role of a self-appointed space police. In the absence of firm criteria and of any objective determination of prerequisites for such a police role, this draft provision would seem to pave the way for misuse and serve, rather, as an incentive for the development and testing of additional anti-satellite systems. Secondly, the rules on verification contained in article IV appear to be insufficient even in the light of other existing multilateral disarmament agreements and certainly in relation to the purposes of the draft treaty. In the view of my delegation it would be indispensable to have a substantially more detailed verification régime, with at least an independent investigating authority, such as a Consultative Committee, lest the desired prescription remain totally ineffective in terms of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. In the light of all these arguments and in conjunction with those already advanced, my delegation must confirm its view that the draft treaty in question is seriously flawed and

(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

For the first time since our first annual session, the Committee has added a new item of substance to its agenda: "Prevention of an arms race in outer space". This item has already formed the subject of a number of substantial statements and I should like to make a few remarks on it at this point. We attach the greatest importance to the destabilizing effects which attacks against satellites would have. This is why we feel that examination of this question should be undertaken without delay. During our debates, the merits and also the inadequacies of the 1967 Treaty on outer space were clearly brought out. The resulting situation inspired the proposals which have been submitted to us.

One of them, that of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, does not appear to us to offer a satisfactory solution. In effect it amounts, paradoxically, to making each space power its own judge in matters of outer space. How are articles 1 and 3 of the draft treaty submitted by the Soviet Union to be interpreted except as giving every State freedom to destroy a space object which it decides of its own accord, without consultation or reference to any pre-established criterion, is carrying weapons? Furthermore, the draft treaty makes provision only for national technical means of verification of compliance with its provisions. Moreover, we do not believe that there is any justification for bringing specifically into the discussion the question of reusable space vehicles -- the question of space shuttles. Is it the intention thus to extend the field of application of the treaty to objects whose trajectory is not exclusively orbital? On the other hand, there is no provision, it seems, for resolving the problems which may arise from the dual use -- for both civilian and military purposes -- of orbital platforms. Furthermore, nothing is said of the part that would be played in this approach by satellites which, as France and other countries have proposed, could be used on behalf of the international community for purposes of verification of disarmament agreements and crisis control.

In fact, our initial discussions on this subject in the Committee have amply demonstrated that outer space activities are so complex and so rapidly evolving that what we must do first is, on the one hand, to define more precisely, in relation to outer space, terms which are often used ambiguously, such as the word "weapon", and, on the other hand, to determine the priorities in examining this problem. In view of the large volume of the resources at present being invested in outer space activities for both civilian and military purposes, amounting in all to several billion dollars in orbit daily, and of the stabilizing part played by satellites, as has been expressly recognized in several international documents stipulating non-interference when the satellites are used for purposes of verification, it is essential for the international community to reach an agreement to prevent the occurrence of a situation where anti-satellite weapons or techniques would become a new factor of instability. In fact, in spite of the protections and reinforcements that might be possible, at great cost and with a reduction of the payload, the intrinsic vulnerability of satellites gives the attacker an advantage.

We therefore feel that the Committee should proceed to a more general examination of the problem in terms of the stability of strategic systems and security. What we need to do is to determine, among the existing or conceivable systems, which would represent potential factors of destabilization with a view to prohibiting them as a matter of priority. For example, the development of anti-ballistic missiles based on space stations would, we believe, be extremely destabilizing. The conclusion of this examination would also bring out the fact that it would probably not be in the interests even of the great Powers, especially in view of the cost-effectiveness ratio, to keep all the options open. For all these reasons, we consider it very important for the Committee to examine the problem of anti-satellite techniques thoroughly when it resumes its work. We would have no objection to the establishment, for this purpose, of a working group which could have the help of experts.

CD/PV.173
22

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

The necessity of the prevention of an arms race in outer space has now become a question of high urgency. The socialist countries express satisfaction at the fact that the consideration of this problem has been inscribed on the agenda of the Committee on Disarmament. They maintain that, in accordance with United Nations General Assembly resolution 36/99 the Committee should start negotiations on a treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space. The most effective approach to the fulfilment of this task would be the creation, at the second part of the 1982 session, of an appropriate ad hoc working group. The views of the socialist countries concerning the terms of reference of such a group were reflected in document CD/272 submitted by the delegation of Mongolia.

CD/PV.173
26

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

The Soviet delegation notes with satisfaction that our proposals, together with the proposals of other States, concerning the need for the adoption of effective measures to prevent the spread of the arms race to outer space have aroused interest in the Committee and have formed the subject of constructive discussion. We intend to continue pressing for the establishment of an ad hoc working group on this topic.

CD/PV.175
17

(Mr. McPhail, Canada)

The threat of an arms race in outer space has concerned the international community for some time. Indeed, the United Nations General Assembly has acknowledged the Committee on Disarmament's responsibility to deal with this subject. As a beginning, we believe that the Committee should attempt to define the dimensions of this problem. To this end, it is our intention to participate actively in the consideration by the Committee at this summer session of the issues relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

CD/PV.175
20-21

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

The problem of the prevention of an arms race in outer space is not less important, and it, too, has already been referred to today. Unfortunately events are developing in such a way that outer space is becoming more and more an arena for the arms race. It is for this reason that we ought without delay to start drafting an appropriate international treaty. The Soviet Union's concrete proposals on that question -- a draft treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space -- has been submitted for consideration to the Committee on Disarmament. We consider that the Committee should set up an ad hoc working group to draft the treaty, as well as to consider other proposals directed at preventing an arms race in outer space.

CD/PV.175
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(Mr. Venkateswaran, India)

A third area of major concern to all is the prevention of an arms race in outer space. This subject is closely linked to the question of nuclear disarmament, including the prevention of nuclear war. A thorough consideration of this item is, therefore, essential, particularly in view of recent developments in space technology, many of which have far-reaching and significant military implications. Our delegation is prepared to be flexible as to the manner in which we deal with this problem. We could, for example, set up an ad hoc working group on outer space, which would in the first instance determine the scope of the problem and the precise area that negotiations in the Committee on Disarmament would cover. We could also explore the implications of several recent developments in space technology for the field of nuclear arms limitation and disarmament as well as for the prevention of nuclear war. The negotiation of an agreement to ban the development, testing and deployment of anti-satellite weapons would be a good starting point, in the view of my delegation, although it must be clearly understood that this again should be immediately followed by other far-reaching measures that would cover the development, testing and deployment of weapons of any kind in outer space.

CD/PV.176
11

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

Nowadays we can also witness yet another tendency, inspired by the Western military-industrial complex, that of the penetration of weapons to areas which were not used earlier for military purposes. We condemn resolutely any steps aimed at spreading the arms race into outer space. Outer space should remain forever free of any weapons so that it cannot become a new sphere of the feverish arms race and a source of further deterioration in the relations among States. Therefore, we support the establishment of a working group which would deal in full responsibility with the problem of prohibiting all types of weapons in outer space. We believe that a generally acceptable mandate for this group could be agreed upon without unnecessary delay so that we can start business-like negotiations on a number of existing proposals already made at previous sessions and at this session.

CD/PV.176
17

(Mr. Datcou, Romania)

The Romanian delegation also feels that the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the prohibition of the use of scientific and technological discoveries for military purposes are important and priority subjects for our Committee's work. We are convinced that the establishment of a working group on outer space and the organization of informal meetings, with the participation of experts, on new weapons of mass destruction will provide us with valuable opportunities to discuss these subjects. The Romanian delegation would also like to welcome the decision taken this morning to re-establish the Ad Hoc Working Group on a Comprehensive Programme of Disarmament, under the chairmanship of His Excellency Ambassador Alfonso García Robles of Mexico. The informal consultations which are to take place will, we are sure, enable the Committee to start its substantive work on this subject next year with better prospects.

CD/PV.176
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(Mr. Tian Jin, China)

III. The question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The threat to world peace and security posed by the development of weapons used in outer space is causing increasing concern among the world community. The two superpowers are sparing no expense in the development of military technology for use in outer space, and the arms race between them is steadily extending to outer space. As is known, at present only the two superpowers have the means to test, deploy and use weapons in outer space, and it stands to reason that they should undertake the responsibility for the prevention of an arms race in outer space. People should be vigilant against the practice in some quarters of paying lip service to "the peaceful use of outer space" while actually stepping up the development of various types of weapons used in outer space.

China firmly advocates that outer space be used for peaceful purposes and for the good of all mankind and strongly opposes the arms race in outer space, which endangers peace and security. Consequently, it stands for the prohibition of all outer space weapons, including anti-satellite weapons. We are in favour of the establishment of a working group on this subject. With regard to the mandate of this working group, it should, in our view, be the negotiation of a comprehensive treaty on the prohibition of outer space weapons.

CD/PV.176
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(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

The last item on our agenda -- the new item, on the subject of outer space -- has already given rise to statements of substance. Many delegations, including our own, are in favour of the establishment of a working group. We are also in favour of the starting of consultations on the terms of the mandate of such a group. We should also like discussions on the substance of the question to continue so as to shed more light on the various aspects of this very complex issue.

(Mr. Sadleir, Australia)

The other new item on our agenda, outer space, is similarly ready for serious consideration with fresh minds. Whether we should move straight into debate on the need for a working group is a moot point. My delegation would prefer that we first lay the basis for that step by identifying the potential areas for useful activity since we do not have a great body of existing work in this field to draw on. It is an important and a vast subject; it is a subject of considerable future potential for disarmament and it will need careful handling on our part.

(Mr. Jayakoddy, Sri Lanka)

At our spring session this year, we examined the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Our exchanges were useful, though it was clear that two different approaches to the question were on the minds of distinguished representatives. But the objective was the same, viz., the need to prevent the extension of the arms race to outer space. If we do not try to prevent such an arms race now, it is estimated that within the next two decades, or even by the end of this decade, space weapons will end the balance of terror that has made nuclear war all but unthinkable for the last 36 years, but they will make possible a global conflict whose undamaged victor could dictate terms to a disarmed and helpless loser. This is a situation that all States would prefer to avoid.

My delegation, therefore, favours the setting up of a subsidiary body on the prevention of an arms race in outer space this year, which marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the launching of mankind's first space object -- the Soviet sputnik in October, 1957. But we hope that a consensus on the setting up of the subsidiary body and its mandate can be achieved without the time-consuming meandering process that we went through at the closing stages of the spring session. We hope that the setting up of the subsidiary body will signal the first tangible step in this Committee to prevent in outer space what mankind has not succeeded in doing up to now on earth.

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(Mr. Ahmad, Pakistan)

It would be only fitting if the Committee on Disarmament, in conjunction with the convening of the Second United Nations Conference on Outer Space, could take some meaningful steps to avert the danger of the arms race spreading to this environment. As a first step, this Committee could propose the universal endorsement of the concept of outer space constituting "the common heritage of mankind". Pakistan shares the view that the Committee should create a working group on this item with an appropriate mandate.

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(Mr. Fields, United States)

At this session, some have advocated the establishment of a working group to deal with the issue of outer space. Many among these advocates confess limited knowledge of this complex and highly technical subject and see the working group as a means to educate us. My delegation supports an examination of the outer space issues by this Committee. Substantive discussions can serve to focus the issues and provide an informed basis for any future consideration. Only minimal discussion of the outer space issue has taken place in the Committee and we have not even heard preliminary views from some delegations.

My delegation remains unconvinced that the establishment of a working group would be the wisest course for us at this time. We would, however, strongly support a number of formal or informal plenary sessions being devoted to the subject of outer space. Only after a full airing of all delegations' views and a great deal of substantive preparation can we begin to focus our efforts.

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(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

Another important item with which our Committee should deal during the summer session is that of the prevention of the arms race in outer space. Indonesia has been and will remain committed to the established legal principles concerning the peaceful uses of outer space. Indonesia is an active member of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The "creeping" use of outer space for non-peaceful purposes by certain space powers, despite the existence of appropriate international legal instruments against such activities, has raised serious concern on our part, as well as, I believe, on the part of the majority of the community of nations. My delegation is of the view that the Committee should agree on the setting up of an ad hoc working group on outer space. In order to facilitate its work on this item, the Committee may consider the possibilities of co-operation and co-ordination with the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Our Committee might also deem it appropriate to take advantage of and to benefit from the Second United Nations Conference on Outer Space (UNISPACE II) now taking place in Vienna.

CD/PV.178
16-17

(Mr. van Dongen, Netherlands)

Another item the Committee should come to grips with during this summer session is that of arms control in outer space. The Netherlands was one of the sponsors of resolution 36/97/C requesting the Committee on Disarmament to consider, as from the beginning of its session in 1982, the question of negotiating effective and verifiable agreements aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space. The General Assembly also requested the Committee to consider, as a matter of priority, the question of negotiating an effective and verifiable agreement to prohibit anti-satellite systems, as an important step towards the fulfilment of the above objectives. After the preliminary exchange of views during the spring session, the Committee should now establish the required infrastructure to deal with this agenda item in a businesslike manner. I listened with great interest to what my distinguished colleagues from Brazil, Canada, China, France, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, the United States and the USSR recently had to say on this matter. The General Assembly resolution I referred to a moment ago provides suitable elements for the mandate of an ad hoc working group under item 7 of the agenda.

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(U Maung Maung Gyi, Burma)

With the rapid rate of advance in the development of space technology, the arms race now threatens to enter the realm of space. It is, therefore, urgently necessary to prevent outer space being used for warlike purposes before it is too late, as the consequences of such use are likely to have a destabilizing effect on earth itself. This delegation, therefore, supports the consideration of this item within a working group as first suggested by the delegation of Sweden during the last session.

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(Mr. Ijewere, Nigeria)

The prevention of the arms race in outer space is another key issue on the Committee's agenda. We see its urgency in the over-all process of nuclear disarmament. The increased militarization of outer space manifests a more dangerous trend in the arms race, and my delegation stands firm in the conviction that outer space constitutes a common heritage of mankind to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes. While we favour the establishment of an ad hoc working group on the subject, it is our view that the scope of the convention must be comprehensive enough to cover anti-satellite weapon systems.

(Mr. Alessi, Italy)

I am pleased to note that the Committee seems determined henceforward to give the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space all the attention it deserves; some reservations expressed last spring appear to have been overcome. Proposals have been made for the establishment of a working group on this item of our agenda. We are in principle in favour of doing this. The real problem, however, is not whether or not to set up a subsidiary body, but how to proceed in this matter. It would be essential for the group to have an appropriate mandate, both because of the technical complexity of the subject and because we have no experience of negotiations on weapons control and disarmament in this area.

Without a mandate which provides a specific goal for our discussions, they are likely to prove aimless. My delegation has constantly drawn the Committee's attention to the urgent need to consider, as a matter of priority, questions concerning an effective and verifiable prohibition of anti-satellite systems. That in itself would be a sufficiently ambitious task. Although opinions in the Committee differ on this subject, we have noted with satisfaction some change in the way of thinking of certain delegations.

(Mr. Erdembilig, Mongolia)

In conclusion allow me to make some comments concerning the establishment of an ad hoc working group on the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

According to its programme of work, in the fifth week of this part of its session, the Committee on Disarmament will proceed to discuss agenda item 7.

During both the spring and the summer parts of the Committee's session, almost all delegations have spoken in favour of the creation of an ad hoc working group. There was a general understanding in the Committee on the setting up of this subsidiary body. In order to facilitate the speediest possible adoption of a formal decision on this question, during the first part of the session the Mongolian delegation formally submitted a draft mandate for the Ad Hoc Working Group for consideration by the Committee and proposed that consultations should be held with a view to reaching agreement on the text.

As you know, so far no specific comments have been made on the draft mandate we put forward, nor have any amendments or additions to it been suggested.

(Mr. Erdembilig, Mongolia)

Last week the United States delegation expressed doubts as to whether the establishment of such an ad hoc working group would be the best course at the present stage. It advocated the holding of a certain number of plenary meetings, either formal or informal, on the subject of outer space.

As I stated earlier, the Committee has already decided to devote its plenary meetings on 31 August and 2 September to a consideration of the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. If the Committee decides in addition to hold some informal meetings for the discussion of this question, the Mongolian delegation will have no particular objections.

Such an organization of the work should not rule out the possibility of continuing the consultations and exchanges of views already begun in the Committee on the draft mandate, but should on the contrary stimulate them. The Mongolian delegation is thus in favour of the Committee's using all possible methods and forms of working so that it can reach agreement on the text of a mandate as soon as possible.

We do not see the need to postpone consideration of a mandate for this group until the conclusion of the Committee's discussion of the substantive side of the question at this part of its session. If one delegation does not agree to the setting up of the working group, that is a totally different matter.

The Mongolian delegation appeals to the members of the Committee on Disarmament to pursue intensive consultations so that before the end of the summer part of its session the Committee can take the necessary decision for the setting up of an ad hoc working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

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21-22

(Mr. Rodrigues Navarro, Venezuela)

Another area of concern to my country is the militarization of outer space and the placing of satellites in synchronous geostationary orbit, to the point of saturation, for purposes that are not exactly peaceful. This directly affects the security of all countries and particularly that of the equatorial countries.

In this connection, it should be said that the world is well aware of the enormous advantages of those countries which have advanced space technologies and which, without considering inequalities, use satellites for military purposes in their disputes with other nations. They thus give free rein to their strategies, paying no heed to the tragic consequences resulting from their use of satellites. In this context, it is sufficient to recall what happened recently in the south Atlantic in order to draw objective conclusions on the matter.

My country shares the views of those delegations which consider it appropriate to establish an ad hoc working group on outer space to identify and consider the problems of its militarization and thereby establish the competence of the Committee on Disarmament in this area.

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(Mr. Solá Vila, Cuba)

Since the last session of the Committee on Disarmament we have been considering the item on the prevention of the arms race in outer space. The time has come to set up a working group on this subject so that it can be guaranteed that no type of weapon, however it may be called, will be installed in outer space.

My delegation supports the proposal made in the Committee concerning the setting up of such a working group and considers that any mandate for the group should recognize that outer space is part of the heritage of mankind and must be used solely for peaceful purposes, and that the introduction of weapons into that region and its militarization must be prevented.

CD/PV.181
10

(Mr. Vrhunec, Yugoslavia)

Fourthly, our Committee has before it the proposal for the creation of a working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the prohibition of anti-satellite systems, based on two resolutions tabled at the thirty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly to the effect that it is imperative to take timely steps to prevent the possible taking of such actions. We have listened to the arguments presented by some States which consider that there is no room for the creation of this group before many uncertainties have first been elucidated, since only two States are so far capable of transferring the arms race into outer space and that many members of the working group would be incapable of understanding the technical aspect of the problem. Admitting to a certain extent the validity of these arguments, we think that we are primarily dealing with a political issue and the decision to adopt an international instrument that will prevent certain activities in outer space, without entering into complicated technical details at all.

(Mr. Sene, Senegal)

In paragraph 80, the Final Document states that in order to prevent an arms race in outer space, further measures should be taken in accordance with the spirit of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and other Celestial Bodies.

The risks of the militarization of outer space have become greater with the appearance of anti-satellite systems. Given the important role that satellites can play in international co-operation in such fields as communications, meteorology and navigation, it is essential for steps to be taken to prevent outer space from becoming an area of military confrontation.

Here again, the lack of any results from the bilateral discussions between the Soviet Union and the United States has left the matter in the lap of the Committee.

The proposal to set up a working group on outer space seems to us a sound one, since such a group could help the Committee in its consideration of the question of the negotiation of effective agreements to prevent an arms race in outer space.

(Mr. Tellalov, Bulgaria)

I would like to touch briefly now on the question of the "Prevention of an arms race in outer space", that being the subject for our meeting today. We have only one plenary meeting for the discussion of this issue, but the series of informal meetings during the spring and the summer session have amply demonstrated the growing interest in the problem, as well as the urgent need to establish appropriate organizational structures for negotiations and the elaboration of agreements in this field.

When taking up the subject of the prevention of the spread of the arms race to outer space, we should first of all stress the fact that the cosmos is being turned more and more into a constant field of human activity that is of ever-growing importance to the over-all development of mankind. In the quarter of a century that has elapsed since the first Soviet "sputnik", a number of agreements regulating the exploration and the utilization of outer space have been elaborated, including a treaty banning the stationing of any kind of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction in outer space.

While including this item in our agenda and programme of work for 1982 we are aware of the responsibilities of the Committee on Disarmament for the elaboration of a universally acceptable international legal instrument designed to erect a solid barrier to the extension of the arms race to outer space. Such a course of action would be in full conformity with and would constitute a natural continuation of the existing agreements in this domain of international law.

(Mr. Tellalov, Bulgaria)

It is in this light that we evaluate the merits of the draft treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space which was introduced by the Soviet Union at the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly and circulated in this Committee as document CD/274. Article 3 of the draft stipulates: "Each State Party undertakes not to destroy, damage, disturb the normal functioning or change the flight trajectory of space objects of other States Parties, if such objects were placed in orbit in strict accordance with article 1, paragraph 1, of this treaty".

Does this approach not cover the meaning of both relevant resolutions adopted at the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly? Is not it the right moment to start elaborating mutually acceptable measures regulating the conduct of States with a view to the latest developments and thus to prevent a new extremely dangerous and costly stage of the arms race in outer space? Or do we prefer to become helpless witnesses of the transformation of the Hollywood scenarios of "Star Wars" into a terrifying reality of our own civilization?

Our position on the creation of a subsidiary body on this item is well known. We note with satisfaction that practically all members of the Committee, with the notable exception of the leading western State, are in favour of purposeful discussions and negotiations on these issues. The draft mandate submitted by the delegation of Mongolia is a basis offering wide possibilities for various approaches to the matter. We believe that, bearing in mind the considerations presented by the delegations of Italy, Mexico, Sri Lanka and others in the course of the informal meetings, we should continue the consultations on a possible mandate for an ad hoc working group to be created before the end of the current session. This would mean that as early as next February we could proceed in a concrete manner with our discussion and negotiations, supported by national experts, as has been suggested by some delegations.

Mr. CLARKE (Sri Lanka): Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, it is both an honour and a responsibility to appear before you today, to discuss military activities in the last and greatest arena of human affairs. Although this meeting is concerned with the prevention of an arms race in outer space, prevention is only one aspect of the problem. As the mathematicians would say, it is necessary but not sufficient. I shall also discuss the positive uses of space technology for strengthening international security.

Before doing so, may I very briefly give my qualifications for addressing you. I became a member of the British Interplanetary Society in 1934, and was later its Chairman. In 1951 I presided over the first London meeting of the International Astronautical Federation and I have known most of the leading figures in the field. Only two months ago, I had the privilege of being hosted at "Star Village" by my friend Cosmonaut Alexei Leonov and his colleagues. I have written more than 30 books on space, and this month spoke at UNISPACE '82 as a member of the Sri Lanka delegation.

Back in 1945, as a Royal Air Force officer, I wrote the paper that outlined the principles of satellite communications. A few months later, my essay "The Rocket and the Future of Warfare" won first prize in a competition set by the Royal Air Force Quarterly. It has been a strange experience reading that paper again after almost 40 years, and I would like to quote the lines of Shelley with which the essay began:

"Cease! Drain not to its dregs the urn of bitter prophecy.
The world is weary of the past,
Oh, might it die or rest at last!"

Nevertheless, "bitter prophecy" is indeed what we are concerned with today. So first, I must request you — if you have not already done so — to read Jonathan Schell's book The Fate of the Earth, which is the most convincing account yet given of the realities of nuclear warfare. It should be required reading for every statesman.

And yet Carl Sagan has summed up the implications of this entire book in a single chilling sentence: "World War Two once a minute, for the length of a lazy summer afternoon."

One other reference: I hope that you can arrange to see the BBC's recent HORIZON science programme, "The Race to Ruin", which showed the first test of laser weapons on airborne targets and interviewed both American and Russian scientists on the possibilities of war in space.

This month at UNISPACE '82, there was some confusion as to precisely what is meant by the "militarization of space". There are very few of man's artefacts which cannot be equally well used for peaceful or warlike purposes; what matters is the intention. It is impossible to define a class of devices and say that "These must not be developed, because they can be employed offensively".

(Mr. Clarke, Sri Lanka)

Let me give an example: few things would seem more remote from military affairs than the geodetic satellites used to detect minute irregularities in the earth's gravitational field. At first sight, this would seem to be of interest only to scientists; nevertheless, these subtle variations are of vital concern to the designers of intercontinental missiles, because unless the earth's gravitational field is accurately mapped, it is impossible to target a missile with precision. Thus purely scientific satellites, by greatly increasing the accuracy of warheads, can have a major impact on strategy. Yet does anyone suggest that they be prohibited?

Even meteorological satellites, one of the most benign of all applications of space technology, because they have already saved thousands of lives, are of obvious military importance.

Similarly, communications satellites would play an absolutely vital role in military operations. Yet neither represents a direct threat to peace.

Just as military helicopters can be used for disaster relief work, so some military space systems can be positively benign. Indeed, we might not be alive today without the stabilizing influence of the reconnaissance satellites operated by both the United States and the USSR.

Let me remind you of a piece of recent history: in the early 1960s, there was a vigorous campaign in the United States claiming that the USSR was far in advance in the development of intercontinental ballistic missiles. The so-called "missile gap" was a major theme in the Kennedy-Nixon campaign, and millions of words were written urging that the United States start a crash programme to overcome the Soviet Union's "enormous" lead.

That missile gap was a total illusion -- destroyed when American reconnaissance satellites revealed the true extent of Soviet rocket deployment. President Johnson later remarked that reconnaissance satellites had saved the United States many times the cost of the space programme, by making it unnecessary to build the counter-force originally intended.

By a fantastic coincidence, just yesterday I discovered President Johnson's actual words, and I quote:

> "We were doing things we didn't need to do; we were building things we didn't need to build; we were harbouring fears we didn't need to harbour." (My italics.)

However, in a sense, that information may have come too late. One can picture the feelings of the Soviet military planners when contemplating this American debate. They knew they did not have the weapons the United States claimed, so what was the purpose of the exercise? Were the Americans deliberately creating an excuse to rearm? That might have seemed the most plausible assumption — but in fact, ignorance rather than malice was the explanation. In any event, the Soviet Union decided it must produce the missiles which, at that time, existed only in the imagination of the Americans. So the seeds of a space arms race were planted, almost a quarter of a century ago.

It is possible to play a numbers game with payloads and launching to prove almost anything. Statistics indicate that the Soviet Union has now launched about twice as many "military" payloads as the United States — by 1981, roughly 860 against 420.

(Mr. Clarke, Sri Lanka)

...oes this mean that the Soviet Union is twice as aggressive as the United States? Not at all, because the Soviet Union's reconnaissance satellites are planned to operate for only a few weeks whereas the much bigger American satellites remain in orbit for many months. So the quantity of American reconnaissance information is probably much greater than that of the Soviet Union, a point to which we will return later.

However, photographic or television reconnaissance is limited by cloud conditions; only radar can give all-weather coverage. And only the USSR has used radar satellites, powered by nuclear reactors to reconnoitre the movements of ships at sea, as was revealed when Kosmos 954 crashed in Canada in 1978.

Another area of confusion and controversy is that of Landsats or earth resources satellites, which give superb views of our planet, of enormous value to farmers, industrialists, city planners, fishermen — in fact, anyone concerned with the use and abuse of Mother Earth. The United States has made its Landsat photographs, which have a ground resolution of roughly 80 metres, available to all nations. Not surprisingly, there has been some concern about the military information that these photographs inevitably contain. That concern will be increased now that Landsat D has started operations with a resolution of 30 metres; I was stunned by the beauty and definition of the first photographs when they were shown to us at UNISPACE a few weeks ago. The French SPOT satellite will have even better resolution (10 - 20 metres) and this is rapidly approaching the area of military importance, although it is nowhere near (perhaps by a factor of one hundred) the definition of the best reconnaissance satellites under favourable conditions.

There is a continuous spectrum between the abilities of the earth resources satellites and the reconnaissance satellites, and it is impossible to say that one is military and the other is not. What matters is, again, intention.

One may sum up the situation by saying that although these satellites may be annoying to some nations, they are not aggressive: and that is the essential factor.

More confusion has now been created by the American space shuttle, which has been heavily criticized in the Soviet Union. It is perfectly true that many of the shuttle's missions will be military — yet it is as potentially neutral as any other vehicle.

The one new factor the shuttle does introduce is that, for the first time, it gives a space-faring power the ability to examine, and perhaps to retrieve, satellites belonging to somebody else, thus opening up prospects of "space piracy" — as the Soviet Union has put it. However, one cannot help thinking that fears on this score have been greatly exaggerated. If you do not want anyone to capture your satellite, it is absurdly simple to boobytrap it and thus to destroy, with very little trouble, an extremely expensive rival space system.

From past experience, I would venture a prediction in this area. When only the United States possessed reconnaissance satellites, there was a great outcry in the Soviet Union about these "illegal spy devices". When the Soviet Union also possessed them, this cry was suddenly stilled. In the same way, when the Soviet shuttle is launched, perhaps we will hear no more talk of space piracy ...

The essential point is that all these systems — communications, meteorological, geodetic, reconnaissance, and the shuttle itself — though they represent some degree of militarization of space, are still, for the moment, defensive or even benign. Some countries may be upset by certain applications, but they can all live with them, accepting their benefits as well as their disadvantages. The new factor which has now entered the discussion is that of deliberately destructive space systems, i.e. weapons.

(Mr. Clarke, Sri Lanka)

It seems to have been forgotten that the first weapons were introduced into space almost 20 years ago by the United States, which exploded several nuclear warheads above the atmosphere in tests of a possible anti-satellite system. This approach was abandoned when it led to the discovery — only recently rediscovered, to the consternation of military planners — that a few nuclear blasts in space could knock out all satellites, simply by the intensity of the radiation pulse.

The fact hovers ominously over all discussions of space weapons systems. A desperate country could blind and cripple all its enemy's satellites — as well as everyone else's — by a few large nuclear explosions above the atmosphere.

Such lack of discrimination has led to a search for precision weapons. Since as far back as 1968, the Soviet Union has made more than 20 tests of a non-nuclear anti-satellite destroyer, or ASAT, which hovers near its victim and explodes in a shower of fragments. In June 1982, it tested this satellite system for the first time in conjunction with large-scale ballistic missile launches from silos and submarines.

The interesting question arises — why are the Russians so concerned with developing an ASAT system, with its obvious destabilizing implications? One can only assume that the Soviet Union, which is able to obtain a great amount of information about the United States military establishment by old-fashioned techniques (such as buying trade magazines on the news-stands), realizes that reconnaissance satellites are much more vital to the Americans than to itself.

Predictably, the United States has not been indifferent to this Russian lead. President Reagan has now announced the development of an ASAT system much more advanced than the Soviet satellite-killers; indeed, it introduces a new dimension into space warfare.

The American weapon is launched, not from the ground but from high-flying aircraft, thus jumping up out of the atmosphere to home on a satellite as it passes overhead. This makes it very flexible and extremely difficult to intercept, as it could be launched from any point on the earth at very short notice.

Doubtless, scientists in the Soviet Union are attempting to find a counter to this system and so the insane escalation of weapons will continue — unless something can be done to check it.

Neither the United States nor the USSR-ASAT systems will be operational for some years, so perhaps there is a last chance to prevent the introduction of offensive (as opposed to defensive) systems into space. The importance of halting this arms race before it gets truly under way will be emphasized when one realizes that these planned ASATs are only the primitive precursors of systems now being contemplated. For a horrifying description of the next phase of space warfare I refer you to the recently published "High Frontier" study directed by General Daniel O. Graham. This envisages building scores of orbital fortresses to intercept oncoming ICBMs before they could reach their targets. Such a system would cost not billions, but hundreds of billions of dollars and of course would only be a stepping stone to something even more expensive, which is the "Star Wars" just mentioned by the distinguished representative of Bulgaria.

(Mr. Clarke, Sri Lanka)

Which leads inevitably to the subject of laser and particle beam weapons. Now that the long-imagined "death ray" is technically possible, it has been seized upon as a solution to the problem of defence against nuclear missiles. A vigorous debate is in progress over the practicability of such systems and the consensus appears to be that although they are theoretically possible, it will be decades rather than years before they can become operational, except for relatively close-range purposes.

However, I am always suspicious of negative judgements, because I remember vividly the debate in the United States over the possibilities of long-range rockets in the late 1940s. Let me quote again the notorious pronouncement made by the chief American defence scientist, Dr. Vannevar Bush, in 1945:

"There has been a great deal said about a 3,000 mile high-angle rocket ... I don't think anyone in the world knows how to do such a thing, and I feel confident that it will not be done for a long period of time to come ... I think we can leave that out of our thinking. I wish the American public would leave that out of their thinking."

The American public did; but the Russians didn't.

If something is theoretically possible, and someone needs it badly enough, it will be achieved eventually, whatever the cost. And when one side develops a new system, the other will try to outdo it. The two Superpowers are both led by intelligent and responsible men, yet they sometimes appear like small boys standing in a pool of gasoline -- each trying to acquire more matches than the other, when a single one is ore than sufficient.

It is no longer true that wars begin in the minds of men; they can now start in the circuits of computers. Yet the technologies which could destroy us can also be used for our salvation. From their very nature, space systems are uniquely adapted to provide global facilities, equally beneficial to all nations.

As you are well aware, in 1978 the French Government proposed the establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency to help enforce peace treaties and to monitor military activities. This has been the subject of a detailed study by a United Nations Committee (see United Nations document A/AC.206/14 of 16 August 1981) conducted by Hubert Bortzmeyer. The conclusion is that such a system could well play a major role in the preservation of peace.

The operational and political difficulties are obviously very great, yet they are trivial when compared with the possible advantages. The expense -- one or two billion dollars -- is also hardly a valid objection. It has been estimated that its reconnaissance satellites saved the United States the best part of a trillion dollars. A global system might be an even better investment; and who can set a cash value on the price of peace?

However, the United States and the Soviet Union, anxious to preserve their joint monopoly of reconnaissance satellites, are strongly opposed to such a scheme. the British Government is also lukewarm, to say the least.

Nevertheless, we have seen that in matters of great, though lesser, importance, such as international communications, it is possible to have extremely effective co-operation between a hundred or more countries, even with violently opposing

(Mr. Clarke, Sri Lanka)

ideologies. Intelsat is a prime example, as on a smaller scale is Intersputnik, and in the near future Arabsat will establish its regional space system. There is no doubt that the resources exist in the Third World, independently of the space-faring powers, to establish an international monitoring system — if the will exists.

I like the name PEACESAT, and although that has already been pre-empted by the Pacific Radio Network using the satellite ATS 1, I will use the term, with due acknowledgement, for the remainder of this talk.

Reactions at UNISPACE '82 and elsewhere suggest that the PEACESAT is an idea whose time has come. Those who are sceptical about its practicability should realize that most of its elements are present, at least in rudimentary form, in existing or planned systems. The French SPOT satellite, with a ground resolution of 10-20 metres, has already been mentioned. Whether the Superpowers wish it or not, the facilities of an embryo PEACESAT system will soon be available to all countries in the near future.

May I remind my Russian and American friends that it is wise to co-operate with the inevitable; and wiser still to exploit the inevitable.

PEACESATS could develop in a non-controversial manner out of what Howard Kurtz, their long-time advocate, has called the Global Information Co-operative.

This could be a consortium of agencies for weather, mapping, search and rescue, resources and pollution monitoring, disaster watch, information retrieval and, of course, communications. No one denies the need for these facilities. If they were provided globally, they would inevitably do much of the work of a PEACESAT system. The only extra element required would be the evaluation and intelligence teams needed to analyse the information obtained.

The organization, financing and operation of a PEACESAT system has been discussed in the United Nations report, to which I refer you. It is not a magic solution to all the problems of peace: there is no such thing. But at least it is worthy of serious consideration, as one way of escape from our present predicament — all of us standing in that pool of gasoline, making our Mutual Assured Destruction ever more assured. To quote from General Graham of the High Frontier Project: "We should abandon this immoral and militarily bankrupt theory ... and move from Mutual Assured Destruction to Assured Survival ... Should the Soviet Union wish to join in this endeavour ... we would, of course, not object..."

I would like to end, as I began, with the conclusion of my 1946 essay, "The Rocket and the Future of Warfare".

> "The only defence against the weapons of the future is to prevent them ever being used. In other words, the problem is political and not military at all. A country's armed forces can no longer defend it; the most they can promise is the destruction of the attacker ...
>
> "Upon us, the heirs to all the past and the trustees of a future which our folly can slay before its birth, lies a responsibility no other age has ever known. If we fail in our generation, those who come after us may be too few to rebuild the world when the dust of the cities has descended, and the radiation of the rocks has died away."

Mr. ALESSI (Italy): Mr. Chairman, since I spoke last, other eminent members of this Committee have left. It is with regret that I note the departure of the distinguished representatives of Yugoslavia, Ambassador Vrhunec, and Algeria, Ambassador Salah-Bey, and wish them well in their new assignments. At the same time, I would like to extend a warm welcome to the new representative of Peru, Ambassador Cannock, who, I am certain, will give an appreciable contribution to the work of this Committee.

I would like to address today item 7 of our agenda, entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space". I am glad to note that the Committee has allocated formal plenary meetings for this item and that our discussions progress with the active participation of all delegations. In this regard, we have listened with attention to the very interesting contribution just made by the distinguished delegate of Sri Lanka, Mr. Clarke, who spoke with the knowledge, the eloquence and the frankness we would expect from an expert of his reputation.

The recently concluded United Nations Conference devoted to the peaceful uses of outer space (UNISPACE '82) should serve as a further inducement for us to advance with determination in our substantive examination. It is to the credit of the United Nations, in particular of the COPUOS, the motive force in international co-operation, that progress in space-science and technology is being achieved in an orderly manner and benefiting mankind as a whole. The Committee on Disarmament is called upon to complement that work from a different angle, that of arms control and disarmament proper. In carrying out this exploratory stage of our proceedings, we have to bear in mind the goal that this Committee, heeding the recommendations of the General Assembly, has set for itself. Our task is not just to deal in general with space-related weaponry, but to try to prevent an arms race in this new dimension of human activity. It is therefore essential to have a clear perception of the avenue or avenues whereby an arms race might be introduced into outer space. We regard the present stage of our work as mainly directed towards acquiring that perception which, in turn, would enable us to establish an order of priorities and to orient our future endeavours.

The view of my delegation in that regard is known: we believe that the development of physical and technical means to destroy or damage space objects or to interfere with their operation is the most immediately threatening problem confronting us. We believe that in this specific area the ingredients for a military competition are present: the importance of satellites as targets, the development of a panoply of physical and technical anti-satellite means which would give the holder a considerable strategic advantage, the difficulties of protecting satellites by making them less vulnerable etc., all these factors could set in motion -- in our view -- the reactive cycle which characterizes an arms race.

Besides anti-satellites systems, more exotic types of weapons have been mentioned in the course of our discussions, notably the "directed energy weapons". That old favourite of science-fiction writers, the laser gun, as well as particle-beam weapons have been mentioned as having a specific potential as space-related weapons. By this term of space-related weapons we mean weapons that are such by reason of the location of the weapon launcher or the location of the target. However, whether and when this potential can be translated into an operational capability remains a moot question.

(Mr. Alessi, Italy)

Though lasers represent a branch of electronic technology that has been in existence for over 20 years now, it appears that substantive difficulties remain to be overcome before the principle can be put to full fruition, including its military applications. The necessary requirement of cost-effectiveness makes that task incomparably harder.

These are the conclusions of various authoritative studies which have been made public so far, one of the most significant being that carried out by Richard L. Garwin, a scientist with an exceptional background in the more exotic frontiers of technology. A revealing article was recently published in the Reviews of modern physics which gave the results of a collaboration between American and Soviet researchers in the field of lasers. The authors stated, inter alia, that the achievement of certain extra progress which is now needed to proceed further in the application of that kind of technology "presents as difficult a challenge as any that Man has ever undertaken". They further stated: "We cannot truly say whether we are closer to the goal today than in the past, since it is not even possible to assert that the goal will ever be reached".

Nearly all the problems encountered in laser technology would affect particle-beam systems, in particular the hydrogen-atom beam, which is the only particle-beam useful in space. Moreover, particle-beams present certain difficulties peculiar to themselves.

A realistic assessment of where lie the real dangers confronting mankind in relation to outer space is essential to our work. We can all participate in evolving such an assessment, but only States possessing major space capabilities can make a definitive contribution. In this field perhaps more than in other fields of disarmament we depend on the contribution of those who have a full knowledge of the subject matter.

We appreciate the argument that we should aim for a comprehensive agreement capable of sealing off all possible avenues towards an arms race in space. It has been said here that it is easier to prohibit something before it comes into existence.

We believe, however, that, in this case, adopting such an approach from the beginning might well result in one of two things: either an ineffective agreement unable to stem the extension of the arms race to outer space or, more probably, the unnecessary delaying of more limited but urgently needed measures.

On balance, we continue to believe that the attention of this Committee should concentrate with absolute priority on those space-related weapons which are currently operational; our task would then be a true disarmament task, as we would strive to prohibit and eliminate systems which are in the arsenals and have been deployed.

Satellites can be destroyed or damaged at present by co-orbital intercept, by orbital intercept and by direct ascent from the ground.

In our statement of 30 March we undertook a preliminary effort in order to identify some of the issues relating to a ban on ASAT systems. We stated that foremost among those issues were the definitional questions of what constitutes an "anti-satellite system" and what constitutes an "anti-satellite activity".

Following on those considerations I would add that the answer to those questions would also depend on the kind of agreement we seek and on what we actually want to prohibit. Should we try to ban both weapons and activities? How effective would

(Mr. Alessi, Italy)

be an agreement that confined the prohibition to attacks on or acts of interference with satellites, irrespective of the systems used to bring about such attacks or acts of interference?

We noted, for instance, that, in its reply to the Secretary-General's note regarding the second special session devoted to disarmament, Sweden mentioned as one of the possible options an agreement restricting or prohibiting activities characterized as interference with or attacks on space objects carried out both from space itself and from Earth.

With regard to ASAT weapons, a basic issue would appear to be that of the scope of the prohibition. It would be necessary to consider carefully which of the various stages -- development, testing, deployment, acquisition, use, etc. -- should be included in the scope.

Destruction of existing ASAT systems would also be a major issue to address.

The question of verification should be considered simultaneously since it would be relevant to a definition of the scope of the prohibition. In the case of ASAT systems, verification would be as important an issue as ever. Even a limited ASAT capability, retained or acquired in evasion of an international agreement, could be of significant military value. For this very reason the question of destroying existing ASAT systems and their component parts, and providing for verifiable dismantling procedures, could not be avoided in the course of discussions.

Outer space is still a medium mainly free from kill-mechanisms. Existing ASAT systems seem to be effective only against low altitude orbiting satellites. The full testing in space of operational ASAT weapons against high-altitude space objects might foreclose the possibility of arriving at an adequately verifiable ban on anti-satellite weapons. Such an eventuality can only be regarded with apprehension: an ASAT world is a more dangerous world. The human and material resources which are available should be used to promote our security and well-being. Satellites today perform a fundamental role in this respect, and the precious contributions that satellites have made to international co-operation and peace have been eloquently underlined by the speaker who preceded me.

We no longer live in an age when a world war would stem from the assassination of an archduke; it is the instability of the situation and not the instigating event which is likely to be responsible for such an eventuality and which must be avoided.

An effective and verifiable treaty banning ASAT systems would be an important contribution towards this objective.

Last week, an International Symposium on the prevention of nuclear war was held at Erice, a small town in Sicily, under the auspices of the Centro Majorana. Scientists and analysts of the highest reputation from many parts of the world took part in the deliberations. One of the issues evoked there, among many others, was that of the outstanding importance of certain types of satellites for that purpose. Providing adequate protection for satellites would also be a significant contribution in this respect. The opportunity before us is rich but perishable. We should seize it without delay.

Mr. Chairman, I would be remiss if I concluded my statement without extending to you our warmest wishes for your future. The talents that once again you have

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Italy for his statement and kind words addressed to the Chair. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Canada, Mr. Skinner.

Mr. SKINNER (Canada): Mr. Chairman, first I would like to join other speakers who have congratulated you on the way in which you have conducted our meetings this month. I think we have, in spite of a number of enormous difficulties, actually achieved quite a lot and a good deal of the credit belongs to you. At the same time, I would like to say how sorry we are that you are leaving us -- as indeed are other speakers who have addressed the question of your departure -- we are sorry, but we wish you the very best. Before I begin my statement on outer space, I would like to say a word or two about why Canada may have some credentials to address this problem. One is the question of our land mass. Ever since there has been a consciousness about outer space, it has been critical to us, as a country, to be involved in the question because of the communications aspect that the curve of the earth presents to us as a country. Through satellites we are able to communicate with each other within our own country and for this reason we are perhaps one of the leading countries in space technology. Not only do we contribute to space technology but we have also been the recipients of it through the contributions of others, either directly, that is through co-operation with other State Powers, or indirectly, when we have received, of course, our Cosmos 954 which has been an interesting experience.

I would like now to address the question of outer space in some detail. In approaching the problems of arms control and outer space, we are taking up the first arms control issue of the twenty-first century. Mr. Arthur Clarke, in his statement a few minutes ago, has given us, I think, a pretty good idea of the dimensions of the problems. Even so, we are only beginning to gauge the immensity of the issues: we are less than 18 years from the year 2000 and the negotiations we undertake here could have an important effect on the manner in which we approach the next century.

Several important events have taken place between sessions of the Committee on Disarmament, I mean, in terms of outer space. The completion of the test phase of the United States space shuttle programme, culminating, as it did, almost 25 years ago after Sputnik I, portends certain commercial aspects of the application of space technology which could rival as a benchmark in the exploration of space of placing the first satellite in orbit. The appearance of a reusable space vehicle -- that is, the world's first true spaceship -- has implications, the dimensions of which are not always easy to grasp. On the Soviet side is the increasing internationalization of its space programme along with its technological perfection. While Columbia was completing its final test flight, a French space-man was orbiting the earth in a Soviet spaceship, thus creating what is a unique situation of having both astronauts and cosmonauts of three nations in orbit at one time. Truly, space is being internationalized in a real as well as a conceptual, that is, in a legal manner.

(Mr. Skinner, Canada)

The second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, despite the disappointment many feel, may have had one positive benefit among others. It dispensed with illusion and stands as an object lesson of the necessity of working within the framework of what is possible. Already we see, at the summer session of this Committee, a renewed sense of realism, and this sense is as important for our deliberations in outer space as on any other issue which may appear before the Committee.

In this regard we should consider the effects of UNISPACE '82 recently concluded in Vienna. It is readily apparent that the mandate of the outer space Committee on peaceful use and the mandate of this Committee on arms control issues may be considered to have in some respects a mere mirror image aspect. I do not wish to deal at great length with the organizational aspects of arms control and disarmament; this is a matter which seems to be of endless fascination, not only to this Committee but elsewhere as well. We believe it would be better to move on to more substantive matters. Nevertheless, it is our view that the basic responsibility for preventing an arms race in outer space has been placed upon this Committee by the General Assembly. We should therefore take up our work in an energetic fashion. It is equally clear that there is a background in the outer space Committee discussions which will be of immense value here in the Committee on Disarmament: for example, the 1967 outer space Treaty is a product of the outer space Committee. As we build upon the outer space Treaty and other aspects of space law in developing the arms control treaty, which we all hope for, we must ensure that the experiences of the outer space Committee as well as of the CD, the CCD and the ENDC are fully utilized. We do not think, at this stage, that it would be productive to prolong discussion about whether or not to set up a working group on outer space if these discussions actually inhibit the Committee from addressing the substantive issues.

On 18 June, before the General Assembly's second special session on disarmament, Prime Minister Trudeau underscored the urgency of coming to grips with the development of new weaponry for use in outer space. He noted that 25 years ago, the first man-made satellite was launched. That event marked a leap in man's mastery of the natural environment. I have a note here on my paper, which is a term that Mr. Arthur Clarke used in this regard: he called it the last and greatest arena of human affairs.

Mr. Trudeau noted that 15 years ago it did not seem premature to close off the possibility that space might be used for other than peaceful purposes. He observed that today the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space is, in our view, patently inadequate.

The need, therefore, is clear and unequivocal.

(Mr. Skinner, Canada)

I have noted that the Committee on Disarmament has a considerable wealth of experience to draw upon. First and foremost is our negotiating experience based upon other issues, and a good amount of useful work can be undertaken in preparation for substantive negotiations. For example, an inventory of background material relevant to outer space is essential. There are a number of treaties, both multilateral and bilateral, which have served to attempt to reserve the "use of outer space for peaceful purposes". In addition to the 1967 outer space Treaty there is the 1963 partial test-ban Treaty, certain aspects of SALT I and SALT II, the ABM Treaty and multilateral treaties such as the 1979 moon Treaty, all of which have a certain significance in this regard. A compendium of relevant portions of these and other aspects of space law, drawn up in a fashion similar to that used by the experts in United Nations document A/AC.206/14 on the implications of establishing an international satellite monitoring agency would, in our view, be useful indeed.

There is a considerable scope, in these preliminary stages, for dealing with other essential and basic matters such as definitions, for it must be recognized at the outset that if we are to proceed in this Committee we must do so on the basis of a common and understood language.

For this reason, and in this regard, I wish to table in this Committee a working paper on arms control in outer space which presents the issue in what we have sought to make a balanced and non-controversial manner. This working paper has been prepared in order to put forward under one cover some of the considerations in developing an approach for this Committee. You will see now that it appears in document CD/320 which has just been distributed. Among other things, the paper presents the dangers in attempting to categorize space systems in a rigid manner -- that is, some systems might lend themselves to categorization; most, however, have characteristics which, depending upon the situation, can be either stabilizing or destabilizing. You will notice, incidentally, as you go through this paper in the fourth paragraph from the end of CD/320, there is a reference to a table which, you will note, does not appear in the document. The reason for this is because of what I have just said. After a long consideration it was decided that it would serve no useful purpose to try to categorize systems at this stage. Therefore, I would ask that a correction be issued to remove that paragraph.

In any event, I hope this working paper will be useful to members and will serve as a basic presentation of some of the issues, thereby contributing to a measure of common understanding.

(Mr. Terrefe, Ethiopia)

Before concluding, let me touch very briefly upon the item inscribed on our agenda for today's plenary meeting, "prevention of an arms race in outer space", a subject with which we have to deal more fully in the future. The Ethiopian delegation believes that space technology should be used solely for peaceful purposes. Therefore, any military applications or any hostile use of space should be strictly prohibited by an international treaty or international agreements. Faced with rapid space technology and its frightening dimensions, our efforts to prevent an arms race in outer space will face greater difficulties the longer the realization of the objective of a demilitarized outer space is delayed by lack of a common approach. It is our earnest hope, therefore, that through the establishment of an ad hoc working group, concrete proposals can be pursued, developed and negotiated for a common approach to make outer space a lasting and peaceful heritage of mankind.

Mr. HERDER (German Democratic Republic): In accordance with its programme of work, the Committee takes up today item 7 — the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Therefore, I would like to dwell upon this question in the first part of my statement. Afterwards, I am going to touch upon some aspects of the work of the NTB Working Group.

There is no doubt that nuclear disarmament, including particularly a comprehensive test ban, is the item of highest priority this Committee has to deal with. At the same time we cannot leave out of sight developments in other fields which — if not prevented at an early stage — could have serious destabilizing and dangerous consequences for international security and the maintenance of peace in the future. Recent events prove that the militarization of outer space is becoming a reality. It is no longer a question of science fiction. It is also no secret that certain military planners regard outer space as the "battlefield of the future". Their programmes of super-armament in outer space have become part and parcel of their concept aimed at achieving military superiority.

Taking into account these dangerous developments, my country favours the prohibition of the deployment of any kinds of weapons in outer space. An appropriate international agreement would effectively cure an arms race in outer space and promote the peaceful uses of this area.

We were very much satisfied that this basic position was adhered to by almost all delegations at the recently concluded Conference, UNISPACE II.

As far as this Committee is concerned, my delegation is led by the following approach:

Firstly, the ban should be a comprehensive one. It should prohibit the deployment of any kinds of weapons in outer space. Thus, the ban would include the prohibition of anti-satellite weapons, but would not be limited to it. Focusing on anti-satellite weapons only would not exclude the extension of the arms race in outer space into other directions.

Secondly, following the request of the United Nations General Assembly contained in resolution 36/99, the Committee on Disarmament should embark on negotiations.

We regret that some States seem, up to now, not to be prepared to accept the negotiating role of the Committee concerning this item.

(Mr. Herder, German Democratic Republic)

But how long should we wait for real negotiations, not to speak about measures to curb the arms race in outer space? We have to take into account the fact that the United States some years ago broke off bilateral talks on the cessation of the arms race in outer space. Even more: as is well known, the United States only recently set up a military outer space command and is implementing a huge military programme in outer space.

Therefore, no efforts should be spared to start immediately negotiations on the prohibition of the arms race in outer space. The draft treaty tabled by the USSR last year represents an appropriate basis for real negotiations.

A Working Group should be set up on this subject. Where should all substantive problems be discussed and explored if not in the framework of such a body?

One cannot pronounce oneself in favour of the consideration of concrete measures against the arms race in outer space while at the same time rejecting the establishment of appropriate bodies to deal with all the proposals, draft treaties and documents which have been submitted on this subject. My delegation fully supports the draft mandate for such a Working Group proposed by the Mongolian People's Republic in document CD/272. The Committee should take action on this proposal and not confine itself to a non-committing academic exercise on the prevention of the arms race in outer space.

My delegation will support every initiative to this end.

(Mr. Taffar, Algeria)

The question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space is the item for discussion at our meeting today. No one is unaware of the importance of this subject in view of the threat of the extension of the arms race to outer space which is increasing day by day. The use of space technology for military purposes greatly increases the risk of outer space becoming the arena of rivalries and constituting a threat to peace, security and the peaceful use of space. Paragraph 80 of the Final Document of 1978 states that further measures should be taken and appropriate international negotiations held to prevent an arms race in outer space.

In the consideration of this question, the importance and complexity of which no one can deny, a global approach should be adopted covering all types of armaments and all activities connected with the development, production, stockpiling and deployment and use in outer space of all types of weapons, while allowing the right of every State to engage in the exploration and the peaceful use of outer space. All negotiations on this question ought, moreover, to include a consideration of measures to promote international co-operation in the matter of the use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

(Mr. Taffar, Algeria)

The time has thus come to start negotiations towards the adoption of effective measures to prevent the extension of the arms race to outer space. To this end, my delegation supports the proposal for the setting up of an ad hoc working group on this question, without prejudice to respect for the order of priority of the questions included in the Committee's agenda.

I should like, before I conclude, to say a few words about the Committee's working methods. My delegation still believes that the formula of ad hoc working groups constitutes the best approach for the consideration of the items that are before us. On the basis of this conviction, my delegation supports in principle any proposal for the establishment of an ad hoc working group which would help us to move forward along the road to disarmament, due respect being paid to the order of priorities set forth in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. The Algerian delegation consequently deplores the misuse of the principle of consensus to block the establishment of ad hoc working groups on such urgent matters as the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament.

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Mr. YU MENGJIA (China) (translated from Chinese): Mr. Chairman, today, I wish to make some preliminary remarks on the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

The rapid development of space science and technology has greatly raised man's ability to conquer the universe and utilize its potentialities. At present, space science and technology are being gradually and effectively applied to man's production activities and various aspects of man's life, thus constituting an important element in the acceleration of nations' economic development, the improvement of people's living conditions and the promotion of social progress.

(Mr. Yu Mengjia, China)

But the development of outer space science and technology has also raised questions causing us concern and apprehensions. The tendency to start an arms race in outer space between the Superpowers has become obvious. Credence is given by the Superpowers to the concept that "whoever controls the universe can control the earth". They have engaged themselves in active research on and the utilization of outer space and the development of outer space weapons. The Soviet Union started its development of anti-satellite weapons more than 10 years ago, and up to now, it has already conducted dozens of experiments. The United States is reportedly also taking effective measures to intensify its research activities and plans the deployment of anti-satellite weapons in outer space. Various indications point to the fact that the development of outer space weapons constitutes an integral part of the global strategy of the USSR and the United States. These two countries are competing with each other to extend the arms race to outer space, thus increasing the danger of war. This has already caused widespread anxiety among peace-loving people throughout the world. At the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space held recently in Vienna, numerous countries urged the Superpowers immediately to cease activities leading to an arms race in outer space and expressed the hope that the Committee on Disarmament would adopt effective measures to this end as soon as possible.

China has all along held that outer space is the common environment of mankind and that space technology represents a great achievement in the development of science and technology. All countries should explore and use outer space for peaceful purposes and refrain from turning it into a new arena of the arms race. We agree with the views of the majority of the member States that the Committee on Disarmament should establish a working group as soon as possible so as to adopt all practicable measures to prevent an arms race in outer space. As is known to all, at present there exists a huge gap between States in space science and technology, especially in regard to their military application, and only the United States and the Soviet Union have the necessary conditions for it. Therefore, in the prevention of an arms race in outer space, they have unshirkable special responsibilities.

With regard to the mandate of the proposed working group, we are of the view that it should be authorized to consider and negotiate on the issue of the complete prohibition of outer space weapons. The future legal instrument on the prohibition of an arms race in outer space should be comprehensive. It should ban all outer space weapons, including anti-satellite weapons, and it should not only prohibit the deployment of weapons in outer space but also the testing, production and use of any type of outer space weapons because the mere prohibition of the deployment of weapons in outer space would leave leeway for the testing and use of weapons in outer space and in consequence the complete prevention of an arms race in outer space would not be achieved. Some States have proposed that the question of the prohibition of anti-satellite weapons be discussed first. As a practical step, this proposal seems to deserve our exploration.

(Mrs. Ekanga Kabeya, Zaire)

My delegation is very much interested in the consideration of measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space, which is the common heritage of mankind and ought to be used by States solely for peaceful purposes. My delegation is ready to agree to any constructive proposal in this connection and fully supports the idea of the consideration of this subject during the present session in a working group set up for the purpose.

Mr. de BEAUSSE (France)

My statement today will be on the subject of the prevention of the arms race in outer space.

In an earlier statement, on 20 April last, the French delegation stressed how important it felt it to be that the Committee should proceed, in accordance with resolution 36/97 C, to a thorough examination of the problems involved in the prevention of the deployment in outer space of weapons which might, in the not too distant future, have profoundly destabilizing effects.

At that time, like other delegations, we emphasized that what was needed first was agreement, in relation to outer space, on the meaning of certain terms, such as the word "weapons", which are often used ambiguously, as well as an exchange of views to determine priorities for our discussions.

The very interesting statements we heard at the plenary meeting devoted to this item on our agenda revealed not only, as mignt have been expected, that positions on this subject differ greatly, but also that this is an important problem which should be considered more thoroughly at the Committee's next session. France, as it indicated on 20 April last, is in favour of the establishment of a working group provided it has a structured agenda which will enable it to consider the various aspects of the problem methodically. France would also be in favour of a meeting of experts at the beginning of our next session, in the same way as was done so successfully in the case of chemical weapons.

Of the important aspects of the matter that were brought up during the discussion, I would like to draw particular attention to the following four points:

Recognition of our Committee's special responsibility in the attempt to achieve a multilateral consensus on the problems of the extension of the arms race to outer space;

The inadequacy of existing legal instruments, in view of current and foreseeable developments in technology;

The uncertainty surrounding the idea of the immunity of space objects; and

The constraints resulting from the long-standing and now irreversible use of outer space for both civilian and military purposes.

(Mr. de Beausse, France)

Recognition of the role of the Committee on Disarmament

In addition to the two competing resolutions, 36/99 and 36/97 C -- France was one of the sponsors of the latter -- which were adopted at the last session of the General Assembly, we now have, as several speakers have noted, the consensus reached at the United Nations Conference, UNISPACE '82. It is to be hoped that this will have put an end to a potentially harmful situation which would have led to a regrettable duplication of the work of the Committee on Disarmament and that of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

We hope that we can interpret the settlement of this conflict of competence as recognition of the complexity of the space element and its growing importance in the consideration of matters relating to the balance of forces and international security. This recognition should lead to acceptance of its corollary, namely, the fact that questions concerning the arms race in outer space now no longer concern the two major space Powers only, even if those Powers clearly have a particular and direct responsibility in this regard because of their existing or potential military capabilities.

It is true that the importance attaching to the work of our Committee is also connected with the inadequacy of the existing legal instruments in view of the foreseeable developments in technology.

Contrary to a widely held opinion, technological developments in the next 10 or 20 years are fairly easy to foresee: space programmes respond as much to the internal logic determined by the extent of the technical and financial investments put into them as to political promptings.

For more than a quarter of a century, outer space has been seen essentially in terms of support for military means of observation and communication. The parallel with the early days of aviation is, moreover, quite remarkable in this respect.

Even if new laser-weapon or directed-energy systems are at present still far from being technologically feasible or economically viable, it seems likely that the idea of the orbital platform, either manned or automatic, capable of use for both civilian and military purposes, will become a reality. Both the orbital rendezvous techniques practised by the Soviet Union for some years and the capacities of the United States space shuttle point in this direction.

In other words, the essential problem up to now has been (and it still is) that of the immunity of the space segment of land-based weapons systems from possible pre-emptive enemy attacks. Although it is true that the space segment is specificall designed for a particular purpose (for example, data transmission, analysis of the environment in which land-based troop movements are taking place, the detection of positions), it is functionally indissociable from a land-based network of communications and control systems. Furthermore, it has no purpose except as part of a complex military organization.

The moment outer space can itself become the scene of specific military activities, whether these are directed against other space objects (such as enemy satellites) or against land-based activities (the trajectories of ballistic weapons, for example), the problem of the arms race in outer space takes on an entirely new dimension.

(Mr. de Beausse, France)

In view of these possibilities, therefore, one of the most important aspects of our discussions ought to be to consider which of the three roles that it is possible to assign to outer space is to be chosen:

(1) That of a demilitarized "sanctuary", after the manner of Antarctica, the sea-bed and the moon;

(2) That of a "support area" for civilian and military land-based activities, to be used in accordance with its specific characteristics and advantages;

(3) That of a specific new "battlefield" in which space-based systems would attempt to destroy or cripple one another, in all likelihood as a prelude to -- the most optimistic among us say as a substitute for -- confrontation on earth.

The first idea -- that of making outer space a sanctuary or totally demilitarizing it -- is obviously no longer possible. It is therefore unrealistic to try to revert to it.

The second idea -- outer space as a support area for a mixture of civilian and military activities -- is the one which prevails today and ought, therefore, in our view, to be considered as a basic element in our work.

The third idea -- outer space as a staging ground for specific confrontations -- is one technological possibility. It remains to be seen whether it is desirable.

It may be argued that, all in all, it is preferable to transfer to outer space a rivalry that may cause untold damage to the surface of the earth; that it would be possible, there, to reduce dependence vis-à-vis nuclear ballistic missiles; and that competition between defensive weapons systems (ABMs based on orbital platforms) in outer space would, all in all, be preferable to the present situation in which the balance between offensive weapons must constantly be re-established as one side or the other becomes more or less vulnerable.

Although theoretically attractive, these arguments take no account of the facts. First, even if such space technologies become operational, it is unlikely that they would be reliable enough to justify less dependence on land-based systems: ABMs stationed in outer space would in all likelihood constitute only a first line of defence.

Secondly, it is doubtful whether, in such a situation of competition for the military domination of outer space, one of the Superpowers would tolerate the superiority of the other for any length of time. In that context, therefore, the very vulnerability of systems stationed in outer space would be a great inducement to the launching of preventive attacks.

It is thus not enough to say that weapons systems in outer space would not threaten the earth and that in any event the prospects for such systems are too distant and problematical to justify their consideration at the present time. The international community should adopt a consistent approach to the question of the arms race in outer space.

In the French delegation's view, this means that the international community should set itself the following two objectives:

Not to allow outer space to become the point of departure for acts of aggression; and

(Mr. de Beausse, France)

The first objective, which, as we have seen, relates to technologies of the future, can be achieved only if the second, which involves tons of equipment now in orbit over our heads, is attained.

Hence the importance which we, like many other delegations, attach to assuring the immunity of satellites.

In this connection, it must be noted that the existing legal instruments are entirely inadequate and fail to meet the needs of the present situation.

A number of these legal instruments have been referred to during our discussions, for example:

The 1963 Treaty on the partial suspension of nuclear weapon tests, in the atmosphere and, as it states, "beyond its limits, including outer space";

The 1972 Treaty Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems, article V, paragraph 1, of which refers to the deployment of space-based ABMs and article XII, paragraph 2, of which refers to the principle of non-interference with national means of verification;

The SALT I agreement, which also provides for non-interference with "national means of verification", including satellites, according to the formal declaration made by President Carter on 1 October 1978 -- a declaration for which there is no Soviet counterpart;

The 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Use of Outer Space.

Other agreements and international conventions relating to outer space, such as the Agreement on the Return and Rescue of Astronauts, the Convention on Damage Caused by Space Objects, the Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and the Convention on Registration of Space Objects are, for our purposes, only of minor interest.

It may be noted that:

First, the 1967 outer space Treaty offers only a partial solution to the problems of the arms race in outer space. Article IV, paragraph 1, of the Treaty in fact restricts, as military activities in outer space, only the placing in orbit of nuclear weapons or weapons of mass destruction.

The Treaty thus authorizes other military uses of outer space. This is clear, moreover, both from the statements made at the time by the Soviet representative and from the positions adopted by the United States.

We can go even further: from our point of view, the Treaty is of symbolic value only because the use of nuclear weapons in orbit is of doubtful military effectiveness, for the reason given on Tuesday by Mr. Arthur Clarke, speaking on behalf of the delegation of Sri Lanka, when he said that, in trying by that means to cripple or destroy its enemy's satellites, a country might well destroy its own.

Secondly, uncertainty about the immunity of satellites extends, according to some interpretations, even to those satellites whose positive role in the verification of international agreements is nevertheless provided for as "national means of verification".

(Mr. de Beausse, France)

Articles I and III of the 1967 outer space Treaty do, of course, state that outer space shall be used in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations. Article III also refers to the maintenance of international peace and security.

The question of the immunity of military observation satellites, including their use in application of Article 2, paragraph 4, of the Charter, is therefore closely bound up with recognition of the international lawfulness of the role they play.

The above-mentioned declaration by President Carter in 1978 establishes a link between military observation satellites and national means of verification, whose lawful use is recognized in the international instruments in force.

With regard to the Soviet Union, the situation is formally less clear, and it is essential for us to know the position of the Soviet delegation on the following three points:

Does the international protection of "national technical means of verification" specifically include satellites? It would seem obvious that it should, but it would be useful if it were clearly recognized.

Is such immunity subject to restrictive interpretations concerning the extent of acceptable verifications, or is any observation capability automatically considered lawful? and lastly,

Does the non-interference clause embodied in Soviet-American bilateral agreements apply to third countries and international organizations?

An answer to these questions might not be necessary if the draft treaty submitted by the Soviet Union on 11 August 1981 did not appear precisely to leave the door open for all possibilities. As the French and Italian delegations noted in earlier statements, the juxtaposition of article 1 of the draft text, which prohibits the stationing of weapons in outer space, although the term "weapons" is not -- and in our view cannot -- be defined, and article 3 thereof, which, on the other hand, legitimizes the destruction of satellites that might appear to any of the signatories to be designed for a purpose contrary to article 1, is extremely disturbing.

Article 3 not only in effect authorizes States to take the law into their own hands in outer space on the basis of their suspicions, thus creating mistrust and insecurity for all, but also legitimizes the deployment of such anti-satellite systems. In order to be used against possible violators, such systems would, of course, have to be tested, deployed and ready for use.

The wording of article 2 also gives rise to all kinds of questions: when, in the unilateral and subjective judgement of one of the parties, a satellite or space platform is considered as not being used "in strict accordance with international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, in the interest of maintaining international peace and security and promoting international co-operation and mutual understanding", is it to be concluded that it is legitimate to interfere with its functioning?

This question is a valid one in view of another proposal submitted by the Soviet Union on 10 August 1972 in connection with television satellites. The proposal provided that a State was entitled to use "the means available to it, not only in its territory, but also in outer space or situated outside its national jurisdiction" against programmes which it considered "unlawful".

Articles 1, 2 and 3 of the Soviet draft treaty which, as indicated above, presuppose the possession of anti-satellite systems for use by what might be called

(Mr. de Beausse, France)

self-appointed space sheriffs, thus limit the self-defence capability of space objects since "target" satellites are prohibited from disturbing the functioning or changing the flight trajectory of "hunter" satellites.

The difficulties we at once encounter as soon as we try to make an artificial distinction between satellites for military purposes and satellites for civilian purposes or to use terms as ambiguous as that of "weapons", should persuade us to contemplate a variety of measures rather than a global treaty. Such measures might include:

The use of language corresponding to the facts. Everyone knows that national means of verification include satellites. Why not say so?

The immunity of satellites. As a result of bilateral agreements, satellites benefit from some measure of protection. Why should such immunity not be specified, increased and extended beyond bilateral arrangements relating to non-interference with "national means of verification" to all existing satellites, if they are equipped only with passive means of defence?

The consideration of weapons systems as a whole and not of their space segments only. Why not recognize the fact that, as regards a weapons system of which only part is in orbit, it is the system as a whole that must be restricted, as in fact was done in the bilateral ABM Treaty. It should be recognized that the central problem is still that of the arms race, and its increasing use of outer space, and not that of the "militarization of outer space".

The adoption of measures designed to build confidence in the immunity of systems whose stabilizing value arises principally from their availability in times of crisis, for example, notification of the characteristics of space objects and the adoption of "co-operative" measures in order to remove any suspicions that might be aroused by certain actions on the part of a space object belonging to another State.

Recognition of the merit of a human presence in outer space because of the capacity for initiative and judgement that is thus introduced into the conduct of space missions. In this connection, the a priori suspicion implicit in the specific reference, in article 1, paragraph 1, of the Soviet draft treaty, to reusable manned space vehicles, i.e. to the United States space shuttle, is unacceptable.

The giving of higher priority to the consideration of ways of promoting international co-operation with a view to using earth observation systems for the verification of arms limitation agreements and for crisis control. Mr. Arthur Clarke rightly recalled, at our last meeting, the proposal for the establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency, originally made by France, which has been supported by a large part of the international community and forms the subject of a very useful report by the Secretary-General.

This is not the place to repeat the reasons why we think that the development of technology inevitably raises the question of the internationalization of space observation and, consequently, that of the benefits which the international community may derive from it, especially in the matter of disarmament. It is, however, clear that the gradual establishment of such co-operation would, in many ways, be the best response the international community could offer to the real concern of peoples at the prospect of the extension of the arms race to outer space.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): Mr. Chairman, first of all allow me, on behalf of the Soviet delegation, to welcome you to that office, eminent Mexican diplomat and statesman as you are, and known throughout the world as a champion of the cessation of the arms race and one who has done much for the attainment of that goal. I wish you success in your tasks and promise you the co-operation of the Soviet delegation. We should also like to express our gratitude to Ambassador Maina of Kenya who successfully guided the work of the Committee during August.

The Soviet delegation would like today to express its views on the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space and also to touch on questions relating to the prohibition of chemical weapons.

The Soviet Union attaches exceptionally great importance to the prevention of an arms race in outer space in view of the general interest in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes. As Mr. Brezhnev, the head of the Soviet State, said in his message to the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space:

"Co-operation in outer space should unite people and develop an awareness of the fact that we all live on the same planet and that peace and prosperity on earth depend on all of us.

"The Soviet Union consistently declares that outer space should remain an arena of peaceful co-operation, that the infinite expanses of outer space should remain free from weapons of any type. The attainment of this great humanitarian objective by joint efforts is not only feasible but is also a vital need for the sake of the future of all mankind."

At the request of the Soviet delegation, Mr. Brezhnev's message has been distributed as a document of the Committee on Disarmament.

As you know, during the 1960s and 1970s, through the efforts of our country and of other States, international treaties and agreements were drafted and concluded which closed off a number of possibilities for the appearance of weapons in outer space and these have already been recalled by delegations in their statements. However, the restrictions thus existing are not complete, for an effective international legal barrier has not yet been created for the prevention of the stationing in outer space of those types of weapons which do not fall within the definition of weapons of mass destruction. There thus remains a danger -- a danger which has recently increased -- of the militarization of outer space.

The Soviet Union believes that we should not allow this to happen. Furthermore, the overwhelming majority of the other States of the world are evincing an equally serious concern on this score. This is shown in particular by the decision adopted at the recently concluded United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which urged the competent bodies of the United Nations and the Committee on Disarmament to give due attention and attach the highest importance to the serious concern of the international community at the extension of the arms race to outer space.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

I would recall that at the thirty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly the Soviet Union introduced a proposal aimed at preventing the extension of the arms race to outer space. The proposal concerned the conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space.

The submission of the text of a draft treaty occasioned a broad discussion both in the United Nations General Assembly and in the Committee on Disarmament. The adoption by the General Assembly of two resolutions aimed ultimately at the prevention of an arms race in outer space also contributed to this end.

The main question which has arisen in the course of discussion -- and this has again been shown today by the statement of the French delegation -- is that of the determination of the basic content of possible negotiations within the framework of the Committee on Disarmament on the subject of item 7 of its agenda. Both at the Committee's spring session and during the current session, including the Committee's last meeting, on 31 August, many delegations again affirmed that the only urgent aspect of this matter is the prohibition of anti-satellite systems.

Allow me, gentlemen, to consider this point in greater detail.

There is no doubt that the question of anti-satellite systems is part of the problem of preventing an arms race in outer space. This is obvious and no one denies it. However, to confine the prohibition to anti-satellite systems means not only not looking ahead to tomorrow but also not seeing those dangerous trends which are before our eyes even today. What constitutes a threat to international peace and security is not only -- indeed, not so much weapons for attacking space objects as weapons for carrying out attacks on earth from space. Since the latter are capable of keeping the entire planet under their aim, they are infinitely more dangerous. I should like to draw attention to the fact that in his statement today the representative of France said that we should not allow space to become the departure point for acts of aggression. We agree with that. Consequently, to begin solving the problem of the prevention of an arms race in outer space with the prohibition of anti-satellite systems would be equivalent to trying to achieve similar aims, let us say in the sphere of military aircraft, by prohibiting anti-aircraft defence facilities.

There is also the fact that one and the same means of conducting activities in space can be used for carrying either useful or dangerous payloads. For example, a satellite may in one instance be collecting meteorological data and in another it may be equipped with homing missiles, representing a threat both to space and to earth. Other delegations in their speeches have referred to the versatility of satellites, including speakers at the Committee's last meeting, on 31 August. The make-up of the means used for conducting space activities is a matter of general knowledge. It includes land-based equipment, launching devices, controls, and so on.

Thus if we are thinking of prohibiting anti-satellite systems, then we at once have to answer the question: what are we going to prohibit? If that is to include everything that helps put into space devices for the destruction or damaging of space objects, then practically all space activity might find itself threatened

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

with prohibition. This makes no sense, and in any case is hardly practicable. We therefore consider that the subject of the negotiations should be what really constitutes a threat when it is placed in space, namely, any kind of weapon.

In practice this could include space-object interceptors, based on the most diverse principles, for attacks on individual artificial earth satellites or for eliminating the space systems of an opponent, anti-missile weapons for attacks on intercontinental ballistic missiles and weapons for the destruction of air, sea or land targets from outer spaces.

What I have said applies also to reusable space vehicles. They can, of course, be used for peaceful purposes, but at the same time they can be used to carry a variety of weapons. It is for this reason that they are mentioned in paragraph 1 of article 1 of the Soviet draft treaty.

As regards laser weapons, some delegations have doubted the possibility of their appearance in space at least in the foreseeable future, regarding the whole of this problem as being rather in the realm of fantasy. But such views are in flagrant contradiction with the facts. From the statement, for example, of Mr. J. Millburn, the United States Assistant Deputy Secretary of Defense for research and development of advanced technology, it appears in particular that given the provision of the requisite financial means, the construction in the United States of military facilities for space laser weapons is possible even during the present decade. What fantasy is there in that, gentlemen?

We entirely agree with the argument put forward by the representative of Sri Lanka in his statement on 31 August, and indeed by many other speakers, that it is easier to prevent the appearance of new types of weapons than to eliminate those that already exist.

We therefore consider that the best way of dealing with this problem is to prohibit the placing and stationing in space of dangerous loads consisting of either specially designed or adapted devices and means for acting on objects in order to destroy or damage them, wherever these target objects may be, in outer space, in the air space or on earth.

We have been asked, both at the spring session and at this session, how we would define the expression "weapons of any kind". Obviously, the search for a generally acceptable formulation should proceed roughly along the lines indicated above.

As regards the scope of the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space, our draft treaty prohibits this for any purpose, including testing, development and use. These questions were, as you know, raised at the Committee's spring session by a number of delegations, including those of Italy, the Netherlands and India.

The Soviet delegation would like once more to draw attention to the fact that the Soviet draft, as it is easy to see, does not ignore the problem of anti-satellite systems. Both the Soviet draft treaty and the draft mandate for a working group submitted by the Mongolian delegation at the spring part of our session allow for the possibility of the consideration of the question of anti-satellite systems in the

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

context of other measures aimed at the prevention of an arms race in outer space, and also take into account other comments made during this session, in particular by the delegations of India, Indonesia and Sri Lanka.,

The Soviet delegation acknowledges the technical complexity of space problems, to which the representative of the United States referred in his statement at our plenary meeting of 10 August. In our view, however, this fact does not argue in favour of putting off the discussion of the question for ever but rather in favour of supporting the Mongolian delegation's proposal for the setting up of a working group on this subject before the end of the Committee's present session.

It must be said that statements made at the Committee's plenary meeting on 31 August, as also today's statement by the representative of France, show that material for negotiations exists.

We appeal to the United States delegation to reconsider its approach and we firmly urge the establishment of an ad hoc working group which would permit the Committee to begin serious negotiations on this exceptionally important problem with the participation of experts.

In conclusion, we should like to stress that one of the most important tasks of the Committee is to do everything in its power to help prevent the possibility of space becoming a source of military danger for States, which will inevitably happen if weapons of any kind are installed in outer space. We, for our part, are ready to engage in honest, equal and business-like negotiations with the aim of achieving constructive agreements on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

The Mongolian delegation would like to speak today about item 7 of the agenda, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

A number of statements have been made on this question since the Committee first added this new item to its agenda at its spring session this year. My delegation has been following the course of the discussion with the greatest interest. It has also expressed its views on the subject both here in the Committee and in the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly. We believe that the Committee has on the whole reacted positively to the two resolutions on the subject adopted by the General Assembly at its last session.

At the last session, the delegation of Mongolia introduced resolution 36/99 in the First Committee on behalf of its sponsors.

Both during the spring part and during the present part of this session the Mongolian delegation, like many other delegations, has repeatedly advocated the orderly and structured consideration of the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the setting up of an ad hoc working group on this subject to begin concrete negotiations for the adoption of effective measures towards the elaboration of an international treaty in this connection.

As I have already reminded the Committee more than once, the Mongolian delegation formally submitted the working paper in document CD/272 which proposes a draft mandate for an ad hoc working group on this question.

As you know, an exchange of views on this question was held in formal meetings. The Committee has been discussing item 7 of its agenda this week at its plenary meetings. During the discussions both at informal and at plenary meetings it has unfortunately become clear that certain delegations intend to maintain the absence of consensus on the question of the setting up of an ad hoc working group on this matter. I will say frankly that we do not quite understand this obstructionism.

We believe that the time has come for concrete negotiations on this important and urgent question in an ad hoc working group. We know perfectly well that a very small number of States are playing the principal part in the exploration and use of outer space. Nevertheless, in view of the extremely dangerous consequences of an arms race in outer space for the peace and security of all, the Committee is obliged to take a vital interest in the consideration of this question and the urgent drafting of an international legal instrument on the subject. The overwhelming majority of the world's States demand this.

This was confirmed in particular at the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which recently ended in Vienna. The Conference urged the competent bodies of the United Nations and in particular the General Assembly and also the Committee on Disarmament, in considering measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space, to give appropriate attention and high priority to the serious concern of the international community at the extension of the arms race to outer space.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

We are all fairly familiar with the fact that outer space is not always and everywhere a peaceful sphere and frequently shows signs of becoming a new arena for the arms race. This is illustrated by the alarming reports in the world's press which have become more frequent of late. I am referring in particular to the numerous projects for the production of a whole range of space weapons designed for the launching of attacks on objects in space, in the atmosphere and on the earth's surface.

There are particularly far-reaching plans in connection with the possible military uses of the reusable space vehicles being constructed in the United States under the "shuttle" programme. According to press reports the Pentagon specialists are considering plans for the establishment of military bases in space with the help of these vehicles, the location in space of mines for attacks on the artificial earth satellites of an opponent and the creation of large-scale systems of space-based anti-missile defence. The possibilities are being examined of the use of space shuttles as vehicles for various types of weapons. Other very important plans for the militarization of outer space are connected with their use. Major-General J. Welch, deputy head of the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff for research and development said recently: "Our activities continue to expand at a substantial rate and the shuttle with its potential for the delivery of heavier and more sophisticated payloads plays the part of catalyst in this.".

The distinguishing feature of the new plans is the fact that the space shuttle is to play the role of the basic element in them without which the systems to be established cannot function. These systems include, for example, large platforms with laser weapons and also small-sized air and space vehicles for the carrying out of short-term operations in outer space and in the atmosphere.

One of the largest programmes to which the Pentagon is at present attaching primary importance is the programme for the development of laser weapons. Their purpose is to be the destruction of any objects, on earth, at sea, in the air and in outer space. Work on the construction of the basic element of this weapon is being carried out within the framework of the so-called triad of space-based laser weapons which, in the view of the periodical Foreign Policy, may soon bring a combat system for space into being. It is planned to test the elements of the triad in space in 1984-1985.

The American press has also published reports about the construction in the United States of anti-satellite systems based on small-sized interceptors. It is to reach its target with the help of a small missile launched from an F-15 fighter aircraft. According to the plans, flight tests of the mini-interceptor in space will begin during the first half of 1983 and it will be supplied to the armed forces in the mid-1980s.

But the United States is not merely developing space weapons; it is also creating the necessary conditions for their use. It is known that from 1 September of this year the area of space surrounding the earth will for the Pentagon become a new potential theatre of military operations. From then on,

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

a special space command will begin functioning in the United States armed forces. According to reports in the western press, the head of the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff said with respect to the establishment of this command: "Research and development in the sphere of space weapons will soon make it possible for us to carry out military operations in space.".

The implementation of such plans and programmes could undoubtedly have far-reaching consequences. It is therefore urgent and important to prevent an arms race in outer space in time.

Mongolia, like many other States, fully supported the Soviet Union's proposal for the conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space.

The Mongolian delegation is one of those delegations which are in favour of a comprehensive solution, that is, as proposed in article 1, paragraph 1, of the draft treaty submitted by the USSR, which states that States parties undertake not to place in orbit around the earth objects carrying weapons of any kind, install such weapons on celestial bodies, or station such weapons in outer space in any other manner, including on reusable manned space vehicles of an existing type or of other types which States parties may develop in the future. In addition, we are not opposed to the treaty containing a provision concerning the prohibition of the use of anti-satellite systems.

The discussion in the Committee of the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space has also revealed a different approach, a pragmatic and gradual one, as its advocates have put it. According to this approach, the prohibition would be confined to anti-satellite systems, the wide variety of weapons and systems not coming within the category of anti-satellite systems thus being left outside the prohibition. Furthermore, it seems that the very expression, anti-satellite systems, is being used in a very ambiguous way, probably because the advocates of this approach have not put forward a clear definition of what they mean by anti-satellite systems.

The Mongolian delegation firmly believes that the main aim should be the solution of the problem as a whole, that is, the conclusion of a treaty prohibiting the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space, and that the question of anti-satellite systems should be dealt with in the general context of measures aimed at the achievement of this goal.

In conclusion, the Mongolian delegation would like to suggest to you, Mr. Chairman, and through you to the members of the Committee, that after item 7 has been considered at plenary meetings, consultations should continue with a view to agreeing on a mandate before the end of this session and adopting a decision on the setting up of an ad hoc working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Mr. KOMIVES (Hungary): I can say without any exaggeration, Mr. Chairman, that I feel happy to be among the first to greet you on the day when you assume the chairmanship of the Committee on Disarmament. I wish you could feel and openly say in the near future: "Well, this is the kind of negotiating forum I have been battling for". In the meantime, we count on your vast experience and diplomatic skill which, I am convinced, will help us get the maximum out of the present situation.

May I also express my appreciation to your predecessor, Ambassador Maina of Kenya, for the contribution which he made to our work as Chairman for the month of July. At the same time, I wish to bid farewell to those colleagues who have left the Committee in the short two weeks since I took the floor last time -- Ambassador Venkateswaran of India, Ambassador Vrhunec of Yugoslavia and Ambassador Salah-Bey of Algeria. On behalf of my delegation, I wish them well in their new assignments.

Finally, it is a pleasure to welcome in our midst the new representative of Peru, Ambassador Cannock, and to offer him the friendship and co-operation of the Hungarian delegation.

Today I wish to set out my delegation's views on a few questions relating to agenda item 7 -- the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

This year the world is celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the launching of the first man-made object into outer space, the pioneer flight of the first Soviet Sputnik. That event 25 years ago opened for man the gate of the space age, the exploration and use of outer space.

The peaceful use of that new, endless area has already brought enormous benefits for mankind. Nobody can, and I believe nobody really wants to, deny or underrate the significance of the peaceful use of outer space in numerous fields such as meteorology, navigation, telecommunication, the remote sensing of natural resources, etc. Taking into account the rapid progress of science and technology, a rich flow of further results -- many of them perhaps not even thought of now -- may be expected in the near future, which can serve for the benefit of mankind as a whole. That actually was the general desire expressed vividly by the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space held only recently in Vienna.

It is very unfortunate that the dawn of the space age was very soon clouded by the sombre possibilities of using outer space also for hostile purposes. When that threat was realized, initiatives were quickly taken in order to avoid such a development. The first important step in that direction was the adoption of the outer space Treaty, signed in 1967, which prohibits the emplacement of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in outer space, codifying at the same time the fundamental principles concerning man's activities in the cosmic environment. The peaceful activity of States, and their co-operation to that end, were further regulated by the conclusion of a set of international instruments. My delegation is proud to note in this respect that Hungarian representatives in the various bodies of the United Nations outer space Committee have contributed to no small extent to the drafting of those instruments.

The growing danger of the outbreak of an arms race in outer space, and the urgent necessity to avoid it, is clearly reflected in the Final Document of the first special session on disarmament. In paragraph 80 it says the following:

(Mr. Komives, Hungary)

My delegation does not want to deny or belittle the importance and the timeliness of the solution of this problem. Nevertheless, we consider that this is only one of the many aspects of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. In the opinion of the Hungarian delegation, and I know it is shared by many others, there are or there may be other weapons which could be used in or from outer space. It is really regrettable that no aspects other than the prohibition of anti-satellite systems were mentioned by our distinguished Italian and Canadian colleagues. The Hungarian delegation, like many others, feels that all aspects of the prevention of an arms race in outer space should be considered and, hopefully, solved by our Committee.

Although my delegation -- like the great majority around this table -- holds the view that the prevention of an arms race in outer space is basically a matter of political decision, I venture to make a few brief comments on some of the views expressed by certain delegations.

First of all, we cannot share the optimistic evaluation that the idea of laser-gun and particle-beam weapons can be translated into an operational capability only in the hazy distant future. Reading the expert study issued by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute in 1978, entitled Outer Space - Battlefield of the Future? one can find the following conclusion:

> "As far as space-borne lasers are concerned, these are in the development stage. For such systems, chemical lasers are more useful because of their compact size .... Advances in infra-red laser radars show that with such devices, an object in space can be tracked .... When such a device becomes available, it can be used to disable solar cells and optical sensors on board a satellite. In high energy lasers and charged-particle beams we may well be seeing the beginning of the next revolution in weapon technology."

Let me recall that the book from which I have quoted was published in 1978, just like the so-called "Occasional Paper 25" by the Stanley Foundation, entitled "Can Space Remain a Peaceful Environment?" which states the following: the United States military has proposed incorporating new types of space systems into existing operational commands, and using satellites for real-time battle management and war fighting. Space technology could free military forces from dependence on foreign bases and from the need for communication and monitoring facilities in other countries.

The study of the Stanley Foundation, whose conclusions I mention in an abbreviated form -- for brevity's sake -- but without changing their message, then goes on stating the following: the United States Air Force envisage both manned and unmanned space stations that would be used for targeting, damage assessment, and retargeting of strategic weapons, weapons guidance, and real-time battlefield command, control and communication functions.

These are only a few examples to prove the point that the problem of anti-satellite systems -- important as they may be -- is but one of the many aspects of the issue. My delegation cannot help coming to the conclusion that the extra weight given by certain delegations to this single item may perhaps serve some special interests.

In conclusion, let me say frankly that at the beginning of the summer session the Hungarian delegation expected a speedy solution of the establishment of a working group on item 7 of our agenda. Unfortunately, the position taken by some western countries

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(Mr. Komives, Hungary)

has not made it possible. Nevertheless, we continue to hold the view that a working group with a properly worded mandate, like the one suggested by the delegation of Mongolia in document CD/272, would be the best framework for dealing with this question.

However, I do not want to over-emphasize the importance of the establishment of a working group on outer space. I have ample reason not to do so. I am fully aware of the fact that the predecessors of the Committee on Disarmament, the ENDC and the CCD, were able to elaborate disarmament agreements without working groups, while this Committee which has now established quite a few groups, still considered to be the best framework for negotiations, has so far been unable to elaborate a single draft treaty or convention on disarmament. But that only underscores my point: what is really needed are devotion, readiness and political will. And if and when they are given, we can easily find the way to elaborate and conclude disarmament measures, with or without working groups.

Mr. FIELDS (United States of America):

I would like to speak today on item 7 of our agenda, the prevention of an arms race in outer space. As the large number of speakers at our previous meeting indicates, this question is one in which all delegations in the Committee, including my own, share a considerable interest.

During our spring session, I addressed the Committee on this agenda item during one of the two informal sessions devoted to this subject. Since that time interest has heightened and a number of delegations have urged the creation of a working group to deal with the issues. My delegation believes that the Committee should sharpen its focus by further discussion of this agenda item before considering whether to take such a step. I hope my statement today will serve to further that goal.

As a major space Power, the United States approaches the question of arms control and disarmament arrangements affecting outer space as an important and serious matter. This approach has shaped our policies and guided our actions in international forums. The United States attaches the greatest importance to the continued preservation of outer space for peaceful purposes, and to the prevention of activity there of an aggressive character. In its support of resolution 36/97 C at the United Nations General Assembly last fall, the United States joined in agreeing to "consider the question of negotiating further arms control measures in outer space ..." here in the Committee on Disarmament.

We are the beneficiaries of the efforts of our predecessors in the field of arms control and disarmament, who have endowed us with a number of agreements affecting outer space. These have already banned from outer space the most dangerous category of weapons -- weapons of mass destruction -- and have imposed other significant restrictions on weapons-related activities there.

The outer space Treaty of 1967 is the broadest and most far-reaching of these agreements. It prohibits the orbiting of nuclear weapons or any other kinds of weapons of mass destruction. It forbids the installation of such weapons on any celestial body, including the moon, or their stationing in outer space in any other manner. This Treaty, moreover, also preserves the moon and other celestial bodies exclusively for peaceful purposes, and forbids "the establishment of military bases, installations and fortifications, the testing of any type of weapons and the conduct of military manoeuvres on celestial bodies."

(Mr. Fields, United States)

Additionally, the outer space Treaty provides that its parties, "in the interest of maintaining international peace and security and promoting international co-operation and understanding", shall apply the principles and regulations of international law, including, most notably, the Charter of the United Nations, to their activities in outer space. This point is worth stressing. A consequence of the application of the United Nations Charter and international law to outer space is the recognition that outer space can have an important role to play in the maintenance of world peace and security. And indeed, in the view of my delegation, outer space has served this end very well, by providing a place for satellites devoted to a wide range of useful purposes, from communications to navigation, to the monitoring of arms control agreements, to the stabilizing function of providing early warning against the possibility of a nuclear attack.

In the view of my delegation, the arms control regime affecting outer space would be strengthened if States not already party to the outer space Treaty were to adhere to this agreement. Indeed, I regret to say, there are 11 members of this Committee who are not yet parties to this important Treaty.

The limited test ban Treaty of 1963 prohibits, inter alia, nuclear explosions in outer space. In addition to the direct arms control benefits this Treaty has provided, namely, the absence of nuclear explosions in outer space, the Treaty has also had another great benefit relating to the continued development of the peaceful applications of outer space. As Mr. Arthur C. Clarke pointed out on Tuesday, the many scores of satellites now performing a wide range of tasks would be placed in serious jeopardy were nuclear explosions to occur in outer space.

As with the outer space Treaty, the limited test ban treaty enjoys widespread, although not universal, adherence. One hundred and eleven countries are States parties to this important agreement. The adherence by additional States to this important agreement would serve to strengthen arms control arrangements for outer space.

The Convention on the Prohibition of Military or any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques, negotiated in our predecessor body, the CCD, and signed in 1977, also applies to outer space. This Convention has now entered into force for some 30 States, a much smaller number than for the outer space and the limited test ban treaties. Again, much wider adherence to an agreement which effectively forestalls manipulation of the environment, including outer space, for hostile purposes would serve to strengthen the outer space arms control structure.

It is possible to point to a number of other agreements that affect the regime of outer space, its use for peaceful purposes and the prevention of its misuse for aggressive purposes. I should only add to my discussion here today the 1972 bilateral Treaty between the United States and the Soviet Union limiting anti-ballistic missile systems. In so far as this Treaty relates to the prohibition of weapons in outer space, the two parties have undertaken not to develop, test or deploy space-based anti-ballistic missile systems or their components.

A fair assessment of the body of international law applying to the environment of outer space which I have just described would be that nations can have some confidence that the most destabilizing developments which might have been foreseen in the past -- especially the orbiting or stationing of weapons of mass destruction in outer space -- have already been renounced by those parties to the outer space

(Mr. Fields, United States)

Treaty. When the provisions of this Treaty and the other agreements I have described are considered, the widespread notion that an arms race in outer space is an immediate threat is placed into a more realistic perspective. I must therefore confess to some amazement at the view of some who seem to dismiss -- or minimize -- these agreements as "totally insufficient".

It is also useful to examine the contribution which the use of outer space makes to the implementation of arms control agreements generally by providing a means whereby monitoring and verification can be carried out. It is abundantly clear that those arms control agreements which rely in part or in whole on national technical means of verification would probably otherwise have been impossible. At least, such agreements would have required intrusive verification measures, measures that no State wants to adopt lightly, especially if a better or more easily available alternative can be found. It is safe to say that given the reluctance of some States to agree to so-called "intrusive" means of verification, man's ability to make use of outer space for verification and monitoring purposes has in many cases made the difference between effective agreement and no agreement. It is interesting to note that a recent article on monitoring arms curbs in the 19 May issue of Mezhdunarodnaya Zhizn pointed out that reconnaissance satellites "produced a real breakthrough in means of observing and monitoring arms limitation measures."

In addition to the specific arms control functions served by outer space, the great potential of outer space for peaceful purposes serves us in a great and ever-increasing variety of important ways. We are all aware of the just completed UNISPACE '82 conference, and of the many applications demonstrated and discussed in that forum. These show just how intimately connected with our daily lives the utilization of outer space for civil purposes has become. From the use of meteorological satellites to improve weather forecasting and warning of severe storms, to communications satellites which make possible the global transmission of live television coverage of both historical and recreational events, it is evident that outer space plays an important role in maintaining the structure of our international society. The United States has taken the lead over many years in making available to the world at large the technology and benefits from its space programme, which is dedicated to placing outer space in the service of peace, and to strengthening the bonds that link nations together.

We all recognize that outer space, and these satellites, have military value. There is no point in denying the simple fact that the use of outer space can and does serve important military functions such as early warning, communication and navigation. These functions can serve to strengthen international stability by strengthening the deterrent value of military forces and reducing the chances of strategic miscalculations. But as Professor Clarke, in his eloquent statement last Tuesday pointed out, "there are few of man's artifacts which cannot be equally well used for peaceful or warlike purposes: what matters is the intention".

And there is another simple fact which there is no point in denying. That is that the Soviet Union, for whatever purpose, has been actively engaged over a number of years in the development and testing of an operational anti-satellite weapon system. That system puts at risk the satellites of every nation. In light of this fact, my Government has concluded that it has had no prudent choice but to continue to pursue a programme of its own to develop a similar capability.

(Mr. Fields, United States)

The United States is in full agreement that unrestrained competition in the development and deployment of weapons affecting outer space -- what we often call an arms race -- would not promote the larger goal of a more peaceful world. Indeed, it is for this reason that the United States supports discussion of this matter here in the Committee on Disarmament.

We continue to be willing to examine possible further measures to be added to the existing body of arms control agreements as they apply to the outer space environment. On 4 July of this year, President Reagan announced a national space policy for the civil, military and arms control uses of outer space. These policies are outlined in a document, copies of which my delegation would be happy to supply to other interested delegations. I would like, however, to quote the appropriate passage from this document as it relates to arms control:

> "The United States will continue to study space arms control options. The United States will consider verifiable and equitable arms control measures that would ban or otherwise limit testing and deployment of specific weapons systems, should those measures be compatible with United States national security."

There are two points in this passage which I think are worth special note. First, the United States believes that attention should be focused on measures applicable to specific types of weapon systems. Obviously, measures which are vaguely worded, and contain only imprecise generalities whose applicability would be open to question, are not useful, nor, I think would they be of interest to delegations here. Secondly, the United States believes that arms control measures subject to consideration should be equitable and verifiable. These two tests are valid standards to be applied against any potential arms control agreements.

It should also be mentioned that, as with other aspects of our work in arms control and disarmament, our consideration of further outer space arms control measures cannot proceed in a vacuum. The international climate has an important bearing on the prospects for co-operation on such measures. As with all arms control measures the real world must affect our judgement.

Finally, I believe I can confidently say that all of us here share a vision of mankind's future in space. As a boy, I recall being held in awe by the serialized exploits of "Buck Rogers" and "Flash Gordon", never dreaming that these were more than flights of fancy. Yet, in our lifetimes we have witnessed man's first tentative steps off our planet. We all remember the poignant comment of astronaut Neil Armstrong as he became the first man to set foot on the moon: "One small step for man, a giant step for mankind". It is not inconceivable that our grandchildren, or perhaps their children, will decisively break the bonds of earth and venture into a new age beyond our imagination. But only if the peace is kept can mankind reach out to that final frontier.

Mr. LANG (Austria):

My delegation has listened with particular care and attention to those statements which were made on the item entitled, "Prevention of an arms race in outer space". May I, with your kind permission, submit the following comments for consideration by the Committee, comments which come from a Government which has for many years shown special interest in questions of outer space, in particular the peaceful uses of outer space.

Mankind is confronted with the serious prospect of outer space being progressively drawn into an arms race.

More than 1700 military satellites have been launched during the last decade; military establishments on both sides increasingly rely on satellites, especially for strategic purposes. The wide and growing range of functions turn these satellites into valuable targets, thus creating strong incentives for developing anti-satellite capabilities. Other efforts potentially introducing weaponry into space are carried out in the field of ABM technology.

These developments have led to grave concerns as to the prospects for the peaceful uses of outer space which were vividly expressed last month in Vienna during the second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The president of the Conference, the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Willibald Pahr, urged the participants to conclude agreements which should definitely ban all kinds of weapons in outer space.

In its final report the Conference expressed the view that the extension of an arms race into outer space is a matter of grave concern to the international community, is detrimental to humanity as a whole and should therefore be prevented. The Conference recommended that the competent organs of the United Nations, in particular the General Assembly and the Committee on Disarmament give appropriate attention and high priority to that concern when dealing with measures aimed at the

(Mr. Lang, Austria)

In 1978, the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament had already requested measures to prevent an arms race in outer space. Last fall, the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly called upon the Committee on Disarmament to seek agreement on the text of an appropriate treaty to prevent the spreading of the arms race into outer space.

There is widespread agreement that the existing international instruments establishing the principle of exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes are insufficient to prevent the spreading of an arms race into space. Some of the deficiencies and loopholes in the most important of these instruments, the outer space Treaty, have come up as a consequence of technological evolution. Others were deliberately built in by the drafters because some of the few possessing certain capabilities in space technology, as well as the necessary financial resources, wished to keep their options open. Again, other deficiencies stem from the growing realization that the ever-increasing use of outer space by a few, especially for military purposes, may unduly limit peaceful uses by others.

As a starting point for strengthening the arms control regime for outer space, one should examine in detail the scope and true meaning of the relevant provisions of the outer space Treaty. As long as the principle of peaceful use for the benefit of mankind which underlies the entire outer space regime remains open to radically divergent interpretations, the danger of creeping militarization will stay with us. And indeed, as we know, some interpret peaceful use to exclude only activities or devices of an aggressive character, whereas others would have it cover all military activities.

Whilst vagueness of terminology may have been helpful in the past, such uncertainty cannot any more be tolerated. In view of the concrete ongoing efforts to experiment with and eventually use offensive devices in space, terminology must be clarified, and necessary new prohibitions should be clear and unequivocal.

Upon the basis of an agreed clarification of the present provisions, it will certainly prove indispensable to introduce new prohibitions concerning the use of outer space. Extension of the provisions of paragraph 2 of article IV of the outer space Treaty to outer space itself or an express prohibition of introducing offensive devices of any kind, even for mere testing purposes, might be considered as possible approaches to this problem.

The restraint that a strengthened regime for outer space would impose on those who, at present, have the capabilities actually to use outer space will eventually, upon careful consideration, be seen even by those few countries as a benefit. For if they do not accept restrictions now, they might be faced, tomorrow, with a situation in which the hardening of devices sent into space and the risk of losing space-based communication and other capabilities will add tremendously to their costs and, especially, raise the danger of destabilizing losses of installations basic to their system of deterrence. The history of arms control, well known to most assembled here, points to earlier miscalculations where, for the semblance of temporary advantages, limitations were turned down at a point in time when they would have been technically and politically feasible, whereas the arms developments that were left uncontrolled raised endless problems only a few years later.

Finally, no new substantive provisions will curb the arms race in outer space unless the countries concerned are able to agree on an effective machinery of implementation and verification. The credibility of any new obligations will depend on their reliability, on the degree of trust they can create among the countries concerned.

(Mr. Lang, Austria)

In this context, I would like to state our conviction that sooner or later, verification from space and in space will have to be internationalized. At present only two countries dispose of a full state-of-the-art array of space capabilities. For the time being and for a long time to come, this situation makes reliance on national means of verification the least credible option. Last year's United Nations study on this subject has shown that an international satellite monitoring agency is an entirely feasible objective. This element should be taken into account when elaborating new arms control agreements concerning outer space.

As to the question of how to strengthen the outer space regime, my country had put some considerable hope in the American-Soviet talks on anti-satellite systems that were held approximately until the Vienna summit of 1979. We would see some advantages in a resumption of these talks.

At the same time this Committee, responding to relevant resolutions of the first special session on disarmament, the last General Assembly and UNISPACE II, should deepen its engagement in the question of preventing an arms race in outer space and set up a working group to this effect. Any move to accelerate the preparatory process leading towards the "take-off" of full-fledged negotiations is welcome.

Mr. WAGENMAKERS (Netherlands):

Upon the instructions of my Government I wish to place the following short statement on record.

It is our earnest conviction that no effort should be spared to prevent unrestrained competition in the development and deployment of weapons affecting outer space. We attach great importance to the responsible task confided to the Committee on Disarmament in this regard, which was reconfirmed by the concluding document of UNISPACE 82. Our concern is well known. During the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly the Netherlands, together with some like-minded States, took the initiative of introducing a draft resolution which led to resolution 36/97 C, accepted by an overwhelming majority. We welcomed afterwards the fact that, in conformity with this resolution, the Committee on Disarmament, at the beginning of its 1982 session decided to place a new item, item 7, on its agenda, entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space". On 2 April 1982 the leader of

(Mr. Wagenmakers, Netherlands)

the Netherlands delegation had the pleasure of explaining our basic approach to this question in detail. We have followed the present debate in our plenary meetings with great interest. In our view, the contributions made by the delegations which have addressed agenda item 7 illustrate amply that consensus virtually exists as to the desirability of establishing meaningful measures to prevent an arms race in outer space. I feel therefore encouraged to reiterate the view expressed in this Committee by the leader of my delegation on 12 August 1982, to wit, that the text of resolution 36/97 C provides adequate language for elaborating an appropriate mandate for an ad hoc working group to be established under agenda item 7. We strongly urge the Committee on Disarmament to take such a course of action which would warrant that the 1983 agenda item 7 will be dealt with in an appropriate way.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

Among this year's items on the agenda of the Committee on Disarmament there are two which, to some extent, occupy a special position. Agenda item 7 — the prevention of an arms race in outer space — and item 5 — new weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons — differ from other agenda items mainly by the fact that within their framework we seek to prevent developments which, if not halted, could lead to considerable implications in the not too distant future. From the procedural point of view those two items have one more thing in common, namely, that they are only being discussed in the plenary without special working or expert groups having been established so far.

We welcome the fact that the danger of outer space being turned into another sphere of the arms race has been finally brought to the attention of the Committee on Disarmament. During our spring session and last week, we heard many interesting statements evaluating existing international documents regulating to a certain extent the military presence in outer space and searching for possible future steps in this regard.

There is hardly any need to recall in this forum all the relevant treaties with a detailed description of their provisions. However, I would like to stress that, in spite of certain efforts to give divergent interpretations of adopted measures, we deem the treaties concluded so far very important international instruments creating the basis for further efforts to achieve a complete demilitarization of outer space. This applies first of all to the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and other Celestial Bodies, of 1967, and to the Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and other Celestial Bodies within the Solar System other than the Earth, of 1979. The provisions of those two, if I may say so, "basic" space treaties, together with the provisions of certain other international documents closed outer space to nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Highly appreciating the measures achieved so far, we also share the opinion of those who consider it necessary and logical to adopt further measures which would exclude the possibility of the emplacement in space of other categories of weapons not covered as yet.

Czechoslovakia has been actively participating in the peaceful exploration of outer space through the well-known international co-operation programme, "Intersputnik", which, inter alia, has enabled a citizen of ours to enter outer space. We have therefore more than valid reasons to pay special attention to all measures seeking the prevention of the arms race in outer space and ensuring that it will be used for peaceful purposes only.

The two relevant resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly at its last session define two approaches in this respect. I would not qualify them as two different approaches. Some proponents of resolution 36/97 C try to convince us that their approach is the only possible one and they do their best to prove that the proposal contained in resolution 36/99, referring to a draft treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space, is not

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

As I have already said, we do not regard these two approaches as excluding each other. However, one does not have to be a specialist in the field to realize that the approach reflected in resolution 36/99 is much more comprehensive. Moreover, it deals not only with present dangers but takes fully into account also possible future developments in weaponry. Much has been said in this connection about the so-called "directed energy weapons". We were rather amazed by attempts of some delegations to raise doubts about the possibilities of such weapons being developed and used in practice. We would presume that problems of a purely technical nature persisting in the development of these kinds of weapons should certainly not prevent us from coping with the quite real possibility of their creation and eventual introduction into space.

We listened with interest to statements wherein the problem of anti-satellite weapons was defined as the basic problem of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. We can agree with many thoughts and conclusions in this regard. However, we registered with concern two tendencies in this approach with which we can hardly associate.

Firstly, it is implicitly or explicitly suggested that anti-satellite weapons are the only weapons with a possible use in outer space which can now be distinctly defined and consequently that we should limit ourselves to that kind of weapon. We are far from underestimating the destabilizing effects of anti-satellite activities, but should this specific problem compel us to forget about the much more imminent dangers emanating from weapons emplaced on objects flying several tens of kilometres above the territory of any State?

Secondly, we also cannot agree with some suggestions as to the definition of, so to say, the components of anti-satellite weapons and activities. We can hardly accept the thesis that a definite line can be drawn separating peaceful from military activities in space. If one wants to render the achievement of any anti-satellite weapons agreement unrealistic, nothing is more suitable for this than the definition of a scope which would embrace preferably all space activities, whether peaceful or military, and would also seek the solution of problems which can only be solved on the earth, not from space.

In his statement last week the distinguished representative of the United States drew our attention to the fact that many valuable treaties concerning outer space have not been universally adhered to up to now. We fully agree with him that universal adherence to these treaties would undoubtedly be beneficial. At the same time we should not forget that the existing treaties, universally adhered to or not, have not closed all avenues for the arms race to spread into outer space. The United States delegation would agree with me since the provisions of these treaties, while extremely useful, have not stopped the United States from military activities in space. The mere headlines of three articles taken at random from issues of the International Herald Tribune published in June this year are enough to substantiate what I have just said. From the issue of the 7th, "Anti-satellite System Sought by Weinberger", from that of the 25th, "Military Use of Shuttle is Expanding" and from that of the 23rd, "US Air Force To Expand Military Activity in Space".

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

There is one more serious aspect of the arms race in outer space which is a matter of concern. It would bring about an unprecedented rise in military expenditures. It is true that the expenditures would affect mostly States present in space but it would certainly be a burden felt by other countries as well. According to David A. Andelman, the deployment of a simple, ground-based defensive system against cruise missiles would probably cost $1 billion. But the price tag would jump to $2-3 billion to deploy a prototype space-based system with ASAT capabilities and $10 billion to deploy a full space-based ABM system.

No delegation pretends to have a recipe for ensuring the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The effective solution of the problem can only be one which is agreed upon by all States, especially those which are technically most advanced. We consider that the best way to proceed further in this direction would be the creation of an ad hoc working group in which delegations could benefit from the active contribution of experts. We associate ourselves fully with the draft mandate for such a working group contained in document CD/272 submitted by the Mongolian People's Republic. We cannot afford to ignore further the responsibility of the Committee on Disarmament concerning the danger of the militarization of outer space, a responsibility which was recently unequivocally confirmed at the Conference UNISPACE '82.

Much of what I have said with respect to the prevention of an arms race in outer space applies also to the problem of new weapons of mass destruction. My delegation has already addressed this item of our agenda on several occasions and I will not, therefore, go into details now. At this juncture I would only like to express once more our considered view that in this regard the emphasis should be placed on the prevention of the creation of new weapons based on new scientific achievements. We have already stated that we are not against the adoption of specific agreements on certain kinds of weapons. However, a comprehensive agreement should be a necessary first step in this direction.

Nobody can deny that a growing danger of the building of new weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons does exist. Let me give just one example. Numerous recent studies and articles in military journals and magazines prove that there is, for instance, a growing development in the field of electronics warfare. Some defence analysts say that in the United States electronics for destruction are becoming a completely new business area and that a new industry has been created to cover the expanding needs of the military in this field.

My delegation is deeply concerned by the fact that we have not achieved any substantial progress in dealing with this item up to now. Since the passage of time is a most unfavourable factor in relation to this question, we believe that dealing with it only at informal meetings of the plenary does not fully correspond to its urgency. We therefore most emphatically support the proposal of Hungary for the establishment of a group of experts to deal with the prevention of new weapons of mass destruction. The experience gained so far through the participation of experts in our deliberations on this problem would assure us that this would be the most appropriate and promising approach.

(Mr. Wegener, Federal Republic of Germany)

My delegation listened attentively last week to the formal exchange of views on the dangers of an arms race in outer space, a topic to which it actively contributed both during the spring session and at the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

As is now recognized, not least by the urgent recommendation contained in the concluding document of UNISPACE '82, our Committee is the only international forum which can recognize, analyse and seek solutions to the dangerous developments in outer space. Recognizing responsibility and obligations means seeking ways and means by which the Committee on Disarmament can perform these tasks. Space technology, as has frequently been spelled out in this Committee, is ambivalent: reconnaissance, remote sensing, navigation and weather satellites can, of course, be put to military use. But the heading "military usefulness" can also include military activities consistent with the provisions of the United Nations Charter. In addition, satellites can help with the vitally important task of verifying arms control agreements. They can therefore play an important role in strengthening confidence in compliance with international treaties.

A threat to international security, however, is constituted by satellites with a destructive capability, that is to say, those anti-satellite systems which the USSR has developed and has already tested on several occasions. This, regrettably, has marked the beginning of a dangerous development. We are all aware that the development of space technology is far from having run its full course. Radiation weapons, such as high-energy laser weapons and particle-beam weapons, present further technological possibilities for the use of outer space even though their military use is not expected before the end of this decade.

What has been done so far by the community of States to end the militarization of outer space? The many years of world-wide efforts to keep outer space, the moon and other celestial bodies free of weapons and military bases are reflected in the test-ban Treaty, the outer space Treaty, the moon Treaty and the ABM Treaty. These four treaties, particularly, of course, the outer space Treaty of 1967, have not been able to satisfy the initially cherished hope that the various demilitarization provisions of the law governing outer space could spill over to give impetus to more extensive steps towards arms control. Existing bans and requirements under international law with regard to the exclusive use of the moon and other celestial bodies for peaceful purposes have left loopholes and are open to varying interpretations.

In the operative part of the outer space Treaty, for instance, the use of the moon and other planets is only permitted for "peaceful purposes". In connection with negotiations on that treaty, the question was raised of how this term was to be understood.

As in the negotiations at that time, the unaltered attitude of my Government is that the term "peaceful purposes" must not be seen as equivalent to "non-military purposes". The right to self-defence and collective defence which is embodied in the United Nations Charter must not be restricted by a general embargo on measures of a defensive nature, even if they are carried out in space.

(Mr. Wegener, Federal Republic of Germany)

On the other hand, every move which leads to a balanced reduction or restriction of offensive military devices and activities in outer space, and which can thereby increase international security, will receive our support. The inadequacy of substantive legal rules of arms control in outer space corresponds to the lack of a suitable procedure for verifying compliance with the relevant obligations. An effective system of supervision and inspection has not yet been agreed upon in any of the existing treaties. Future agreements whose object is the exclusive use of outer space for peaceful purposes must contain stringent verification provisions. As my delegation has pointed out on previous occasions, the lack of verification arrangements in the Soviet draft treaty is one of the most fundamental shortcomings in the Soviet approach. I hope and expect that the Soviet delegation will take advantage of the discussions in the Committee on Disarmament to present in detail its conception of how the question of verification can be regulated in a future treaty so that the use of space technology in breach of the treaty can be precluded.

I believe I have made clear that previous treaties have not been substantial enough to ensure an acceptable level of arms control in outer space. The Soviet draft treaty of 10 August 1981 does not bring us any further in this respect.

My delegation feels that despite the need for haste, information on the state and future development of space technology must precede formal treaty negotiations. The American space programme, as announced by President Reagan at the beginning of July, not only offers the prospect of international co-operation in the use of outer space, but also underlines American willingness to consider verifiable and equitable arms control measures in outer space that would ban or otherwise limit the testing and deployment of specific weapons systems. An informative exchange of views, in which in particular the leading space Powers ought to participate, could win sympathy for an initial approach to negotiations which concentrates only on those systems whose own destructive capacity enables them to attack and destroy satellites required for reconnaissance, navigation, communications, weather forecasting and verification of disarmament agreements. This approach was proposed in United Nations General Assembly resolution 36/97 C.

I see three steps which ought to determine our future course of action:

A comprehensive exchange of views on the state of development of space technology;

Identification of the systems posing the greatest threat;

Establishment at the appropriate juncture of a working group with a clearly defined mandate to engage, as a first step, in discussions on the most threatening and destabilizing systems.

(Mr. Saran, India)

Although India is a developing country, it has taken a keen interest in the exploration of outer space. During the last 15 years or so, India has successfully trained a large number of personnel in space technology, including the designing and launching of satellites. The modest progress which has been achieved in India's space programme is inextricably linked with the close co-operation that its Department of Space has developed with space agencies in several countries including the Soviet Union, the United States, France and the Federal Republic of Germany and also international agencies. We believe that it is necessary to strengthen the environment within which such beneficial international co-operation can continue to develop and be strengthened. It is not enough to keep outer space devoid of weapons. It is necessary to keep outer space free of fears and suspicions that plague us here on earth and that is possible only through the development of international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

We in India are convinced that space technology can be a powerful catalyst in the economic and social development of developing countries. Along with peaceful co-operation with other advanced countries we have tried to build our own indigenous expertise in this field. We are also prepared to share our modest achievements in this field with other developing countries, and the Government of India has decided to allocate a portion of India's space budget to promote co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space among developing countries.

Given our commitment to the peaceful uses of outer space and the immense possibilities that we see in the development of space technology for our own economic development, it should come as no surprise to this Committee that my country is greatly concerned about the possibility of an arms race in outer space. Outer space must remain a domain of peace and a common heritage of mankind. We support negotiations that would ensure these objectives. Like other delegations belonging to the Group of 21, my delegation believes that we ought to set up without delay an ad hoc working group of this Committee to undertake negotiations on further measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space, as was called for in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. In our view, the objective of negotiations within such a working group ought to be the conclusion of an agreement prohibiting the development, testing and deployment of weapons of any kind in outer space. Such an instrument would be a logical extension of the 1967 Space Treaty which prohibits the deployment of weapons of mass destruction in outer space.

While we believe that this is the kind of agreement we should aim at, we are, of course, prepared to consider, as a first step, more limited agreements such as the prohibition of the testing and deployment of anti-satellite weapons.

(Mr. El Reedy, Egypt)

I would now like to turn to the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space, a matter which, after extensive debates during the spring session, we agreed to include on our agenda. At that time I explained Egypt's position in this respect and emphasized the fact that, since the beginning of the second half of this century, in the General Assembly of the United Nations and, in particular, in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Egypt had continually advocated the need for an agreement to prohibit the use of outer space for military purposes and to restrict its use to peaceful purposes in furtherance of the interests and progress of mankind. Although agreement was reached in 1967 on the "Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies", 15 years after the adoption of that Treaty we still lack an international agreement prohibiting the arms race in outer space and restricting its use to peaceful purposes.

The rapid progress in modern technology and the space sciences calls for an early approach to this item through an ad hoc working group endowed with a general, comprehensive and non-specific mandate within the framework of which it would be able to address all aspects of the problem, including the question of anti-satellite systems.

We are naturally aware of the complexities and ramifications of this question. During the first part of this session last spring, therefore, we proposed that the secretariat should prepare a full collection of all the background documents and proposals relating to this question so that we could identify the various stages through which it has passed. This would undoubtedly save much time and effort which would otherwise be spent in the informal consultations which have been proposed to deal with this question.

Mr. SUTRESNA (Indonesia): Mr. Chairman, I have to request your indulgence and that of the distinguished delegates because I need to take the floor again, very briefly, at this plenary meeting.

I have the honour to introduce formally, on behalf of the Group of 21, document CD/329 containing a draft mandate for a working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space (item 7 of our agenda).

During the discussion on item 7 both at plenary meetings and at informal meetings of the Committee, the need for the establishment of an ad hoc working group to deal with this item has been widely acknowledged. In the view of the Group of 21, the exchange of views we have had so far on this subject has revealed to us that there is already a basis for substantive negotiations. The draft mandate as contained in CD/329 has been formulated by the Group of 21 in such a way as to accommodate the different views that have so far been reflected in our deliberations, with a view to enabling the Committee to undertake substantive negotiations on this subject during the first part of 1983 session.

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

It is the wish of the Group of 21 that the Committee should adopt a decision on the establishment of an ad hoc working group on item 7 and its terms of reference at this particular session. Such a decision, in the view of the Group of 21, is in line with what the Committee on Disarmament has been called upon to do by the recently concluded Unispace Conference in Vienna.

Mr. ERDEMBILEG (Mongolia) (translated from Russian): Allow me, Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the Mongolian delegation, to offer you our best wishes as Chairman of the Committee for the month of September and for the intervening period up to the opening of our spring session; we are sure that you will make an important contribution during this critical period of the work of the Committee on Disarmament at its 1982 session.

I have asked for the floor in order to express my delegation's satisfaction at the document — CD/329 — just introduced by the distinguished representative of Indonesia, Ambassador Sutresna.

The Mongolian delegation is prepared to study that document with a view to enabling the Committee on the basis of that proposal and of document CD/272, which was submitted by the Mongolian delegation during the spring part of our session, in due course, to formulate a mandate for an ad hoc working group on item 7 of its agenda so that it can start work as soon as possible next year.

(U Maung Maung Gyi, Burma)

The discussions during the summer session of this Committee on the prevention of an arms race in outer space were indeed very interesting and informative. The views expressed by the representatives of States with considerable knowledge of this very intricate and complex subject have given us much insight into the ramifications of the issue, despite the fact that we have not as yet been able to establish an ad hoc working group to deal effectively with this matter. The discussions also revealed that there is a consensus of opinion that this issue should be dealt with in the context of this multilateral forum. This is indeed a propitious start, for outer space, which is defined as "the province of all mankind", is not under the national jurisdiction of States, and issues dealing with the activities of States in outer space should of necessity have an international perspective.

The deliberations on the prevention of an arms race in outer space have disclosed that there appear to be differences in approach on how to achieve agreement or agreements. For this reason it would perhaps be appropriate to deal with this matter from a broad perspective.

What we have learnt from our discussions here is that the prevention of an arms race in outer space is a very complex issue as it involves an array of high-technology weapons in various stages of development, some operational or near-operational, others in the stages of experiment and development, and many others still in the realm of theoretical scientific possibility. Under the circumstances, it would be difficult to define the scope of the weapons to be prohibited and still more difficult to resolve would be the issue of verification as some would seem to suggest. There are also differing views on whether an arms race in outer space is an immediate or a remote threat. Whatever these views are, it is essential to nip the problem in the bud before it becomes more difficult to solve. The existing Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space could serve us as a very useful reference as regards the nature of the broad approach we might first take to define the general principles governing the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The inclusion of commitments to undertake further measures in such an approach could meet the need for taking practical steps that are required for the non-armament of outer space. In this connection, it has been our privilege, by the kind courtesy of the delegation of Sri Lanka, to listen to the very illuminating statement made by Mr. Arthur C. Clarke, the eminent authority on outer space. It is particularly relevant to mention what Mr. Clarke quoted in his statement, which is as follows: "The only defence against the weapons of the future is to prevent them ever being used. In other words, the problem is political and not military at all. A country's armed forces can no longer defend it; the most they can promise is the destruction of the attacker."

(Mr. Tellalov, Bulgaria)

One positive result of the 1982 session is the increased attention given by the Committee to the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The proposal submitted by the delegation of the Mongolian People's Republic on the establishment of an ad hoc working group on this question and the draft mandate it contained met with a positive response in the Committee.

It is to be regretted that the opposition of the United States of America has made it impossible to undertake concrete negotiations with a view to preventing the extension of the arms race to outer space.

The delegations of the socialist countries will continue their efforts towards the solution of this urgent question. They note with satisfaction the awareness of its importance shown by the delegations of the Group of 21, which submitted a draft mandate two days ago, and some western States.

(Mr. Fields, United States)

During our summer session, the Committee returned to the question of whether additional arms control measures affecting outer space would be desirable. Our informal discussions were informative and productive. In my view, these discussions provided an appropriate perspective for further consideration of the issue. They shed light on the large body of international law already contained in existing agreements which constrain the possibilities for an arms race in outer space. The discussions also pointed up the fact that activities in outer space have utility both for peaceful as well as aggressive purposes and revealed that our main concern should be about programmes which have aggressive characteristics. In particular, the anti-satellite weapon programme of the Soviet Union has caused other nations, including my own, to take due notice of the potential threat to systems on which we all depend for such important functions as navigation, communications, early warning of nuclear attack and monitoring of arms control agreements.

Nevertheless, a large number of delegations in this Committee have not yet contributed to our consideration of the question of outer space arms control. The subject bears further scrutiny, and I continue to believe that the most efficient way to pursue our examination of these issues is through the mechanism of informal meetings of the Committee.

I would also like to say a few words regarding the two working groups which did not meet during this session. My delegation was certainly prepared to resume work on both negative security assurances and the comprehensive programme of disarmament. Regarding the comprehensive programme, we look forward to resuming our work next session so that we can report to the General Assembly at its

(Mr. Garcia Moritan, Argentina)

We would also like to place particular emphasis on another point which, in my delegation's view, as a result of its own experience, is of a fundamental nature and consequently leads it to express regret that, at this session, the Committee has not set up an ad hoc working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the prohibition of the use of satellites for military purposes. My delegation would like to point out that our work should be aimed at the demilitarization of outer space. We have heard, not without some surprise, certain statements in which speakers have claimed that the demilitarization of outer space is unrealistic or no longer possible. We have heard such arguments on other occasions, in connection with attempts to maintain certain military advantages or to divert attention from the real problems of disarmament. Satellites are already used for military purposes to a considerable and significant extent, as my country learned, with grievous consequences, during the conflict in the South Atlantic when United States satellites were placed at the service of the colonialist Power. It is appropriate to remind members that, at the end of 1980, 75 per cent of the satellites in orbit were for military purposes and that 70 per cent of the military communications of one of the Superpowers are affected by that means.

My delegation wonders whether the task of the Committee on Disarmament is to discuss this situation or carefully to avoid doing so in order to maintain the existing Power relationships.

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(The Chairman)

The problem of preventing an arms race in outer space has recently become particularly pressing and urgent.

The approach to the consideration of this question must be constructive, aimed at the prevention of the further militarization of space and the use of contemporary scientific and technical achievements for peaceful purposes.

I think it would not be superfluous to recall that the General Assembly also recognized the value of the resumption of bilateral negotiations between the USSR and the United States of America on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

(Mr. MacEachen, Canada)

Another area for progress is the subject of weapons for use in outer space. This issue has been described as the first arms control problem of the twenty-first century. I urge the Committee to begin as soon as possible its essential task of defining the legal and other issues necessary to build upon the outer space legal regime. Canada contributed to this objective in a working paper tabled here last summer. Verification is likely to loom large, as it does for a nuclear test ban and a chemical weapons ban. The expanding programme of verification research in Canada will seek to identify possible solutions. We intend to participate actively in this work. It is the view of the Government of Canada that it is time to establish a working group on this subject.

I have focused on four important issues, four Canadian priorities for 1983, on which I wished to put Canada's position strongly:

Canada will press for progress toward the objective of a comprehensive nuclear test ban;

Canada will press for a more effective non-proliferation regime;

Canada will press for a convention to prohibit chemical weapons;

Canada will press for progress towards the objective of prohibiting all weapons for use in outer space.

These are issues where there are prospects for genuine progress and where progress can make a direct contribution to mutual security.

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(Mr. Don Nanjira, Kenya)

(e) Prevention of an arms race in outer space. Here, the onus is on the shoulders of the States with major space capabilities and the objective of preventing such an arms race cannot be attained unless the powers concerned refrain from competitive military activities in outer space. The best way to stop and prevent that race would be through the negotiation and conclusion of verifiable and effective agreements on the subject.

As you know, the Group of 21 has already proposed a mandate for a working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space (CD/329). The urgency and significance of concluding agreements or a convention in this field necessitates the establishment of such a working group at the earliest time possible, preferably during this session of the Committee. The urgency and priority nature of this issue was recognized by the General Assembly in its resolution 37/83 of 9 December 1982.

The report of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, held in Vienna, Austria, from 9 to 21 August 1982, is contained in document A/CONF.101/10, and should be regarded and used as an important document in this regard.

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(Mr. Genscher, Federal Republic of Germany)

Finally, great importance also attaches, in my Government's view, to arms control measures designed to prevent an arms build-up in outer space. The Committee on Disarmament will have to pay particular attention to this field as well in the future.

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(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

Recent events have drawn our attention to a special space problem. We are informed that nuclear power reactors are used on board certain satellites. We are concerned that the malfunction of such satellites can pose hazards to the population and the environment. The use of nuclear power sources in orbit should therefore be subject to the same kind of regulations as those adopted for the use of nuclear power on earth. Such regulations must be internationally accepted since the malfunction of a space craft with a nuclear power source may affect almost any country. It is, therefore, important that the work on international safety regulations which has been going on for some years in the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space be completed expeditiously.

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

The military utilization of outer space has assumed increasing importance. In fact the majority of the satellites launched in the last two decades have had a military mission. It is known that considerable efforts are being made to develop anti-satellite systems and such systems have already been tested in outer space. Important resources have also been committed to studying and developing technologies for space-based ABM systems. The extension of an arms race into outer space is a matter of grave concern to the international community. This concern was clearly reflected at the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE 82).

If unchecked, developments in this field will accelerate into another ruinous and destabilizing arms race. The international community and the space Powers themselves should -- before it is too late -- make a determined effort to further limit the military use of outer space and to prohibit anti-satellite and ABM warfare.

The General Assembly has, in two resolutions (37/99 D and 37/83), requested the Committee on Disarmament to consider taking up the question of the military utilization of outer space for substantive consideration. The Committee should, therefore, as a matter of urgency establish a working group on this subject at the very beginning of this session.

(Mr. Bush, United States)

I should also like to say a brief word about further arms control measures affecting outer space. The United States has been the leader in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space. We intend to continue this leadership role. Some of these activities in outer space are important to our national security and that of our allies. They help to monitor the peace, to warn of the threat of war, to ensure proper command and control of our armed forces world-wide, to preserve our deterrent capability, and to assist in the verification of arms control agreements. The limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, the Environmental Modification Convention, and the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, which is one of the SALT I agreements, all have important arms control provisions affecting outer space. Some are now asking of us all whether additional measures might be called for and if so of what kind? The United States does not have a simple answer to that question, and we are continuing to study this issue. Clearly, the conditions do not exist which would make negotiations appropriate. We are, however, prepared to exchange views with other members of this Committee, and believe the Committee should address the matter in a very systematic way, a more systematic way than it has done in the past.

(Mr. Onkelinx, Belgium)

The Committee could also contemplate a similar role in the matter of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. We hope that it will be possible to reach agreement quickly on a mandate for a working group to deal with this question.

We suggest that for a start this subsidiary body should, after thorough consideration, define the questions to be discussed with a view to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. To begin with, a study could be made of all the international agreements referring to this matter, so as to see where further elaboration might be necessary.

(Mr. Herder, German Democratic Republic)

Some remarks on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Many of us have been witness to the efforts of a majority of States at the thirty-seventh session for the adoption of a joint resolution. The result was resolution 37/83 which we consider to be a good basis for negotiations in this Committee. It is unfortunate that a single State opposed the consensus.

In the above-mentioned so-called "Defense Guidelines" it is declared that outer space operations "add a new dimension to our military capabilities. We must make sure that treaties and agreements do not block opportunities to develop such capabilities". The question arises whether the international community will again be faced with accomplished facts? Should it not be possible to counter such efforts by elaborating an international treaty prohibiting the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space? We support the establishment of a working group for this purpose, with a corresponding mandate.

(Mr. Li Luye, China)

The prevention of an arms race in outer space is also an important question. The dynamic development of space science and technology has opened up prospects for man's conquest of the universe. While being inspired by the achievements already made in this respect, people are deeply concerned about the fact that the major Powers with enormous space capabilities are extending their arms race into outer space. For years they have been spending huge sums of money on the development of space weaponry. Anti-satellite weapons have already been manufactured and research on laser weapons and particle-beam weapons has intensified. In recent years, the military activities of these Powers have also been intensified in outer space. Their ever-increasing rivalry has already made "space war" no longer a figment of science fiction, but a growing component part of their respective global strategies. Such a dangerous trend must be stopped promptly.

China consistently maintains that outer space should be used solely for peaceful purposes, and it attaches importance to international co-operation for the peaceful use of outer space. We hold that an international legal instrument on the prohibition of an arms race in outer space should be elaborated through negotiations. To this end, we are in favour of the establishment by the Committee on Disarmament of an appropriate ad hoc working group. It is true that it is a rather complicated problem to prevent the militarization of outer space. Nevertheless we are confident that a solution can always be found to any difficult and complicated problem, provided all States work in co-operation with sincerity.

(Mr. Alessi, Italy)

Two resolutions relating to the prevention of an arms race in outer space were adopted by the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session, by a very large majority. Their adoption was preceded by intense negotiations among various interested delegations; although it did not prove possible to overcome certain differences of views and present a single resolution, these resolutions form a useful frame of reference for the continuation of our discussions on agenda item 7.

These discussions should take place in the most suitable framework, such as an ad hoc working group with an appropriate mandate.

The very first obstacle which will have to be faced is the absence of consensus as to the precise subject of our negotiations. In order to overcome this obstacle, a collective effort is necessary to facilitate the discussion and definition, after thorough examination, of the various questions to be dealt with in the negotiation of effective and verifiable measures to prevent an arms race in outer space.

Resolution 37/99 D indicates that, among these questions, that of ensuring the immunity of satellites through the negotiation of an effective and verifiable prohibition of anti-satellite systems is the most urgent. It is of course not the only one; there are other questions, too, which we are likewise prepared to examine and discuss. It has been observed that spacecraft, by their nature, lend themselves particularly well to international co-operation. Our experience in this area confirms this observation and, in our view, increases the urgency of strengthening the legal protection afforded to the space objects of all nations: the progress made by the European Space Agency during the past ten years sets an example in this regard; my country shortly intends to launch, from a platform off the coast of Kenya, the fifth of the "SAN MARCO DL" scientific satellites, whose activities in the spheres of teledetection and climatology are of interest to all countries, particularly those in the tropical zone.

Positive achievements towards the prevention of an arms race in outer space will serve as a powerful stimulus for the peaceful use of space and international co-operation for the benefit of all countries.

(Mr. Imai, Japan)

My country recognizes that recent remarkable progress in science and technology for the development of outer space, while opening up very promising possibilities for the future of mankind, gives rise, at the same time, to concerns over the possible extension of an arms race into outer space in the near future. Based on such recognition, we have pointed out that the commencement last year in the Committee on Disarmament of consideration of the item, "Prevention of an arms race in outer space", was quite timely and opportune. Although this is a complex issue and can entail many complications, we hope that the Committee on Disarmament will continue to give serious consideration to this matter.

(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

Outer space should be used solely for peaceful activities, but in fact it is already being used for military purposes, and the plans and projects under way augur a growing and expanded militarization.

It would be superfluous to dwell on anything so obvious as the need for the prevention of nuclear war. However, I should like to say that we cannot accept the idea that this question should be dealt with in the broader context of the prevention of war in general. While it is self-evident that any war should be prevented and avoided, it is also true that war has been with man since his earliest days and that all efforts to eliminate it from the conduct of nations have proved fruitless. Such efforts should constantly continue, but the beginning of the atomic age in 1945 brought with it the possibility of a conflict in which nuclear weapons might be used with such horrifying properties as to endanger the very survival of the human race. This fully justifies the initiation in appropriate forums -- and the Committee on Disarmament is one -- of a search for pactical measures to reduce and if possible eliminate the risks of the outbreak of a nuclear war.

However, it would appear that in these two areas, too -- outer space and the prevention of nuclear war -- the Committee will be unable to play the full role that it has been assigned and which is expected of it, despite the appeals made in this respect by the United Nations General Assembly. Once again, the Committee will at best be limited to an exchange of views, either formal or informal. The Committee is not a deliberative body, and the international community will not be satisfied with words and more words, which often leave no trace.

(Mr. Tellalov, Bulgaria)

In the view of the delegation of the People's Republic of Bulgaria the Committee ought, at its present session, to decide on the opening, without delay, of negotiations on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space. Judging from the results of the thirty-seventh session of the United Nations General Assembly on this issue, the conclusion may be drawn that there is now a wider basis for working out a generally acceptable mandate for a working group. We are resolutely for the creation of an ad hoc working group on this subject, and are ready for consultations and co-operation with all interested delegations. At the same time we vigorously oppose any suggestions to simply "exchange views", or "address the matter in a more systematic way", as a substitute for genuine negotiations.

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(Mr. Ijewere, Nigeria)

Before closing I should like to speak briefly on two major items of special concern to my delegation. The first is the problem of an arms race in outer space. It is our view, which we have held consistently, that outer space must be a zone of peace to be used for the benefit of all mankind. Serious efforts should be made by this Committee to implement General Assembly resolution 37/83 calling upon it to establish an ad hoc working group on the subject at the beginning of the 1983 session, with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space.

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(Mr. Terrefe, Ethiopia)

On the prevention of an arms race in outer space, my delegation reiterates its position in support of the undertaking of concrete measures that would prohibit any military or hostile use of outer space. The best way to tackle this would be the establishment of an ad hoc working group on the subject, as was recommended by the General Assembly in its resolution 37/83. Last year my delegation expressed the hope for a common approach on this subject. It is our hope again that the draft mandate proposed by the Group of 21 in document CD/329 will be accepted as a basis for the establishment of an ad hoc working group on the subject.

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(Mr. Berg, Norway)

The prevention of an arms race in outer space is becoming an increasingly important task. Recent technological developments demonstrate that further international instruments beyond the outer space treaty of 1967 are essential. In particular, and as a first step, attention should be focused on the development of anti-satellite weapons and their destabilizing effects on international security. To this end, Norway co-sponsored last year a General Assembly resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the prohibition of anti-satellite systems. This resolution calls for further measures and appropriate international negotiations in accordance with the 1967 Treaty, such as the establishment of a working group on outer space in the Committee on Disarmament.

My Government believes that an intensification of the Committee's activity in this field is desirable and that the deliberations will benefit from adequate assistance from experts. We would hope that the major space Powers would offer such assistance in order to expedite the Committee's work. Other countries ought to draw on available expertise as well. For our part we should like to follow closely the work of the Committee also in this area, while drawing on our own experts. Many of the issues involved may seem complex and maybe even remote today. We are convinced, however, that these are issues with a major bearing on future strategic stability and therefore on the security of all of us.

(Mr. Ahmad, Pakistan)

Our delegation also hopes that a working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space will be established to commence work at this session of the Committee. In view of the breathtaking developments in the area of warfare in outer space, it is imperative that serious negotiations begin immediately to prevent the emergence of new frontiers of the arms race. There is no longer any doubt as to the imminence of the development of the so-called futuristic weapons for use in space. An American writer, Ralph K. Bennet, in an article entitled "Struggle for Supremacy in Space", has the following to say in this regard: "A secret race is taking place in private and government laboratories around the United States, and in huge military-scientific complexes inside the Soviet Union, to see who will perfect a new generation of weapons of blinding speed and destructiveness. Such weapons could destroy all the satellites in the sky in a few minutes, and also any ICBM warheads in the upper atmosphere before they start on their ballistic paths back to targets on earth". These are portents of a critical time ahead of us.

(Mr. Jayakoddy, Sri Lanka)

Let me leave aside this planet for a while and turn to outer space. 1982 was a significant year where outer space was concerned. We witnessed some spectacular feats by the United States and the USSR in which man demonstrated his genius, talent, skill and courage. These feats reminded us of what great benefits we could draw if we so willed it and at the same time alerted us to dangers that lurk not so far away. The "UNISPACE 1982" conference came out with a blueprint for genuine international co-operation in the exploration and peaceful use of outer space, but it did not fail to remind us of the dangerous trends now under way to make that environment a new arena of the arms race. We in this Committee have had a few opportunities to examine the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. My delegation was happy to bring to the Committee someone who speaks knowledgeably about the question. We failed to set up a working group here last year but we kept the issue alive at the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

We take a very positive view of the wide sponsorship of General Assembly resolution 37/83 and the support that was extended to it. Regrettably, the best efforts of many in New York were insufficient to ensure that there was only one resolution. Although disappointed, we are not disheartened. We feel that there is universal endorsement of the proposal that urgent action must commence on negotiating an agreement or agreements which will prevent outer space from being used for the arms race. Several distinguished representatives who preceded me have spoken on the subject in constructive terms. Interesting suggestions and practical ideas have been put forward as to how this Committee could proceed on this question. My delegation wishes that the Committee should set up at this session a working group that can start work at an early date. The drafting of a mandate, we feel, should not become a further source of discord in the Committee. The question is of concern to all States, although only a very few share outer space activity amongst themselves. My delegation earnestly hopes that the Committee will be able to arrive at an unanimous and early decision on how further work on the issue could be pursued to the satisfaction of all.

(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

With regard to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, the subject of item 7 of our agenda, the French delegation took an active part in the consideration of this question last year and expressed its views in detail. In view of the very great complexity of the subject we believe that it should this year be given very thorough study. This study should concentrate, as a matter of priority, on a consideration of the problems relating to the prevention of the deployment in outer space of those weapons that are potentially the most destabilizing, such as anti-satellite weapons.

The French delegation is ready to join in a consensus on the setting up of a working group, provided its mandate is satisfactory.

(Mr. Oul-Rouis, Algeria)

The growing militarization of space -- another subject of concern to the international community -- is likely to lead to the conversion of outer space into a theatre of confrontation between the major Powers.

Outer space is the heritage of humanity and should be reserved exclusively for peaceful uses for the benefit of all. This is our deep-seated conviction and we feel obliged, therefore, to stress the imperative need to prevent an arms race in outer space.

The participants in the "UNISPACE '82" conference held in Vienna last August invited States possessing major space capabilities to contribute actively to negotiations aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space while refraining from any action running counter to that objective.

At its last session the General Assembly adopted a resolution on similar lines in which it requested the Committee on Disarmament to establish an ad hoc working group with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space.

(Mr. Skalli, Morocco)

The extension of the arms race to outer space is a subject of great concern to the international community. The ever-increasing trend towards the militarization of outer space will, if we are not careful, make it a new battle-field, which can only add to the uncertainties and insecurity that already prevail on our planet.

Our duty is to do everything possible to reserve outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes and to preserve it as the common heritage of mankind.

Aware of the need to remove the danger which an arms race in that environment would mean for all mankind, the United Nations General Assembly, in its resolutions 37/83 and 37/99 D, urged us to take appropriate measures to that end.

The Moroccan delegation therefore considers that it would be advisable to give favourable consideration to the proposal of the non-aligned and neutral countries, supported by several other countries, for the establishment within the Committee of an ad hoc working group responsible for undertaking negotiations with a view to the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space.

(Mr. Datcu, Romania)

As the Yearbook published by SIPRI in 1982 stresses, at least three quarters of all satellites are used for military purposes, and the majority are closely linked with the development of new strategies for the use of weapons of mass destruction. The Romanian delegation therefore believes that the starting of negotiations for the prevention of an arms race in outer space ought also to be the subject of our discussions this year. We are in favour of the setting up of a working group of the Committee on this question without further delay.

(Mr. Zawalonka, Poland)

I would now like to touch briefly upon a matter which we also believe to be important and pressing. I am referring to the need to proceed without delay to negotiations on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space. It would not be enough to repeat the performance of exchanging views on this problem in the Committee. What we and many others insist upon is the immediate establishment of an ad hoc working group on this subject with an appropriate mandate, which could proceed with the actual negotiations.

(Mr. El Reedy, Egypt)

We have tried, or rather let me say we have been trying, for more than 20 years to prevail upon the countries which have conquered outer space to establish a system and a set of restrictions to prevent the extension of the arms race to outer space and to safeguard it against military uses. We felt optimistic last year when we saw indications of a possible agreement on the establishment of an ad hoc working group on this question. Unfortunately we have not yet succeeded in setting up this group.

Here again I would like to refer to the difficult situation in which the countries of the third world find themselves. These countries have a direct security interest in ensuring that outer space above their territories is not used for military purposes that could endanger these countries, which lack the means to protect themselves.

A few weeks ago, or rather a few days ago, reports were circulated in the media about the likelihood that a nuclear-powered satellite would crash into the earth. We witnessed the preparations undertaken by several developed countries to protect themselves against such an eventuality on their territories. However, we did not hear of similar preparations in the third world countries for the simple but obvious reason that most of them do not possess the necessary facilities for civil protection. Does this not provide all of us with a warning of the possible consequences of the use of space for military purposes?

A large number of non-nuclear-weapon States, many of which are third world countries, have committed themselves to renunciation of the nuclear option in order to contribute to the international endeavours to halt the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to establish a regime which could be the starting point for the final elimination of nuclear weapons, the cessation of nuclear weapon tests and the use of nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful purposes.

Unfortunately, none of these objectives has been achieved. With the passing of time, the issue becomes even more complicated.

Therefore, we once again call upon the nuclear-weapon States to try to understand the critical situation with which we are all faced. We appeal to them in this Committee to take steps to put an end to the state of paralysis from which we are suffering. It is our earnest hope that we will be able to begin to discharge our mission of achieving nuclear disarmament, halting nuclear tests, securing guarantees for the non-nuclear-weapon States, preventing the outbreak of a nuclear war and endeavouring to ensure that space is used only for peaceful purposes.

(Mr. Sutresna, Indonesia)

Before concluding, my delegation would like to reiterate the importance of the task of the Committee concerning the prevention of an arms race in outer space. It is generally recognized that the extension of the arms race to outer space will not only exhaust valuable resources which would otherwise be more appropriately used for relieving mankind of hunger and poverty, but will certainly also increase the danger of war, nuclear or conventional, on the earth. It is therefore incumbent upon all members of the Committee to ensure that resolution 37/83 of the General Assembly calling upon the Committee to establish an ad hoc working group to deal with the subject in the first part of the 1983 session will be duly implemented. In this connection, my delegation is confident that the Committee will seriously consider the draft mandate as proposed by the Group of 21 in

(Mr. Wabuge, Kenya)

My delegation is gravely concerned that the Committee has not yet adopted its agenda for 1983 and the work programme for its current session. We believe that one possible compromise could be reached along the following lines which I present to the Committee for its consideration:

One, accept prevention of nuclear war as a separate item on the agenda of the Committee on Disarmament as proposed by the Group of 21 in its carefully drafted working paper contained in document CD/341;

Two, have the proposed items 9 and 10 discussed under the existing items 2 and 5, respectively, of the Committee's agenda, with the proviso that these subitems be given identifiable status with separate working groups and appropriate mandates, subject to negotiation;

Three, adopt the agenda and work programme of the Committee as above;

Four, re-establish the working groups as they existed in 1982 and retain the chairmanships of the working groups on a nuclear test ban and on negative security assurances as they were in 1982; and

Five, transfer everything else, including the creation of a new working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, to informal consultations which should start as soon as possible.

My delegation believes that a procedure along the lines of the above practical proposals would lead to an early resolution of the deadlock in our procedural discussions. My delegation stands ready to continue participating actively in the work of this Committee. For indeed disarmament, like socio-economic development, is the most urgent and serious problem facing mankind today. Paragraph 18 of the Final Document provides an answer to our failure to achieve this goal: "Removing the threat of a world war -- a nuclear war -- is the most acute and urgent task of the present day. Mankind is confronted with a choice: we must halt the arms race and proceed to disarmament, or face annihilation".

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

And lastly, there is agenda item 7, the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The majority of delegations are truly ready, as they have been in the past, to undertake practical negotiations on this question, but last year one delegation prevented the adoption of a decision to set up a working group on it. If the position of that delegation has changed, we can only welcome the fact.

(Mr. Vidas, Yugoslavia)

We attach equal importance to the establishment of a working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. These two working groups could work in such a manner as to cover all problems in which the members of the Committee have expressed an interest. These are two vast and urgent issues of complex contents whose consideration would take some time. It is, therefore, necessary for these two working groups to start work as soon as possible. The Group of 21, which has put forward these requests, has proceeded from realistic assumptions and expects an in-depth and substantive consideration of the above issues.

Mr. KOMIVES (Hungary):

The main subject of this statement is the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The timeliness of this problem may be proven from various angles. History could be called on, since it is the bicentenary this year of the occasion when the first representative of mankind soared in a balloon to conquer the third dimension -- the space above. One could mention the rapid tempo of that vertical adventure: from 1783 to the first flight of the Wright brothers, a period of 120 years was required; from then to the launching of the first Soviet sputnik, that is, the beginning of the space age, it took only some 50 years, and 12 years later Neil Armstrong could take "the first great step of mankind". However, I do not intend to speak about the various stages of the discovery of the universe. What I wish to underline in some detail is a rather gloomy side of that bright picture. I wish to prove that since the space age dawned upon us, the danger has never been greater and more acute than now, the danger of witnessing the common heritage of mankind turn into the arena of an unprecedented arms race, which may bring unforeseeable threats to the destiny of the world. In this modest contribution I wish to call attention to the urgent need for resolute action in this important field. My points are the following.

First, the danger of an arms race in outer space is a real and rapidly growing one.

Secondly, the present trend, which would result in a less secure world with an ever higher level of armaments, can only be prevented through negotiations.

Thirdly, negotiations can only plug this channel of the arms race effectively if the problem is treated in a comprehensive manner and with a view to increasing the security of all States.

Fourthly, the solution of the problem by way of negotiations cannot bear any further delay.

(Mr. Komives, Hungary)

Well, let me try to prove my points.

A review of recent developments concerning outer space can lead to alarming conclusions. The achievements in various fields of science and technology, which require tremendous amounts of material and human resources, are devoted at an increasing rate not to the peaceful uses of outer space but to its growing militarization. This trend cannot be any novelty to the members of the Committee. Nevertheless, the lack of any progress in our discussion on the item and the failure of efforts to start concrete negotiations on it prompt me to quote some facts and figures.

Western press sources speak about a vast expansion of United States military operations in outer space. According to American administration officials, "the purpose of the surge into military space operations is to enable American forces to fight more effectively in a prolonged conventional or nuclear war..." (International Herald Tribune, 20 October 1982). The New York Times, referring to the five-year "Defense Guidance" that provides strategic direction for the armed forces, outlines the Reagan administration's military space programme. In the next five years the administration plans to increase spending on military operations in space by more than 10 per cent a year, which means an increase even faster than the 7 per cent annual increase in the over-all military budget. On 19 October 1982 the paper wrote the following: "The money would support the testing of an American ASAT, the development of a space-based ballistic missile defense system using lasers, more research on particle-beam weapons, construction of space-shuttle launching facilities for military operations, and the continuation of present satellite programs. In addition, looking somewhat farther in the future, the Pentagon is supporting conceptual studies of space stations and spaceplanes with military roles."

These developments, and perhaps many others as yet unknown to the public, alarm even American experts on foreign policy and defence technology. They fear -- says The New York Times -- that time is running out, if an outer space arms race is to be prevented. Such developments are being justified by contending that the United States has fallen behind the Soviet Union in that area.

Without challenging now the validity or the relevance to the matter in question of these assertions, and without going into technical details, let me make three short comments on this score.

First, I do not believe that we are facing any new phenomenon here when certain circles are trying to create an atmosphere in which they will not have any difficulty in selling such programmes as the ones mentioned in the American press. Recalling what the late President Eisenhower said about the nature of the military-industrial complex, I have no doubts that this, unfortunately, is not the last one of such campaigns. The present campaign, however, reminds me of a similar space alarm that was sounded after the launching of the first Soviet sputnik. At that time, the "missile gap hysteria" built upon the technical challenge of the sputnik,

(Mr. Komives, Hungary)

was exploited by the American side to carry out unprecedented programmes of nuclear missile development, in addition to the acceleration of space research. As the periodical Newsweek has put it, recalling those times: "Unsurprisingly, the Pentagon and the defense industry were quite willing to close the (non-existent) missile gap. Not one but six different US strategic missile systems on the boards - Atlas, Titan, Minuteman, Thor, Jupiter and Polaris - were pushed through to completion. By the early 1960s a real missile gap did in fact appear, one favoring the United States" (Newsweek, 18 October 1982).

Secondly, it is a question of decisive importance whether the State concerned is ready to settle the problem by political means, through negotiations, taking into consideration the security interest of the partner and the world in general. So far, unfortunately, only one of the partners has given proof of such readiness to negotiate, and what is even more important, to come to agreement.

Thirdly, the Secretary of Defense in the Carter administration, Mr. Harold Brown, considered -- in the words of the International Herald Tribune -- by members of Congress, military officials and military contractors to be the best-qualified technician to have been Defense Secretary, said: "By and large, the United States is ahead of the USSR in these military support uses for space" (International Herald Tribune, 20 October 1982).

If we try to get an answer to the question "What purposes are served by space programmes?", we can draw conclusions from various documents and statements by military leaders. Let me quote from a knowledgeable source.
Lt. General Richard C. Henry, deputy commander of the newly organized Space Command, declared on that score: "Space is not a mission, it is a place. It is a theater of operations. It is now time that we treat it as a theater of operations". The "Defense Guidance" elaborates on this by saying: "The United States space program will contribute to the deterrence of an attack on the United States or, if deterrence fails, to the prosecution of war by developing, deploying, operating and supporting space systems" (The New York Times, 17 October 1982).

These words only gain their real meaning if they are considered not only as a manifestation of endeavours to gain supremacy in a specific field but also as pieces of mosaic inserted in the totality of strategic conceptions. The Reagan administration's nuclear strategy which went beyond even President Carter's Presidential Directive 59, "calls on American forces to be able to 'render ineffective the total Soviet (and Soviet-allied) military and political power structure'. But it goes on to require the assured destruction of 'nuclear and conventional military forces and industry critical to military power'."

In that context it becomes much more unambiguous that the meaning of deterrence in present-day American strategic terminology is very close to first-strike capability, and thus the United States space programme is considered to be an important contribution to acquiring and maintaining such a first-strike capability.

(Mr. Komives, Hungary)

It should not escape our attention that indeed many of the capabilities rendered by present or future space systems totally satisfy the requirements for a pre-emptive first strike. Among the requirements for a pre-emptive first strike, the SIPRI Yearbook of 1981 enumerates highly accurate and reliable weapons which possess a high one-shot probability (the Global Positioning System known as Navstar, by 1988, when fully operational, will slash the margin of error for different weapons systems to 30 feet), the defence of both military and civilian targets against those retaliatory forces which do remain (the Pentagon is now carrying out research with space-based laser ABM-weapons).

If we assume that present and future space systems might fulfil some requirements for pre-emptive strikes or counterforce options, the question arises: how far do they enhance security for certain countries and for the world in general? Though it is very difficult to answer this question in short, nevertheless one can conclude that some of those space systems contribute to making nuclear weapons more suitable for fighting a nuclear war than deterring it, increase the relative advantages of a pre-emptive first strike, generating well-founded doubts about future intentions and, in the long run, undermine strategic stability between nuclear-weapon powers and in the world in general.

It must be clear for everybody that the concept of extending the arms race into outer space and the concept of mutual security simply cannot be matched. In the light of the resolutions adopted in recent years by the United Nations concerning outer space and of the views formulated by UNISPACE-82, one may come to the conclusion that the overwhelming majority of States have realized that in order to prevent an arms race in outer space, negotiations must be started without delay. That realization is taking shape also in the Committee on Disarmament. It may be a source of guarded optimism that the number of delegations obstructing concrete negotiations has in fact come down to a minimum. It would be very important now that not a single State should create for itself such a vicious circle that it would later not be able to break. As an example, one could mention the following: after the United States had in 1979 unilaterally broken off the bilateral talks which it had been holding from the previous year with the Soviet Union on anti-satellite weapons, the aircraft-launched anti-satellite programme was justified in the United States Defense Department report for 1982 as being necessary in the absence of agreements limiting the use of outer space to peaceful purposes. As a next step, Vice-President Bush stated here in the Committee on 4 February: "Clearly, the conditions do not exist which would make negotiations appropriate". I believe one should ponder in general over the disarmament philosophy which is contained in this respect in the "Defense Guidance": "We must insure that treaties and agreements do not foreclose opportunities to develop these capabilities. In particular, it must be recognized that agreements cannot protect our defense interests in space during periods of hostilities" (The New York Times, 17 October 1982). In the light of this, one can better understand the position of the State obstructing negotiations on substance. Nevertheless it still cannot justify the attitude whereby its own security interest is to be upheld to the detriment of international security as a whole.

(Mr. Komives, Hungary)

In addition to the simple rejection of negotiations, there is yet another set of explanations, denying the expediency of negotiations. It uses as a pretext the technical complexity of questions connected with the subject, and states that the complications and difficulties in the way of a workable agreement are nearly insurmountable. That position is far from being any novelty. Already in 1962, during the first meetings of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, certain delegations kept citing that slogan. Without in any way diminishing the need for technical knowledge, I only want to quote the example of the Outer Space Treaty of 1967 as proof of the fact that, with a will to agree, even the most complicated political and technical questions can be solved.

If the members of the Committee are willing to acknowledge the necessity and expediency of negotiations, the next question arises immediately: what should we negotiate about? My delegation stands for a comprehensive treatment of the whole problem, and supports the approach reflected in the draft treaty submitted by the delegation of the Soviet Union. We are convinced that an arms race in outer space can only be prevented if all its possible channels are promptly plugged. Such a comprehensive approach is dictated also by the lessons that can be drawn from the shortcomings of the 1967 Outer Space Treaty.

Certain delegations, as is shown by the resolutions on the subject adopted at the thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh sessions of the United Nations General Assembly, only wish to emphasize one aspect of the prevention of an arms race in outer space, and stress the urgency of anti-satellite weapons. There can be differences of opinion when a complex problem is evaluated, but it does not mean that any part of it can be artificially separated from its context. The bilateral talks of 1978/1979 between the Soviet Union and the United States clearly indicated that the Soviet Union is willing to discuss that question as well. Certain stipulations of various agreements between the two States also prove the point that the normal functioning of artificial satellites can be assured through agreements. Another proof of what I state lies in document CD/274 containing concrete proposals concerning anti-satellite weapons. However, the attempts aimed at making this question an exclusive subject of negotiations, irrespective of the various explanations given in support, belong to the same category of manoeuvres which try to gain unilateral advantages over the other side.

What are the arguments behind the need for a comprehensive treatment of the whole problem? Even the sources available to the general public indicate that the possible spectrum of outer space weaponry goes well beyond anti-satellite weapons. As an example, the United States military space budget, besides anti-satellite weapons, includes items like space-based ballistic missile defence systems using lasers, particle-beam weapons, space shuttle launching facilities for military operations, military space stations and military space-planes. Some of these items have really substantial financial as well as military consequences. The Defense Department plans, for example, to spend $10.9 billion for shuttle-related developments, operations and transition

(Mr. Komives, Hungary)

costs to accommodate 20 launches through 1987. Some 113 of the 311 flights planned through 1994 will carry military payloads. Robert T. Marsh, commander of the Air Force Systems Command said, while characterizing the importance of the shuttle: "We will depend upon it for launching virtually all of our national security payloads" (The New York Times, 17 October 1982).

Another important item is the space-based ballistic missile defence system, first and foremost because of its possible contribution to a pre-emptive strike capability, elaborated upon earlier. Though experts agree that prospects are still not close for a near-perfect laser missile defence system, research and development is being carried out at an accelerating pace. As a sign of it, the budget for military lasers doubled in one year, and jumped from $200 million in fiscal year 1981 to $400 million or even more in fiscal year 1982. According to Aviation Week and Space Technology, the United States army "is funding an exploratory development at Lockheed aimed at developing a non-nuclear kill interceptor for possible use in an exo-atmospheric ballistic missile defense" (Aviation Week and Space Technology, 1 March 1982). The same journal reported on 26 April that the House Armed Services Committee believes that "attention should be paid to achieving near-term capabilities such as anti-satellite and, possibly, air defense through ground- and air-based laser systems. It made references as well to weapon system studies of a space-based laser for use in satellite defense and ballistic missile defense. Beyond the fact that these are practical military programs related to outer space and thus must be subject to appropriate negotiations in the adequate forum, it is questionable how far they are in conformity with Article V of the ABM Treaty which states: 'Each Party undertakes not to develop, test, or deploy ABM systems or components which are sea-based, air-based, space-based, or mobile land-based'".

Ground-based and space-based laser and particle beam weapons, weapons in fixed orbit and armed space stations represent other important items in dealing with the question of the possible militarization of outer space and thus should be adequately addressed if effective and meaningful agreements are to be achieved.

Another question to resolve is that of weapon systems which are not deployed in outer space, but which are targeted there.

Elaborating upon my fourth point, may I underscore the necessity to start negotiations immediately on the problem of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. In the opinion of the Hungarian delegation, all the channels for concrete negotiations, including an adequate subsidiary body of the Committee on Disarmament, should be duly exploited for that lofty purpose. Time is really pressing, as the ever-accelerating pace of outer space military programmes and the high rates of increase in military space budgets bear witness.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

The situation is equally lamentable with respect to item 7 of the agenda, the question of the "Prevention of an arms race in outer space", for one delegation, ignoring the views of all the other members of the Committee, has stubbornly answered "No" to insistent proposals for the setting up of an ad hoc working group to conduct negotiations on this subject.

Another no less glaring example is the attitude of certain delegations to the drafting of the mandates of ad hoc working groups. Occasionally, owing to pressure from the world community and the members of this Committee, it becomes politically extremely difficult to prevent the establishment of working groups, and then a different ploy is adopted: the setting up of the working group is agreed to, but attempts are then made to limit its mandate simply to "discussing" certain questions, and even then not all aspects of certain issues but only some of them. This is what happened last year with the mandate of the Working Group on a Nuclear Test Ban. I should like to observe in passing that many members of the Committee agreed to such a limited mandate at that time as a temporary measure and to show their goodwill in order to allow the new United States administration time in which to consider and determine its attitude to the question of a comprehensive nuclear-weapon test ban. We now know the results of that review: the most authoritative representatives of the United States administration have talked about them, and what they amount to is that the question of the prohibition of nuclear-weapon tests is now regarded by the United States as a "long-term" goal, that is to say, something for the remote future.

But gentlemen, our Committee was not set up for the holding of debates on sundry issues; it was not intended as a discussion group or as an arena for the practice of oratory. The Committee on Disarmament is a negotiating body. That is its principal and indeed its only role, its raison d'être, the entire purpose of its existence.

We consider that if, by common agreement, an item is included in the Committee's agenda, then negotiations on that item ought to be started automatically and appropriate subsidiary bodies established. As regards the mandate of a working group, it should have a single content and a single aim, that of conducting negotiations with a view to elaborating an international agreement on the relevant aspect of the limitation of the arms race or disarmament. I believe that we should reach a firm understanding on this once and for all.

Mr. FIELDS (United States of America): I cannot fail to respond to some of the remarks made in the Committee this morning. I want to make several brief points.

First, our distinguished colleague, Ambassador Komives, ran through a litany of United States space programmes and objectives, quoting liberally from Western -- United States -- press sources. He left the impression that Newsweek magazine makes United States space policy. That is ridiculous. United States space policy was set forth in unequivocal terms on 4 July 1982 by President Reagan on the occasion of the return of the space shuttle, Columbia. I will gladly pass a copy of that statement to my friend, Ambassador Komives, for his perusal. To be sure, there are voluminous sources to quote from in the Western press, and this source is used liberally in this Committee. I would ask, where is the comparable information in the East? Why don't we have the benefit of a public debate on Soviet or Warsaw Pact security policies? Well, I think we all know the answer to that question.

(Mr. van den Broek, Netherlands)

I mentioned earlier the need for stability to maintain international peace and security and to prevent war. The notion of stability is particularly relevant to outer space.

Last year, the Committee on Disarmament held a first round of discussions on this subject. Since time is running out on us, the Committee should now probe more deeply into this complex problem and try to reach some conclusions.

At present, many artificial satellites fulfil military functions, wholly or partially. On the whole, these satellites have a stabilizing effect. Observation-, early-warning- and communications-satellites strengthen confidence that arms-control measures are being complied with, that no surprise attacks can be mounted and that communications can be maintained even in periods of tension and conflict.

This conclusion seems to me of the utmost importance. It means that for the foreseeable future complete demilitarization of outer space is not at all a good idea. It would, of course, not be very realistic either.

The development of anti-satellite weapons is quite another matter. Systems capable of destroying stabilizing satellites are by their very nature destabilizing. Both major space powers are developing such weapons, and the Soviet Union has even tested quite a number of them. In our opinion, this development should be halted. We know quite well that we are talking about a complex matter. Many different types of potential systems are involved, applying various techniques, operating either from the earth or from space. We realize that even under a complete and verifiable ban on anti-satellite weapons, some residual capacity in this field will remain since certain weapons and space-systems could also be used for anti-satellite warfare without being specially designed for that purpose. None of these complexities should discourage us.

After careful study of the major aspects of this issue we believe that two general measures should be taken which are mutually reinforcing and are meant to take away the threat of anti-satellite warfare. The first would be an investigation into the possibility of reaching an agreement to declare satellites inviolable. Parties should undertake not to damage, destroy or remove satellites and not to interfere with their functioning.

The second, meant to reinforce the declaration on inviolability, would consist of an agreement to prohibit the testing, stationing and use of specific anti-satellite weapons. We realize that both the definition of anti-satellite weapons as well as the development of adequate verification measures will be difficult, though not insoluble. For example, we regard a speedy ban on testing to be important, since that would be about the best way of verifying that anti-satellite weapons would not be deployed.

Mr. JAYAKODDY (Sri Lanka):

Mr. Chairman, as I may not be in Geneva for a few days next week, I seek the indulgence of the Committee to address it on item 7 of our agenda, the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

At last year's summer session of this Committee, the delegation of Sri Lanka expressed in detail its views on item 7, the prevention of an arms race in outer space. We tried to highlight what was taking place in the development of weapon systems that are designed for use in outer space. We emphasized that at least one system had reached operational capability, and that other weapon systems would fast reach their full development and thus become operational. Our concern was that these new weapon systems would soon be integrated into military doctrines and strategies that included their use, thus converting outer space into an arena of the arms race.

My delegation concluded that if the arms race in outer space had not commenced, then it was very close at hand, and if no concrete, urgent action was taken now to prevent it, the world would find itself very soon in the midst of a situation that would be far more complex and dangerous than that we face today.

In recent months, particularly during the last few weeks, there has been an incessant flow of information, analysis and comment which confirms that the apprehensions and fears that have been expressed in this Committee and outside it about the extension of the arms race into outer space have not been exaggerated. Many distinguished representatives in this Committee last year, and during the current session, have presented us with striking evidence of developments that are inevitably leading the world into an arms race outside this planet. I shall not try today to regale this Committee with details of these developments as we are now quite familiar with what is happening and what we can expect in future years up to and into the next millennium. I shall restrict myself to quoting a few sentences from an article entitled "The decisive frontier" appearing in Omni magazine in November 1981 in which the author, Mr. Jerry Pournelle, says as follows: "It is an unpalatable truth, but we must face it: before the end of this century — probably in this decade -- space weapons will end the balance of terror that has made nuclear war all but unthinkable for the last 36 years. They will make

(Mr. Jayakoddy, Sri Lanka)

possible a global conflict whose undamaged victor could dictate terms to a disarmed and helpless loser". I have no comment to offer on these words except to say I hope the author will not be proved correct. Since preparing this text I have seen this morning's Herald Tribune and it is worth quoting from an article by Flora Lewis on a recent conference held in London: "A small group of people, including some top experts on space war, has held a conference near here on the military use of space. Their chilling conclusion was that the military space age has arrived and cannot be revoked. The questions remaining are whether there will be weapons in space and war in space".

For my country, the prevention of the extension of the arms race into outer space is a major political issue of our times. It is both a political issue and a disarmament issue. Inherent in the political issue is whether the international community intends to shut off outer space once and for all from the arms race and thereby preserve it for peaceful purposes. Having saturated this planet with enough explosive and incendiary power to blow it up and roast it many times over, do we now intend to invade the heavens with new weapon systems so as to protect and safeguard our nuclear arsenals down below? There are philosophical and moral aspects to the issue, but they are not for this forum and therefore I shall bypass them. But we must face up to the political issue that is involved and we, as the Committee on Disarmament, the only forum for multilateral disarmament negotiations, are the appropriate body to negotiate on it as a disarmament issue.

Sri Lanka, a country without any space capability for the present or the foreseeable future, has welcomed with appreciation the achievements of all space powers in their civilian space programmes. We hope that they will continue and benefit the world as a whole. It therefore comes as a disappointment to us to know that a State with major space capabilities has decided to commence research on an anti-ballistic missile system to be used for defensive purposes in outer space. The concept underlying the system envisaged is not new and has been around for several years in different forms. But what is new and significant is that the decision to start research amounts to beginning the first stage in a familiar four-stage process with regard to new weapon systems. It begins with research, which of course comes out of what is felt to be a perceived need. Then follows development, with simulated testing followed by acquiring operational capability. Inevitably, there then arises the pressure to deploy. Once deployed and forming part of strategy and tactics, there is proliferation, quantitative and qualitative. And after a time-lag during which unlimited resources would have been spent will come moves to dismantle and eliminate the system, either through bilateral negotiations or perhaps as an item on the agenda of work of this Committee because more reliable, more effective, more destructive systems have been developed.

The decision I referred to, coming as it does at a time when concern and apprehension about the extension of the arms race into outer space are high and widespread, complicates even more the complexities that are involved in safeguarding outer space for peaceful purposes. We hope that reason, and the awareness of the responsibility that goes with being a State with major space capabilities, will prevent action that can lead to an extension of the arms race into outer space.

This Committee last year and earlier in this session has addressed item 7 both in plenary and in informal meetings. At the thirty-ninth and thirty-seventh sessions of the United Nations General Assembly, too, the issue has been examined. To my delegation it appears that there are at present three different approaches to the issue prevailing in the Committee. Let me take them up in ascending order.

(Mr. Jayakoddy, Sri Lanka)

The first approach, which I regretfully characterize as the passive or do-little approach, suggests that item 7 remain on the Committee's agenda and that it is of some importance. At the same time, it is said that item 7 is a highly complex issue, very technical, and that the Committee has no experience of negotiating disarmanent issues relating to outer space. Inherent in this approach is the view that the item be discussed and debated further in the Committee both in plenary and informal sessions, but there is no willingness or readiness to recognize the need for setting up a subsidiary body of the Committee to negotiate on the issue. If this approach is followed by the Committee the outcome would be that all of us could have excellent opportunities for spelling out 1,001 scenarios of coming star-wars and perhaps transform this Committee into being a learned society on outer space. But the Committee will make no progress in tackling the substance of the issue. The Committee's immobility in adopting any meaningful action will be matched on the outside with the intense pursuit of developments which will make it even more difficult to initiate action, as desired by the great majority of States, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

My delegation regrets the continuation of this approach in the Committee. To limit ourselves to debating, discussing and exchanging of views on what is manifestly a serious concern about preventing a danger to humanity before it grows more threatening and irreversible, is an abdication of our responsibilities towards the living and the generations that are to follow. In the early years after the Second World War, countries such as mine were either newly independent or still colonies, and we had no voice in disarmament negotiations. We were innocent bystanders whilst the nuclear arms race started and gathered momentum. The mushroom-like clouds from the nuclear-weapon tests lifted and we found ourselves hostages of the nuclear-weapon States. But now the picture is significantly different. We have found seats in this forum -- the only forum for multilateral disarmament negotiations -- and it is our intention to act vigorously and persistently in pressing for meaningful action towards preventing an arms race in outer space before it is too late. My delegation is not alone in this. The majority of States members of this Committee have told us that they cannot rest satisfied with the passive approach of doing little. They have called for a more positive attitude to be shown. We trust that this call will not be rejected.

The second approach that we find, the intermediate one, contains more positive elements. It encompasses the desire to set up a subsidiary body of this Committee to negotiate an agreement related to one weapon system that is now operational or to a restricted number of aspects of the entire issue of preventing an arms race in outer space. The chief characteristic of this approach is that it fragments and compartmentalizes the main issue and presses for urgent action on aspects that it identifies as of highest priority. But it fails to give due consideration to the fact that in the prevention of an arms race in outer space there are many aspects that are interrelated and linked inextricably, aspects that must be taken up together, and that fragmentation contributes to delaying and avoiding a comprehensive look at the entire issue. Once again the argument of complexity and lack of expertise in the Committee on negotiating disarmament relating to outer space arises, but this in itself cannot be an insurmountable obstacle.

(Mr. Jayakoddy, Sri Lanka)

My delegation welcomes the initiatives that have come from a number of States that can be identified as supporting this intermediate approach. These initiatives have helped to give better shape and direction to our deliberations and to shed light on the complexities that we shall face. But my delegation wishes to stress that a partial, fragmented approach avoids the main issue, viz., addressing ourselves to preventing an arms race in all its aspects, and I repeat, in all its aspects, in outer space. The information that has been presented to this Committee this year and last year, what is known publicly about developments that are now under way, the consequences of such developments and the repeated concern that has been expressed by the international community cannot be ignored or responded to by partial measures alone.

I now come to the third approach with which my delegation is fully associated. The elements in this third approach, the comprehensive one, are:

(i) It looks at the issue as a single integrated one that is made up of several aspects;

(ii) It addresses itself to sealing off outer space in its entirety as an arena of the arms race;

(iii) It calls for the setting up of a subsidiary body of the Committee as the vehicle for carrying out negotiations to draft an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent the extension of the arms race into outer space;

(iv) It is flexible in its formulation, providing for taking up on a priority basis, if that is called for, particular aspects of the issue within a comprehensive, all-inclusive framework;

(v) By being comprehensive it is not discriminatory or weighted to one side, and

(vi) It has the expressed support of the overwhelming majority of States members of the United Nations and in this Committee.

This approach, in our view, offers the best prospects for this Committee to respond as it should in working for the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

The Group of 21 proposed this approach in this Committee last year and it is presented in document CD/329. It will be recalled that at the thirty-seventh session of the United Nations General Assembly a group of non-aligned and neutral countries and a group of socialist countries co-sponsored resolution 37/83 on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, which was adopted by 138 votes in favour, 7 abstentions and one against. Paragraph 6 of that resolution states that the General Assembly

"Further requests the Committee on Disarmament to establish an ad hoc working group on the subject at the beginning of its session in 1983, with a view to

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undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space".

The United Nations General Assembly has thus in clear terms communicated its request to this Committee. We are aware that in certain circles it is fashionable to attach little weight to United Nations General Assembly resolutions and to give them a minimum of attention or even less consideration. But the General Assembly still remains one of the main channels by which the wishes of member States can be communicated to this Committee. If we in the Committee pay little regard to the requests of the General Assembly, we might be confronted with a situation where all States Members of the United Nations would want membership in this Committee, or may choose to come here as observers, to get their concerns heard. My delegation defends very strongly the autonomous character of this Committee and its right to order and organize its work in independent fashion. But this Committee does not work in a world of its own -- in a vacuum that it might choose to create for itself. It works in the international political environment and must be responsive to and reflect the concerns of the overwhelming majority of mankind. It must listen to and respond constructively to what comes out of the annual gathering of States' representatives at the United Nations. It must therefore respond positively to resolution 37/83.

In this Committee there is very broad support for the approach contained in the Group of 21's proposal. This support comes not only from the Group of 21. The group of socialist countries in this Committee, which have submitted their own proposals here and which were co-sponsors of General Assembly resolution 37/83, I believe hold a view not different from that held by the Group of 21.

It is my delegation's view that the deliberations of this Committee on item 7 up to now have provided adequate substance and demonstrated strong political will to set up a subsidiary body, an ad hoc working group, on the basis of the Group of 21 proposal, with the kind of mandate suggested in document CD/329. The setting up of ad hoc working groups is now a tested and proven method for deepening this Committee's work on an agenda item, and for moving from the general area to the specifics of an issue. As we all know, disarmament negotiations when conducted through a subsidiary body of the Committee envisage a preliminary stage when we must deal with defining the issue with clarity and precision, identifying aspects and focusing on interrelationships and linkages. It involves fixing elements and priorities and profiling components with a view to giving the proper weight, dimensions and recognition to all aspects of the issue. The essential prerequisite of agreeing on language, to be sure that we all attach a common meaning to the words we use, must be heavily underlined at the beginning. The Committee has accumulated invaluable experience and expertise in negotiations through the subsidiary bodies. In calling for the setting up of an ad hoc working group on item 7, the Group of 21 proceeds from this experience. The lack of success on some items in ad hoc working groups need not deter us from choosing similar mechanisms for resolving the issues that still confront us.

May I now say a few words about the complexity of the issue and the need for technical expertise. Every issue that comes before us is complex and in different degree they all call for technical expertise. Several delegations in the Committee have already expressed their intention and even readiness to come before this Committee with the technical expertise that may be required on item 7. It is the view of my delegation that the members of the Committee can decide and organize

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the form and modalities by which it can benefit from technical expertise. No single method or form needs to be considered sacrosanct to the extent that it must be adopted because it was the mode in the past. The Committee must not be bound by past practice alone. It should be inventive and innovative in deciding on the modalities of securing the technical expertise that it may require.

My delegation therefore hopes that the Committee this year will reach a consensus on the setting up of an ad hoc working group on the basis of what is proposed in document CD/329. In the event of this being realized, my delegation would suggest that the ad hoc working group address itself to the following:

Firstly, negotiations to draft a comprehensive agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prohibit

(a) The stationing in orbit around the Earth, on any celestial body or at any other location in outer space of any weapon which has been designed to inflict injury or cause any other form of damage on the Earth, in the atmosphere or on objects placed in space; and

(b) The testing, production, deployment or use of any space-based, air-based or ground-based weapons system which is designed to damage, destroy or interfere with the functioning of any space-craft of any nation.

It is hardly necessary to emphasize that this work involves examining and establishing adequate and effective measures for verifying compliance with the terms of any agreement or agreements that will be negotiated.

Secondly, the ad hoc working group would start examining the feasibility of extending article IV of the outer space Treaty of 1967 to include a ban on all kinds of weapons from space, including all weapons based in space for use against any target and all anti-satellite weapons regardless of where they are based.

We are confident that such a start is feasible and reflects the desire of the United Nations General Assembly as expressed in resolution 37/83. The Committee, in our view, has an excellent opportunity either to begin on a meaningful course of action or to remain deadlocked and divided on the issue.

Finally, may I address a few words, with your permission, Mr. Chairman, to the distinguished representatives of the United States and the USSR. Your countries possess the major space capabilities. Through the excellence of your scientific, technical and technological cadres and the willingness of your two governments to invest very large resources, even in times of unprecedented world economic turmoil, you have contributed immensely towards realizing what is perhaps mankind's oldest dream -- discovering, exploring and benefiting from outer space. You have the biggest responsibility in preventing outer space from becoming a new arena of the arms race. That responsibility can be truly carried out by a resumption of your bilateral talks that faded away in 1979, and by assisting this Committee fully to initiate and follow through active, meaningful work on item 7 of the agenda. My delegation is confident that both your countries will respond positively to the challenge and the opportunity that is before you.

Mr. HYLTENIUS (Sweden): Mr. Chairman, the agenda of this Committee may be seen as a reflection of the most urgent problems in the field of disarmament. It contains a number of items which have been with us for many years and which still await a solution. It would seem that the longer an item has to wait for real negotiations the harder it is to come to grips with it. Few would deny that the technical problems and complexities of disarmament questions have become greater over the years.

It is against this background that one should see the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Today I shall devote my statement to that item. It has been referred to the Committee on Disarmament by overwhelming majorities in the United Nations General Assembly. The support for the request to the Committee on Disarmament to establish an ad hoc working group to deal with this matter comes from all political quarters. It was, furthermore, clear at the UNISPACE Conference last summer that the question of the increasing militarization of outer space was a major concern for the participating countries. This was clearly expressed in the final report of the Conference, in which it was recommended that this Committee give high priority to this grave concern.

The Committee on Disarmament should take concrete action on this item in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions and with the Committee's role as the single multilateral negotiating body in the field of disarmament.

It is in the interest of maintaining stability and preventing the unleashing of another round of the arms race that the Swedish delegation urges that an ad hoc working group be established without delay. We cannot accept the assertion that negotiations on this matter would be to the disadvantage of any country. On the contrary, we are convinced that further delays will complicate an already very complex problem to the disadvantage of us all.

The 1967 Outer Space Treaty prohibits the emplacement of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in orbit around the earth and the stationing of such weapons in outer space or on celestial bodies. Several other treaties limit or prohibit various other military uses of outer space, for instance, the 1963 Partial Test-Ban Treaty, the SALT I Agreement and the ABM Treaty. Nevertheless, it is obvious that a number of conceivable

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military uses of outer space, which are likely to have destabilizing or otherwise threatening effects, are not covered by existing international legal instruments. There is, therefore, a need to identify areas and activities which so far have not been covered, in order to consider to what extent there exists a need for international agreements aiming at the prevention of undesirable developments in this field.

There is, in the opinion of the Swedish delegation, still a good chance to tackle these problems, but time is quickly running out. Rapid technological developments do not wait. As in so many areas, disarmament negotiations are likely to become more complicated for every lost month. Action must be taken before financial and political investments in new weapons systems become so important that the process becomes irreversible.

It is an understatement to say that the problem of preventing an arms race in outer space is a complex one. Apart from the many technical intricacies, there are the problems of distinguishing between civilian and military applications and between the stabilizing and destabilizing effects of various military space functions.

Another dimension is the distinction between whether a spacecraft is geared to "active" or "passive" military use. So-called "killer satellites" and space-based ABM or BMD systems are examples of devices which are designed actively to interfere with the adversary's military capabilities.

Obviously there are important military applications of space technology which contribute to a more stable military balance and a lower risk of war, in particular between the two major alliances. I have in mind, for example, military satellites, which are used to provide early warning of missile launches, and satellites for verification of arms control agreements and for fast and reliable communications. There are, however, certain developments which give cause for particular concern. One such trend is that of efforts to acquire or improve the capability to destroy one another's satellites. Another concern is that an increased launching capacity, for instance in the form of re-usable space vehicles, may also be used for the further militarization of outer space.

As the military balance is becoming increasingly dependent on satellites for communications, command, control and intelligence, the ability of such functions to survive is also becoming increasingly threatened by the development of anti-satellite weapons systems. The Soviet Union has launched a number of interceptor/destructor satellites during the last several years and, in earlier years, also fractional orbital bombardment systems (FOBS), and the United States is planning to begin operational testing of its ASAT system in 1983. Moreover, both Superpowers are investigating the possibility of using high-energy laser and particle beams for ASAT applications.

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I have already mentioned the problem of lacunae in existing international agreements regarding the prohibition of military uses of outer space. It seems natural that one of the first tasks of an ad hoc working group in the Committee on Disarmament should be to analyse such gaps in present treaties against the background of existing and conceivable military applications of space technology. The next step may be to determine which of the space systems or activities should be prohibited or subject to regulations. It would seem natural to the Swedish delegation that, for example, anti-satellite weapons systems should be banned. Perhaps, as a complement to such a prohibition, in order to exclude the possibility of the military use of otherwise legitimate civilian space vehicles, it might also be desirable to ban certain activities, for example, the destruction of satellites of other countries. We have noted with interest what the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, Mr. van den Broek, said in this context in his statement in this Committee on 29 March, and we will carefully consider it.

My delegation has taken note with great interest of the Soviet draft treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space. However, the draft gives rise to some important questions, such as, for instance, how to define the concept of "weapon" in this context. This issue would obviously have to be tackled at an early stage.

As is well known, many satellites form integral parts of weapons systems which are not themselves stationed in outer space. Perhaps, for practical reasons, we may have to focus on such systems or "weapons" as are intended for warfare exclusively in outer space. Such weapons, as we know them today, are based on the earth. The discussion must, therefore, encompass all weapons which are meant to be used in outer space and not only those which are stationed there.

As long as the leading military powers build their security on a precarious nuclear balance and hold the rest of the world hostage, it is vitally important that nothing should upset this balance. The peoples of the world demand serious disarmament proposals from the Superpowers in order to reach a balance at lower levels of armaments. Instead we have learned with grave concern that the United States plans to embark upon a research and development programme with the ultimate goal of obtaining the capability of destroying ballistic missiles launched by the adversary. The only safe way of avoiding the nuclear threat is to abolish the nuclear weapons. To develop and deploy weapons for the purpose of obtaining the capability of destroying the adversary's strategic missiles while keeping one's own strike capability intact, would create a dangerously unstable situation. This would be the case at least as long as only one party has such a capability. It should also be

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noted in this context that such a major undertaking would entail the spending of enormous funds and a waste of precious scientific resources. The initiation of such a research and development process will be destabilizing in itself and increase the level of nervousness and tension. It would also initiate research for similar weapons in other States and lead to countermeasures, and hence give rise to a new cycle in the senseless arms race.

The SALT I and II agreements between the Superpowers acknowledged the right of the parties to use national technical means to verify compliance with their provisions. In addition the Soviet draft treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space refers exclusively to national technical means of verification. However, it is hardly likely that such a limitation would be accepted by the international community. If a treaty on the prevention of an arms race in outer space is to stand a chance of being universally adhered to, it must have a system of international verification. A first step in this direction was taken by France in advancing the idea of an international satellite monitoring agency. This is a matter of principle to many countries. Moreover, it must also be realized that the present virtual duopoly of the two Superpowers in this technology is about to be broken.

The further development of anti-satellite weapons is a most threatening perspective. The Swedish Government, therefore, attaches great importance to the early initiation of negotiations with a view to prohibiting the establishment of such systems and the dismantling of existing ones in order to preclude such a new phase of the arms race. We cannot share the view that if one of the Superpowers has acquired a certain lead in one area, the other should be entitled to catch up before any negotiations can be embarked upon in that field. The experiences so far of "the bargaining from strength" philosophy are anything but encouraging. My Government acknowledges the need for an over-all balance in the military field, but that balance must be sought and achieved at lower and not higher levels of armaments. If one Power or a few Powers have achieved a certain capability, which may become threatening to others, negotiations should start without delay in order to do away with such unilateral advantages. As we all know, experience shows that once a new military technology has become established, the temptation to exploit it in

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the form of the production and deployment of new weapons in most cases becomes irresistible. The case of anti-satellite weapons is not likely to be any exception.

Although there is clearly a need for multilateral negotiations in the Committee on Disarmament on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, this, of course, does not exclude the possibility of the two leading space Powers negotiating between them on matters of particular bilateral interest in this field. This view is consistent with the opinion my delegation and many others have expressed regarding other disarmament questions also, such as a nuclear test ban and the prohibition of chemical weapons. Sweden, therefore strongly urges the United States and the Soviet Union to resume their bilateral talks with a view to finding solutions to some of the most pressing problems in the field of space warfare, notably the prevention of anti-satellite warfare.

Sweden was able to co-sponsor both General Assembly resolutions last autumn on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Resolution 37/83, submitted by non-aligned and socialist countries, contained, inter alia, a clear request for the establishment of an ad hoc working group in the Committee on Disarmament with the task of opening multilateral negotiations on this item. This is important. Negotiations must no longer be delayed. Resolution 37/99 D, adopted on the initiative of western countries, put special emphasis on the need to tackle the problem of an emerging race in anti-satellite weapons. This seems to us to be the most immediate concern. Both resolutions, therefore, had merits which we considered important. The distinguished Ambassador of Sri Lanka, in his statement of 14 April, made a clear presentation of the possible approaches to the decision now facing the Committee on this matter. As far as the Swedish delegation is concerned, it is flexible on the organization of a forthcoming negotiation within an ad hoc working group in this Committee. A constructive proposal regarding the establishment of such a working group has been made in document CD/329, submitted by the Group of 21.

Security is basically a political concept. Security problems must, therefore, be solved not by increased armaments or confrontation between adversaries but in co-operation and negotiations between parties for their mutual advantage and our common security. Time is getting short, but it is still possible to prevent an arms race in outer space if negotiations start now. If this fails, all countries will suffer. All countries thus have a legitimate interest in this matter. An overwhelming majority among them demand negotiations in this Committee before it is too late. Such a demand must not pass unheeded.

Mr. GUI ROUIS (Algeria) (translated from French): Mr. Chairman, since the beginning of this session the Algerian delegation has had the opportunity to express its views on the various items on the agenda of the Committee on Disarmament. I shall confine myself today to offering some comments on the subject of item 7 of our agenda, namely, the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Recent years have been marked by the appearance of signs foreshadowing a new phase in the militarization of outer space.

The extension of the logic of conflict to outer space, now considered by the strategists of the major powers as a potential battlefield, could not but engender a race in the development of space weapon systems.

The current programmes of research and development relating to anti-satellite interceptor systems, laser weapons and particle-beam weapon systems are all part of this perpetual endeavour to secure military superiority.

The integration of outer space into the strategic concepts of the major powers greatly reduces the distance between the fictional "star wars" scenario and the sphere of reality.

These dangerous shifts further complicate the disarmament equation. There is no doubt that an arms race in outer space will have unforeseeable consequences for the security of the world, unless the international community, in a healthy reaction, succeeds in preserving outer space, and the peaceful activities for which it provides support, from the warlike antagonisms of the major powers.

This is still possible, for, unlike nuclear disarmament, where the goal is to eliminate weapons which unfortunately exist, it would seem that space weapons are not yet operational.

We therefore consider that it is neither naive nor idealistic to believe that there is still time to prevent the conversion of outer space into a future battlefield.

It is still possible, if the powers in question show political will and embark upon a process of negotiation with a view to the adoption of concrete measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

This task is urgent, for experience in disarmament matters shows that, once it has been started, the arms race in a given sphere develops in an action-reaction spiral and makes it all the more difficult to adopt measures to stop the escalation and reverse the trend.

The injunctions of the international community in favour of this objective are numerous.

Almost five years ago the General Assembly, meeting at its first special session devoted to disarmament, stated in its Programme of Action, which was adopted by consensus, that further measures should be taken and appropriate international negotiations held in order to prevent an arms race in outer space.

(Mr. Oul Rouis, Algeria)

In its resolutions 36/99 and 36/97 C, the General Assembly requested the Committee on Disarmament to undertake negotiations on this question. That request was, moreover, reiterated by the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session, in its resolutions 37/83 and 37/99 D.

Speaking at the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, held at Vienna last August, the Secretary-General of the United Nations echoed the concerns of the international community in declaring that the growing militerization of outer space was alarming and inviting the forces of reason and peace to oppose what would be a dangerous escalation of the arms race.

The same Conference adopted by consensus a report which places the emphasis on the maintenance of peace and security in outer space, and in which it urgently recommends the competent bodies of the United Nations, and in particular the General Assembly and the Committee on Disarmament, to give this matter the requisite attention and high priority.

Apart from the fact that it runs counter to the efforts being made by the international community to put an end to the arms race and to prevent nuclear war, the extension of the arms race to outer space can and should be avoided for certain very obvious reasons.

It ought to be avoided in the first instance because it is likely to increase the risks of the breakdown of international peace and security.

It ought to be avoided, secondly, because it is unacceptable that a small number of States should not merely cause danger to all mankind by reason of the huge nuclear arsenals they hold but in addition place the security of all States at risk by converting the common heritage of mankind into an advanced defence position for their own security.

It ought also to be avoided because that is an essential precondition for the development and continuation of international co-operation in the sphere of the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

Lastly, it is no secret to anyone that space programmes for military purposes absorb vast resources whose size is in shocking contrast with the meagreness of the financial flows devoted to what is known as development aid.

There can be no doubt that the Committee on Disarmament, the only multilateral disarmament negotiating body, is the proper place for multilateral negotiations on the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

The discussions which took place in this Committee on this question at the last session had the merit of showing the interest that exists in achieving the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Delegations were able to conduct a very broad exchange of views on the substance of the question as well as on the structural framework for dealing with item 7 of the agenda.

Almost all delegations stressed the need to set up a working group on this item; unfortunately, differences of views about its mandate prevented the establishment of such a group at the last session.

(Mr. Oul Rouis, Algeria)

Anxious to help promote disarmament in all possible ways, the Group of 21, in document CD/329, submitted a draft mandate for an ad hoc working group on this question.

Basing itself on the principle that outer space, which is recognized as the common heritage of mankind, ought to be preserved exclusively for peaceful purposes, the Group of 21 proposed a mandate which favours a global approach designed to prevent an arms race in outer space in all its aspects.

The Algerian delegation, for its part, continues to support that proposal, which it recommends anew.

On the eve of the unleashing of an arms race in outer space which would assuredly be as dangerous as it would be costly, it seems to us that the best way of eliminating this danger is the global approach, which recognizes the interdependence of all aspects of this question and takes into account the interests of all parties to the negotiations.

While we do not wish to minimize the difficulties of the task confronting the Committee on Disarmament, we nevertheless find some of the arguments that have been advanced for putting off the negotiation of an international instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects unconvincing.

It has first of all been claimed that this is only a theoretical possibility because the weapons in question do not yet exist. It is surely hardly necessary to point out that in matters of arms, the temptation to convert theoretical possibilities into reality is great because it is inherent in the dynamics of the search for military superiority.

The argument has been put forward of the complexity of the issue and the lack of experience in this field. This should in no way prevent the Committee from embarking on negotiations on this matter, taking advantage of all the experience gained in this sphere, particularly during the bilateral negotiations, as well as calling upon all the requisite expertise. It is, moreover, to be noted that putting off the negotiations because of the complexity of the question would mean deferring the solution of this matter indefinitely, because it is obvious that these problems become more complex as time passes.

The argument of complexity and technical difficulties is very often used to cover the unwillingness of certain powers to engage in negotiations in the Committee on Disarmament.

As to the Algerian delegation, we are firmly convinced that the will to negotiate is primarily something political. Although technical difficulties may possibly explain the slowness of a given negotiating process, they cannot affect the essentially political nature of the process itself.

In establishing a working group with a global mandate, the Committee on Disarmament would be responding to the appeals of the United Nations General Assembly as well as to the demands of our peoples, who insist that measures should be taken to prevent outer space becoming a battlefield endangering the very survival of mankind.

Mr. ERDEMBILEG (Mongolia) (translated from Russian): Mr. Chairman, my statement today will be devoted to the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space, the item the Committee is to discuss this week in accordance with its programme of work. It is to be noted that the problem of the prevention of an arms race in outer space is becoming all the more urgent and pressing in view of the dangerous trend towards the conversion of outer space into a theatre for such a race.

If we look at history and turn some of its pages, we shall be convinced anew of the importance and timeliness of the efforts that have been made to prevent outer space being used for military purposes.

Three months after the beginning of the space era in the history of mankind, which was opened by the launching of the first Soviet satellite in March 1958, the USSR put before the United Nations General Assembly at its thirteenth session a proposal on the prevention of the use of outer space for military purposes and on international co-operation in the matter of the exploration of outer space. That was the first proposal in the history of mankind for the limitation of military activity in outer space. With the active participation and significant contribution of the socialist States and other peace-loving countries, certain international legal instruments now in force, limiting the use of outer space for hostile purposes, were worked out and concluded, for example, the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water, of 1963, the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, of 1967, the Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, of 1979, and others.

Important provisions aimed at limiting military activity in outer space were included in the strategic arms limitation agreements reached between the USSR and the United States in the 1970s -- the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems and the Salt-I Agreement. These constituted an impressive achie ement in this sphere, substantially limiting the use of outer space for military purposes. The agreements contained qualitative limitations concerning specific military space systems. Thus, for example, in the United States -- USSR ABM Treaty of 26 May 1972, the parties undertook "not to develop, test, or deploy ABM systems or components which are sea-based, air-based, space-based or mobile land-based".

The conclusion of these agreements constituted real steps forward in the demilitarization of the celestial bodies and a positive limitation of the use of space for military purposes. However, the existing limitation measures are not complete, because there is no effective international instrument placing a reliable barrier in the way of attempts to extend the arms race to outer space.

It has unfortunately to be observed that those who want to militarize outer space in order to secure absolute supremacy are hastening to take advantage of the absence of such measures of prohibition. It is no secret that the United States has prepared a vast programme in this sphere the basic principles of which have been confirmed by a special presidential directive. In this programme, outer space is regarded as a theatre for military activities and a special military space command has been set up to take charge of operations there.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

A particular danger resides in the preparation of innumerable projects for the development of space weapons designed to attack targets in outer space, in air space and on the earth. Among these, special priority has been given to the development and deployment in space of anti-ballistic missile defence systems, based in particular on the use of the latest scientific and technological achievements in the sphere of laser and charged particle technology.

As you know, the Washington administration has announced the start of work on a large-scale and highly effective anti-missile defence system using military vehicles in space. This programme of extensive military preparations in outer space provides for the establishment of 100 military orbital stations equipped with laser and particle-beam weapons and also sensors for detecting ballistic missiles. It is planned to spend $500 billion on these purposes. We believe that if the United States carries out these plans that will mean in fact the deployment in space of anti-ballistic missile defence systems for the purpose of destroying the strategic weapons of the other side, that is, depriving it of the possibility of taking retaliatory measures. In essence what this amounts to is the intention to create a strategic first-strike potential.

A large part is also played in these plans by various manned spacecraft capable of carrying out purely military tasks in the placing in orbit of space-earth strike systems, anti-satellite systems and reconnaissance, navigation and other types of satellite for military purposes under the orders of the United States military space command. As has been stated in the Western press, out of 331 planned flights of such craft, more than a third will be destined for military tasks.

The idea of the militarization of outer space in violation of the agreements existing in this sphere did not come from the minds of contemporary science-fiction writers but originated in the highest military and political circles of the United States. For example, it has been said more than once in American military circles that, depending on the results of its work in the sphere of anti-ballistic missile defence systems, the United States might ask for the revision or even the renunciation of the Soviet-American treaty of 1972 that was concluded at the same time as the SALT-I Agreement. As we understand it, both sides legally recognized at that time that mutual restraint in the development of anti-missile defence systems would permit progress to be made in the limitation and reduction of strategic weapons as a whole. Thus there is now in effect a threat to remove one of the cornerstones of the entire strategic arms limitation process.

I should like to add that the carrying out of a programme for the development of a "perfect" ABM system in space would constitute a violation of the Soviet-American ABM Treaty of 1972. Under article V of that Treaty, the parties undertook not to develop, test or deploy in space ABM systems or components. Furthermore, the distinguished representative of the United States confirmed this in his statement to the Committee on 2 September 1982.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

We also wonder how such actions can be in conformity with the provisions of other important international treaties and agreements. As is stated in the United States press with reference to such authorities as the "father" of the hydrogen bomb, the physicist Edward Teller, the provision of the energy for the powerful X-ray lasers necessary for the proposed ABM system is possible only through nuclear explosions in space. The magazine Newsweek, in its issue of 4 April 1983, in particular states: "Although information on the X-ray laser remains classified, the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory reportedly created an X-ray pulse with the system in a recent underground test in Nevada".

Thus, questions are now being raised about the fulfilment of obligations assumed under two important international legal instruments, namely, the 1963 Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in three environments, including outer space, and the 1967 Treaty on the non-deployment in outer space of weapons of mass destruction.

We believe that any violation of generally recognized international legal norms will entail far-reaching consequences.

What dangers do we see in the arms race in outer space?

In the first place, military space vehicles would cause extreme destabilization of the strategic situation. Plans for the development of so-called "perfect" defence systems against strategic missiles are nothing but a screen covering the real intentions of the authors of these plans. Talk about their defensive purpose is deliberately designed to deceive public opinion.

In the second place, the deployment of military vehicles in space would lead to the creation of yet another type of global weapon, the creation of an excessive military first-strike potential which would inevitably increase the risk of the outbreak of nuclear war.

In the third place, as I have already said, an arms race in outer space would entail colossal material expenditures.

Fourthly, and this should be particularly emphasized, the new programme for the development of a "defensive" ABM system violates the specific system of international legal norms to which I referred earlier.

The Mongolian delegation, like the majority of other delegations in the Committee, is firmly in favour of the adoption of constructive measures aimed at the prevention of the extension of the arms race to outer space. There are on the negotiating table in the Committee on Disarmament a number of documents which could serve as the basis for the detailed consideration of and the conduct of negotiations on the substance of the issue. In particular, the Soviet delegation submitted a draft treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space (document CD/274). The Mongolian delegation

(Mr. Erdembilog, Mongolia)

submitted a proposal on the establishment of an ad hoc working group on this subject (document CD/272); the group of delegations of the non-aligned and neutral States put before the Committee a draft mandate for the ad hoc working group (document CD/329); a document on arms control and outer space (CD/320) was submitted by the delegation of Canada.

We believe that towards the end of the second part of its 1982 session the Committee was very near to the achievement of a consensus on the setting of an ad hoc working group to discuss questions connected with the prevention of an arms race in outer space on a solid basis, with the participation of qualified experts. This did not happen, however. Certain delegations, and more precisely one delegation, blocked the setting up of an ad hoc working group, declaring that it was necessary to hold an exhaustive discussion of the views of all delegations and to carry out extensive preparatory work of substance. The Mongolian delegation, like many other delegations, is in favour of the practical consideration of the substance of the issue, that is to say, the conduct of genuine negotiations. All the necessary prerequisites exist for this. Apart from the working papers containing specific proposals to which I have already referred, the Committee has been considering item 7 of its agenda from every point of view for more than two years now, both at plenary meetings and at informal meetings. We believe that the majority of delegations have expressed their views on the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. In this connection I should like particularly to draw attention to the statement made by Ambassador Jayakoddy of Sri Lanka at our last plenary meeting, which contained a whole series of practical and useful suggestions which could form the subject of careful study and further consideration in the initial phase of practical negotiations in the Committee.

The Mongolian delegation, which is in favour of the speediest possible starting of actual negotiations, hopes that the Committee will soon agree on a mandate for the ad hoc working group. The wording of the mandate should, in our view, be based on the provisions of resolution 37/83, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session. In the course of the negotiations, all existing proposals and possible future initiatives should undoubtedly be taken into account.

At the same time we consider that the main object should be a comprehensive solution of the problem of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. This does not mean that we wish to leave to one side the question of the prohibition of anti-satellite systems.

Mr. HASSAN (Egypt)(translated from Arabic):

I shall deal in my statement today with item 7 of the agenda, "Prevention of an arms race in outer space".

When man succeeded, more than a quarter of a century ago, in conquering outer space for the first time, the whole world welcomed this important event which asserted the creative power of man and his ability to open up new horizons for exploration, development and construction, thus ensuring prosperity and well-being for the whole world. Since that remote date, Egypt has been among the States that have drawn attention to the importance of action for reaching international agreements on establishing the proper international legislation so as to ensure the use of this new breakthrough for the benefit and well-being of man and for peaceful purposes along and to exclude outer space from the sphere of rivalry and competition among the major powers and of military uses and the arms race.

When the leaders of the non-aligned countries convened at their first summit meeting in Belgrade in September 1961, they issued their final statement which included in its paragraph 17 the following: "The participating countries call upon all States in general, and States at present exploring outer space in particular, to undertake to use outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes". Since that time, the efforts exerted have succeeded in achieving positive steps on this path, and it has in fact been possible to conclude a number of agreements dealing with some aspects pertinent to outer space, the most important of these

(Mr. Hassan, Egypt)

being the 1963 Treaty on the partial banning of nuclear-weapon tests and the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies.

In spite of the importance of these agreements and other measures that dealt with the subject of outer space, they remained, on the whole, insufficient to establish an integrated international legal system providing a real guarantee against the use of outer space for military purposes and excluding it from the arms race. This has given the world the opportunity to witness, in the last few years consecutive attempts to militarize outer space, and the involvement of the States possessing the greatest technological potentials in a race for the creation and development of space equipment with a view to achieving military and strategic goals which would give them supremacy in the field of the arms race between them.

The Final Document of the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament drew attention to these gaps when it said, in its paragraph 80, that "In order to prevent an arms race in outer space, further measures should be taken and appropriate international negotiations held in accordance with the spirit of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies".

There is no doubt that the risks of the permanent threat of seeing the arms race spread to outer space do not apply solely to the Superpowers, which possess the greatest technological potential in this field, but in fact represent a serious threat also to the security of the whole world. Perhaps the risks to which the States of the third world are exposed surpass those which threaten the developed countries, because the latter possess the requisite means of defence and protection, while the developing countries lack the potentials and technological means to ensure their security and to protect their people.

For this reason, while recognizing the special responsibility falling in this field on the Superpowers, we insist on the fact that the task of negotiating the halting of the arms race in outer space should remain in a collective multilateral framework.

Before the subject was raised in the Committee on Disarmament, there were attempts to bring the issue of the peaceful uses of space and preserving it from the arms race before the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. However, some objected to this, arguing that the subject is beyond the terms of reference of that Committee and is fully within the competence of the Committee on Disarmament.

Hence, all hopes were placed on the Committee on Disarmament as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. Then there were the resolutions of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, convened in Vienna in August of last year, which were adopted by consensus and which emphasized this role while calling upon the Committee on Disarmament to undertake the proper steps to prevent an arms race in outer space, clearly indicating the need for the participation of all nations, and especially those possessing the greatest space potential, in contributing actively to the achievement of this goal.

(Mr. Hassan, Egypt)

The Committee's session last year was an opportunity for a broad exchange of views on the importance of action to prevent the extension of the arms race to outer space, and it was obvious that interest was given to the risks issuing therefrom and the increasing threats to international peace and security it represented.

The United Nations General Assembly also, in its resolution 37/83, which was supported by 138 States and sponsored by my delegation with a number of non-aligned and socialist countries, including 21 States members of this Committee, requested the Committee on Disarmament "to establish an ad hoc working group on the subject at the beginning of its session in 1983, with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space".

During the Committee's session last year, the Group of 21 called for the setting up of a working group which would deal with item 7 of the agenda, and it submitted document CD/329 containing a draft mandate for such a group. The Group of 21, in its suggestion, called for the adoption of a comprehensive approach in dealing with the subject, so that it could be examined in its various aspects with the necessary flexibility and allowing the negotiation of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, in order to prevent an arms race in outer space.

Those who at that time opposed the setting up of a working group argued the new character of the subject and its complexity, with its intricate technical aspects, and called instead for it to be dealt with at informal meetings and sessions called "instructive", with a view to exchanging views and information about it. We nevertheless cannot but disagree with this opinion, for the following reasons.

Informal meetings of the Committee cannot be a substitute for a working framework for the carrying out of its basic task which is that of negotiating agreements on disarmament. The working group has proved to be the best framework to achieve this goal.

Most — if not all — of the subjects with which the Committee is concerned are by essence complex subjects where technical aspects interfere with political considerations; but this fact has not prevented us, in the past, from attempting to make progress in these subjects and try to reach agreements about them, and we must not be prevented from doing that now or in the future.

While we are living in a period when man is becoming increasingly anxious as a result of the dreadful armaments on land, in the air and at sea, and when efforts to stop and curb this race are faltering, we are requested today to undertake steps to ensure the prevention of the extension of this danger to new horizons, which threatens the future and the security of mankind.

Our race against time calls upon us to speed up the pace of our action and step forward to assume our responsibilities — today rather than tomorrow, without hesitation or delay.

Mr. CARASALES (Argentina) (translated from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, the Committee on Disarmament is at present considering the questions of the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the prevention of nuclear war and in particular how to deal with these two subjects procedurally. I shall refer in this statement to both topics.

Representatives will recall that at the beginning of last year the inclusion in our agenda of a new item on the peaceful use of outer space was not easy. Furthermore we were told bluntly at that time that that in no way meant agreement to give substantive consideration to this question in a working group because that would be premature and because the complexity of the subject was such that it would be necessary first to identify the areas in which useful work might be done.

We were obliged then to accept the procedure which appears to have become customary where there is no political will to initiate negotiations, namely, the holding of informal meetings. My delegation has growing doubts as to the real value and usefulness of these meetings of which no proper record is made and which usually consist simply of a repetition, often in a diffuse and disorderly way, of positions and views already expressed at plenary meetings. They appear to be simply a subterfuge designed to fill time and to give the impression -- a very poor one, it is true -- that something is being done. This way of approaching the consideration of an item presupposes that the question is not urgent and that the Committee has years in which to begin to deal with the subject in greater depth.

In 1982 informal meetings were held to consider the existing and foreseeable situation in outer space and the subject was also referred to repeatedly in formal statements. One thing constantly emphasized at those meetings by the vast majority of delegations was the urgent need to act promptly in this matter, with the utmost speed, because the range of activities then developing in outer space and of those that seemed likely to be carried out in the immediate future was expanding at such a rate that it would soon be too late -- if it was not so already -- to adopt measures to put a stop to or regulate those activities. As usual, a minority of delegations gave no sign of sharing that appreciation and showed no interest in bringing nearer the moment when the international community represented in this Committee on Disarmament would apply itself seriously to this objective.

Barely a year has passed since those discussions and I am wondering if there can be any doubt that the situation that so many of us warned against has occurred and that, as regards outer space, developments of various kinds have taken place, all of them increasing the possibility and likelihood of the use of outer space for warlike purposes.

(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

In spite of the repeated declarations at every level of the need to preserve outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes, it has already become militarized to such a degree that the delegation of France was able to say, in the interesting document, CD/375, which it put before us, that of the three possible roles it identified for outer space, the first, "that of absolute sanctuarization or demilitarization, is something that is no longer possible. It is therefore unrealistic to try to revert to such a situation.".

I very much fear, in view of the reluctance of some delegations to allow the Committee on Disarmament to discuss this item in substance, that the day is not far off when we shall be told: the arms race in outer space is a reality and there is no longer the possibility of pursuing the goal of preserving it for purely peaceful purposes for the benefit of mankind.

The Group of 21 was always forthright as regards the need to set up a working group to conduct negotiations on item 7 of our agenda, and in September 1982 it submitted document CD/329 containing a draft mandate for such a group, a proposal which my delegation of course fully supports. The delegation of the Mongolian People's Republic had earlier submitted document CD/272 containing a similar proposal.

Certainly, the mere establishment of a working group does not of itself guarantee useful and much less successful work. But at least the possibility exists and experience has shown that to be so. The Committee has not yet found any better method for dealing in depth with the questions on its agenda. It has already become clear that informal meetings lead to nothing concrete. This is why the setting up of a working group is interpreted -- rightly, in my view -- as a clear sign that the Committee has decided to tackle the subject seriously. A working group may function effectively or not -- time will tell -- but what I am certain of is that if we do not set up a working group and continue to confine ourselves to casual conversations and informal consultations, the item will simply remain on the agenda, giving the illusion that the Committee is dealing with it whereas in reality little or nothing is being done.

When we talk about setting up a working group it is -- obviously -- on the understanding that the group will have a meaningful mandate. For no one is against working groups "in principle". Reservations appear with respect to the desirability of setting up a given group and its function.

I have not the slightest doubt that the negotiation of a mandate for an ad hoc working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space will not be easy. The question of the mandates of working groups is becoming an exercise absorbing a large part of the best energies of the Committee on Disarmament. The position of some delegations is habitually such that we may well ask ourselves what is the real meaning of their acceptance of the establishment of a working group when they insist that the mandate of such a body should be so limited that its practical consequences for the achievement of effective measures of disarmament are virtually nil. Its work may be useful as an illustration for the representatives who take part in its discussions, but it contributes very little to the negotiation of international agreements on disarmament, which is the essential task of our Committee.

We should ask ourselves if the time has not come to change the practice followed by the Committee on Disarmament up to now, which is that of deciding in each case, with absolute precision, what a working group may do and what it may not do. This practice means that the group starts with its hands tied, and it then spends a good deal of its available time trying to secure the broadening of its mandate.

(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

Would it not, in the long run, be more productive to establish working groups with simple mandates merely assigning to them a given item, without going into details?

The group could then devote itself exclusively to the subject assigned to it and could decide, as its work proceeds — and we should not forget that the rule of consensus always applies — what it can hope to achieve and what is not yet possible. The process of the work itself will decide the rate of progress that is possible towards the ultimate objective, which can be nothing other than the negotiation of one or several international agreements. But before that goal can be reached, many intermediary stages must be passed through, and the working group can accomplish them gradually, according to the progress and the convergencies of views achieved, without being limited from the outset by a restrictive mandate and without then having to spend a large part of its time discussing the amendment of that mandate.

Resolution 37/83 of the last session of the General Assembly clearly reflects the thinking of the international community on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Its various paragraphs plainly indicate the urgency of this task and what is expected of the Committee on Disarmament in this connection. The number of votes which that resolution won is important, but what is more important, I believe, is the realism and timeliness of the thinking that inspired it. It is certain that there are few subjects where time is such a vital factor as it is in the matter of outer space. Outer space is a new world that is already being used, and not always for peaceful purposes, but whose possibilities for military use, both direct and indirect, are increasing day by day. Every hour of delay in tackling the regulation of this sphere will be lost for ever and may prove fatal.

As has already been noted a number of times, the military use of satellites is already a reality. Some 75 per cent of the satellites in orbit in 1980 had a military purpose, and an extremely high proportion of military communications are conducted by means of satellites.

Attempts have been made to convince us that military satellites are good and positive. We are told — and I recall a statement made on 29 March last — that "these satellites have a stabilizing effect" and that they ought therefore to be protected. We were also told that "for the foreseeable future the complete demilitarization of outer space is not at all a good idea. It would, of course, not be very realistic either".

This last statement is perhaps "realistic" — to borrow the term — but I beg to disagree with the claim that the complete demilitarization of outer space would not be a good idea. I think that it would be. The satellites carrying out tasks connected with the verification of compliance with disarmament agreements could very well be controlled by an international agency. But military satellites can also carry out a vast range of tasks whose ultimate results would be an increase, at times very substantial, in the destructive capacity of a combat force. My country has had a direct and painful experience of the consequences of the military use of satellites.

The questions of the peaceful use of outer space and the prevention of an arms race in that sphere should be dealt with in a comprehensive manner. The problems are many and various, and in our view there is no reason for determining preferences and priorities now, as some want to do in connection with anti-satellite systems,

(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

particularly when the objects which it is intended to protect, military satellites, can fulfil hostile functions far too important to warrant their immunity and impunity.

From the procedural point of view, many of the comments I have made in connection with the subject of the prevention of an arms race in outer space could equally well be applied to that of the prevention of nuclear war.

Both items refer to the future in so far as the goal is to "prevent" something which has not yet happened but which could very well happen. There is the difference that, if either of these possibilities were to become a reality, the extent of the consequences would in the second case be even more catastrophic.

As the Heads of State or Government of the non-aligned countries stated at their seventh summit meeting held recently in New Delhi, "the greatest peril facing the world today is the threat to the survival of mankind from a nuclear war". The New Delhi Message likewise contains a paragraph pointing out that "the non-aligned countries, speaking for the majority of the world community, want an immediate halt to the drift towards nuclear conflict which threatens the well-being not only of humanity in our times but also of future generations as well".

At the root of the problem there is an undeniable fact. As the Political Declaration of New Delhi says, "Nuclear weapons are more than weapons of war. They are instruments of mass annihilation." Until full recognition is given to this essential difference between nuclear weapons and other types of weapons and between nuclear war and other types of war, and until the logical conclusions are drawn from this difference, the nature of the question of the prevention of nuclear war will be distorted and all the efforts based on the unique character of nuclear weapons will be fruitless.

Document CD/341 of the Group of 21 is explicit as regards the nature of the problem and the way to deal with it, namely, through the setting up of a working group with an adequate mandate.

I shall not, therefore, dwell further on this question, so as not to repeat ideas already expressed. Furthermore, I spoke about this matter in my statement of 28 February last. The need to adopt the measures advocated by the Group of 21 is, in my view, indisputable.

I feel obliged, however, to state that what has happened so far with respect to items 2 and 7 of our agenda, which concern two issues of the utmost importance for the future of mankind, does not, in my view, constitute a model of what the action of the sole multilateral negotiating body in this sphere ought to be. When the attention of the international community, justifiably and deeply concerned at the possibility of an arms race in outer space and even more at that of the outbreak of a nuclear war, is directed with well-founded expectations towards the Committee on Disarmament in the hope of seeing a serious and thorough consideration of these problems and the gradual emergence of concrete and realistic measures for dealing with them, it is deplorable that all the Committee can offer is protracted and meaningless discussions on procedural questions: the inclusion of the item in the agenda, whether or not a working group should be established, the formulation of mandates with or without substance. The international community has the right to expect something different from the body to which it has given specific and unique competence in order precisely that it should not repeat once more another round of sterile debates but should find practical solutions to the problems of the world today.

The Committee on Disarmament has a tremendous responsibility. If it does not manage to fulfil that responsibility fully and effectively, that will be no victory for anyone but the defeat of all.

(Mr. Ijevere, Nigeria)

I would now like to address another agenda item of the utmost priority to all mankind, namely, the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Although the United Nations General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session, in resolution 37/83, requested the Committee on Disarmament to "establish an ad hoc working group on the subject at the beginning of its session in 1983, with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space", it is a matter for regret that this Committee has not even started setting forth on the hard and difficult road of result-oriented negotiations.

Events in recent years have shown that the extension of the arms race to outer space poses a real threat to international peace and security. For instance, the growing rivalry between the two Superpowers over the development of space-based anti-satellite defence systems such as destroyer systems or ASAT has introduced a new dimension into space warfare prospects. The destabilizing consequences of such space weapons with regard to international security and the maintenance of our fragile peace are only too obvious.

In the opinion of my delegation, the increase in the use of anti-satellite weapons, high energy lasers and particle-beam weapons runs counter to the spirit and letter of the outer space Treaty of 1967 and other relevant legal instruments whose objective is to promote the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

At this point, my delegation feels concerned about the announcement coming from Washington earlier this month urging American scientists to forsake the three-decade-old doctrine of deterring nuclear war through the threat of retaliation and instead pursue a defensive strategy based on space-age weaponry designed to "intercept and destroy" incoming enemy missiles. According to the opinion of some experts, this proposal "raises the spectre of an arms race in space which ultimately could be more expensive and dangerous than the one taking place on earth". In a reaction the Soviet leadership was quoted as saying, "Should this conception be converted into reality this would actually open the floodgates of a runaway race of all types of strategic arms, both offensive and defensive".

The arms race is a live issue and one should approach the problem of disarmament with a sense of realism and honesty. Nobody doubts that the United States is the richest country on earth but my delegation believes that a proposal for a $2 trillion military expenditure for a five-year period is, to say the least, disturbing, especially in a world where most people can hardly afford three square meals a day, and where ignorance and disease ravage societies that we consider members of the same human family.

Let us think of the funds to be involved in such a monumental and ambitious project; let us think of the tests that will be carried out -- and here we chide ourselves thinking of a nuclear test-ban treaty! Unfortunately, figures are not available to know how much the other Superpower spends on its own "defence", if the word defence can be appropriate in this context.

(Mr. Ijewere, Nigeria)

On 3 March 1983, Ambassador C.A. de Souza e Silva of Brazil eloquently spoke of vertical proliferation among the Superpowers in his statement to this Committee. Inventing a weapon to destroy another weapon only draws back the hands of the clock of disarmament. A defensive arms race would only escalate the offensive one already under way. Each side would feel compelled to increase the number and destructiveness of weapons with which to penetrate the defences of the other.

My delegation feels that instead of the star war epitome, the two Superpowers should engage in serious, objective and honest negotiations to achieve a meaningful disarmament and peace.

Since virtually no "scientific wizardry" on the part of either one of the two Superpowers can assure any long-term superiority in absolute terms, let the Superpowers hearken to the voice of reason by undertaking meaningful negotiations within the Committee on Disarmament and other forums with a view to concluding an effective and comprehensive treaty aimed at preventing the further militarization of outer space. It is therefore in this context that my delegation fully endorses the views of the Group of 21 as contained in document CD/329 to the effect that negotiations on the prevention of an arms race in outer space should aim at concluding "an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in outer space in all its aspects". We would also like to associate ourselves with those delegations that have called for the establishment of an ad hoc working group on the issue under an appropriate mandate.

In the opinion of the Nigerian delegation, the voice of reason suggests that the Committee take immediate measures aimed at engaging in practical negotiations in order to elaborate a comprehensive agreement to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space, in consonance with the provisions of United Nations General Assembly resolutions 37/83 and 37/99 D, if outer space, the common heritage of all mankind, is not to be turned into a cataclysmic battlefield.

Now is the time to establish, firmly and legally, outer space as a common heritage of mankind. May I conclude by calling to mind the words of Harry Truman: "All through history it's the nations that have given the most to the generals and the least to the people that have been the first to fall".

(Mr. Fields, United States)

We have also had useful and informative discussions on the subjects of the prevention of nuclear war and outer-space. Informal meetings on these subjects have reflected the keen interest of some delegations in the immediate creation of working groups with full negotiating mandates and a more cautious approach to these subjects by other delegations. The Committee has through this process made some progress in reconciling these opposing approaches. My delegation has tried to keep an open mind on these questions, but has not, as yet, heard compelling arguments that we have definitvely established the existence of a dangerous void in international law which demands the urgent attention of the Committee or a precise focus on concrete issues on which negotiations can take place. It seems to my delegation that there is a perception by some delegations that the creation of a working group somehow in and of itself solves these complex and often obscure problems. If we were to accept this approach, we would have a proliferation of working groups -- well beyond the resources of most delegations in the Committee to cover adequately. We believe it would be better to concentrate on the completion of the work before us, while at the same time exploring the substantive issues relating to these complex subjects on which we can develop a common approach. As the sole multilateral negotiating forum for disarmament, we must always be vigilant to those areas where disarmament negotiations are necessary and appropriate.

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(Mr. McPhail, Canada)

Mutual security is also a critical theme in this Committee's consideration of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Outer space has been defined as a Canadian priority for 1983. For a number of years in the General Assembly, Canada has urged that attention be given to this subject. Let me be clear. Our objective is the prohibition of all weapons for use in outer space. Mr. MacEachen called on this Committee to begin as soon as possible its essential task of defining the legal and other issues necessary to build upon the existing outer space regime. Perhaps one of the most logical issues to treat first is that of defining what a future treaty or treaties would include. Presumably the definition should encompass space-based and ground-based systems, and should include any type of weapon not prohibited by the outer space Treaty. The definition should presumably be as broad as possible, and be sufficiently precise so as not to conflict with other categories of armaments. As we progress, it may be decided that we should concentrate initially on one category of weapons, if a broader definition would unduly delay progress toward our objective.

The main problem the Committee will face, however, will undoubtedly be that of verifying any prohibition on which we may wish to agree. The technical problems involved are daunting, for example, in determining whether a vehicle in space — or a system on the ground apparently designed for use in space — does in fact contravene the prohibitions of an agreement. Canadian experts are attempting to determine how the problem can be dealt with, and we shall share any promising results of their research with other delegations in this Committee.

The Canadian delegation will co-operate fully, Mr. Chairman with the contact group that will be consulting under your guidance and that of your successor in this regard. This contact group is charged with clarifying the objectives and tasks of an eventual working group on arms control and outer space, with a view to reaching consensus on the creation of a working group and its mandate. The objective is to reach agreement during the course of our summer session, and we intend, in co-operation with others, to work actively toward this objective so that the option of arming outer space may be closed off.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

The question to which the Committee has given greater attention at this session is that of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. We fully understand the alarm and anxiety expressed by a number of delegations in the Committee about the programmes recently adopted and already being carried out for the designing of weapons based on the latest scientific achievements and discoveries, including systems and means for the conduct of military operations in outer space and from it. We regret that in spite of the almost universal understanding by delegations in the Committee of the urgency of this question, the discussions on it did not culminate in the adoption of a decision to set up an ad hoc working group. The basis for such a decision existed and exists. A number of delegations, including delegations from socialist and non-aligned States and also from Western countries put forward proposals meriting attention. The Soviet delegation will continue at the summer part of our session to make efforts to secure progress on this issue, bearing in mind the ultimate goal -- outer space should remain a peaceful sphere. The draft treaty we put forward concerning the non-stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space was designed to contribute to this end. As Mr. Andropov, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, stressed, "We are convinced that it is necessary to go even further and agree on a general prohibition of the use of force both in outer space and from it, in relation to the earth".

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

With regard to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, the Mongolian delegation, like many other delegations, has repeatedly drawn attention to the urgency of this question, which is becoming all the greater in view of the dangerous trend towards the conversion of outer space into a theatre for such a race and particularly in the light of recent actions on the part of the Washington administration.

The socialist countries constantly endeavour to secure the adoption of effective measures to prevent an arms race in outer space. There are on the negotiating table in the Committee various documents which could provide a solid basis for a detailed consideration of and the conduct of negotiations on questions of substance.

As a result of the consistent demands of the group of socialist countries, and with the support of the Group of 21, the Committee on Disarmament could in principle at the present stage reach a consensus on the establishment of an ad hoc working group on item 7 of the agenda, if it were not for the opposition of those who maintain the thesis of the "vagueness" of the aims and tasks of such a working group.

The Mongolian delegation considers that appropriate consultations should be held in the Committee at the very beginning of the summer part of its session for the purpose of reaching agreement on a mandate for an ad hoc working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space so that the group can proceed forthwith to practical negotiations.

(Mr. Cromartie, United Kingdom)

My delegation also welcomes the prospect of further work in the Committee on Disarmament on problems related to arms control in space. We believe that this is an issue of the highest importance which deserves full and proper consideration by the Committee, including the creation of a working group on space issues, provided that agreement can be reached on an appropriate mandate. There are already a number of proposals before the Committee for the formulation of such a mandate, but we believe that they may be too broad and too unspecific for the purpose in hand. In the view of my delegation we should aim to point the work of the proposed group in practical directions which offer the prospect of real progress. We would favour adopting a more pragmatic approach which would seek to answer the following questions:

(i) Which aspects of military activity in space are already controlled by bilateral or multilateral agreements? Have these agreements been observed? Have they stood the test of time?

(ii) Could existing agreements be extended? What other further arms control measures might be envisaged? Are there developments which are immediately threatening?

(iii) Is there scope for confidence-building measures or other more general undertakings?

In line with this approach my delegation would consider it desirable to confine the draft mandate initially to the examination of the scope and continued validity of arms control agreements governing space; the definition, if that is possible, of areas in which it would be desirable and feasible to extend that scope; and the identification of means by which such an extension could be achieved.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

The question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space has been on the agenda of the Committee on Disarmament for two years. This problem has become particularly urgent now in connection with the recently declared plans of the United States to turn outer space into an arena for the arms race.

The Soviet Union is firmly against the initiation of a new round in the arms race and its extension to new spheres. That is why, a few years ago, the Soviet Union submitted to the Committee on Disarmament a draft treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space. As you know, we are not opposed to the consideration, in the course of the relevant negotiations, of questions connected with the prohibition of anti-satellite systems as well as other systems of weapons to be used in or from outer space. But we are in favour of concrete negotiations aimed at achieving agreed tangible results. This is, in our view, the task of the Committee on Disarmament -- the body for multilateral negotiations in this field. In this connection, we cannot share the approach set forth in the statement made the day before yesterday by the head of the United Kingdom delegation, Ambassador Cromartie, who proposed that the mandate of an ad hoc working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space should be confined to "the examination of the scope and continued validity of existing arms control agreements governing space" and to some other problems of a similar research nature.

In principle the Soviet Union is not against research activity in this field. Moreover, we have even submitted an appropriate proposal to this effect. As you know, Mr. Yuri Andropov, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, has proposed the holding of a meeting between Soviet and United States scientists who are specialists in this matter in order to discuss the possible consequences of the creation of large-scale anti-missile defence systems. However, the Committee is not the place for such an activity. Here we should work out concrete international agreements on the prevention of an arms race in outer space and on the prohibition of the stationing in space of weapons of any kind because a real danger exists of the spreading of military activity into this sphere also. The Soviet delegation therefore considers that the mandate of the working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space should envisage talks on this issue aimed at the elaboration of an appropriate agreement or agreements.

(Mr. Nuñez Mosquera, Cuba)

As regards outer space, consultations have been begun with a view to setting up a working group to negotiate an appropriate solution for the prevention of an arms race in that environment. As you all know, practical working papers containing well-defined mandates have been submitted to the Committee on Disarmament both by the non-aligned and neutral countries and by the socialist group of countries. These documents were submitted some time ago and we are still awaiting the reaction of the group of western countries. We are aware that they are ready to submit their own ideas on this subject, which we hope will be consonant with the negotiating function expected of us. Anything less — a limited mandate, like the one given to the Working Group on a Nuclear Test Ban — would be regrettable.

Mr. ERDENBILEG (Mongolia) (translated from Russian): Mr. Chairman, allow me sincerely to welcome you to the office of Chairman of the Committee on Disarmament for the month of August and to wish you success in the discharge of the responsible duties of that office.

I should also like to express our gratitude to your predecessor, Ambassador Mansur Ahmad of Pakistan, who guided the Committee's work last month.

The Mongolian delegation had occasion to set forth its views again on the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space on 19 April of this year, during the spring part of the Committee's session. Today I should like to make certain comments in order to explain our position on this question in greater detail. Before beginning my statement I should like, on behalf of the Mongolian delegation, formally to introduce the working paper in document CD/410, which has today been distributed to members of the Committee.

In this document the Mongolian delegation has tried once again to demonstrate the importance and urgency of the problem of the prevention of an arms race in outer space and to give an assessment of the present situation in the Committee on this issue. I would also note that we have tried to explain the need for the speediest possible starting of negotiations on the substance of the issue within the framework of the Committee, and, to that end, for the setting up without further delay of an ad hoc working group with an appropriate mandate. The Mongolian delegation hopes that the ideas and observations contained in its working paper will be carefully studied and commented on during the Committee's further consideration of item 7 of its agenda.

The question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space, which was included in the agenda of the Committee on Disarmament only relatively recently, is becoming one of theatre and greater urgency. The active interest in this question of the overwhelming majority of delegations has greatly increased, and even during the spring part of our session we were near consensus on the establishment of an ad hoc working group on this question.

However, discussion of the matter has been dragging on, while the threat of the conversion of outer space into a theatre for an unrestrained arms race has markedly increased. In the United States a decision has been adopted concerning national space policy in which a large part is played by the use of outer space for military purposes.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

The United States' intended large-scale use of space combat systems is connected primarily with the deployment in outer space of weapons based on new physical principles, in particular laser and high-energy weapons, and also traditional types of weapons.

Under the programme for the so-called triad of space-based laser weapons, intensive work is being done in the United States on the development of the basic elements of space laser weapons. The "Alpha" programme provides for the development of a powerful chemical laser; under the "LODE" plan, an optical system is being devised which will "increase the effect of the laser beam on the target", while the "Talon Gould" project is for the development of a system of detection and tracking and guiding the laser beam to the target. Large companies like Lockheed, Rockwell, TRW and others are engaged in this work.

The United States is considering the possibility of the application of the reusable space shuttle system to anti-satellite and other military purposes.

The United States is also developing an airborne missile system using the F-15 military aircraft in order to carry out attacks on artificial earth satellites.

Lastly, on 23 March 1983 President Reagan announced in the United States the beginning of work on a large-scale and highly effective anti-missile defence system with space-based elements. All this constitutes a dangerous step, opening the way to a new arms race in outer space. It is disguised with misleading arguments about the need to strengthen the United States' strategic defence. In reality, however, it implies the further development and improvement of the United States' strategic offensive forces, and in a very specific direction, that of acquiring the potential to deliver a first nuclear strike.

There is one other factor which, in the Mongolian delegation's view, bears witness to the urgent need to set up in the Committee without delay an ad hoc working group to conduct negotiations on item 7 of the agenda and reach agreement on the text of an appropriate international treaty, taking into account the proposals that have been made. The existing system of multilateral and bilateral agreements and treaties limiting the possibilities for the extension of the arms race to outer space could well be undermined by the efforts to create space types of weapons. Here is one example which is a good illustration of this. Even before the United States administration's announcement of its intention to start implementing a programme for the development of a highly effective large-scale ABM system, the world community was alarmed by reports in the United States press about work at the Lawrence laboratory in Livermore on the development of a powerful X-ray laser belonging, according to staff working at the laboratory, to the "third generation" of atomic weapons.

The principle on which this laser is based requires the use of atomic explosions to produce the energy for a powerful flow of X-rays.

According to workers at the laboratory, this laser system could be deployed in outer space, where lasers and nuclear charges could be placed in orbit aboard artificial earth satellites.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

This alarming information was repeated in April this year even after the announcement of the decision to start work on the development of a large-scale highly effective ABM system. Judging by recent statements in the influential United States newspaper, the Christian Science Monitor, those working on the new programme, and in particular the well-known Edward Teller, are in favour of the development of laser devices which will use the X-rays produced by the explosion of nuclear charges deployed on space satellites.

I should like to point out that plans for nuclear explosions in space will assuredly jeopardize the observance of the international treaties and agreements that are in force, safeguarding outer space from being turned into an arena for the arms race.

Those who are obstructing the establishment of an ad hoc working group, and thus the starting of concrete negotiations, justify their action by arguing that discussion of the prevention of an arms race in outer space is pointless. In particular, Vice-President of the United States George Bush, in his statement to the Committee at the beginning of this session, said in this connection: "Clearly, the conditions do not exist which would make negotiations appropriate".

The Mongolian delegation does not share this view. It will be easier and simpler to block possible channels for an arms race in outer space before the appearance and deployment of space types of weapons. In our approach to item 7, we see as the priority task the closing off of possible dangerous channels for the arms race in good time, instead of waiting passively until they begin to be used for filling the arsenals of States with new types of weapons.

Paragraph 39 of the Final Document of the first special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament clearly emphasizes the need for negotiations "on the limitation and cessation of the qualitative improvement of armaments, especially weapons of mass destruction and the development of new means of warfare so that ultimately scientific and technological achievements may be used solely for peaceful purposes".

This provision of paragraph 39 is particularly relevant in connection with outer space, the peaceful use of which is one of the most important prerequisites to the solution of the global problems of all mankind.

During the discussion of this item at plenary meetings it has been said that a convention on the prevention of an arms race in outer space would be ineffective because of the "vagueness" of its scope.

This apprehension is based on two false assumptions. The first is that the parties to the future treaty or agreement will endeavour at all costs on the first opportunity to violate it -- will do everything in order not to feel bound by its limitations.

The Mongolian delegation, like many other delegations, considers that the prevention of an arms race in outer space is in the interests of the security and development of absolutely all States. It is on this common interest that all the multilateral and bilateral treaties and agreements concluded up to now have been founded.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

Secondly, the proponents of this view assume that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to prove the violation by one State or another of the obligation it had assumed not to deploy weapons in outer space. Of course, there is no perfect verification system, nor can there be. Every agreement in the sphere of disarmament contains an element of trust. But the opposite is also true. No attempt at obtaining a strategic advantage by violating the treaty would pass unnoticed. The possibility of individual violations is not excluded by any of the agreements now in force in the sphere of disarmament. But with the existing verification measures we believe that it would be impossible to secure strategic advantages without the other parties to the agreements being aware of it.

At the present stage of the discussion of item 7 of the agenda it is unlikely that anyone is unconvinced of the urgency of this issue. The overwhelming majority of delegations, if not all, are in favour of its discussion in some form or other. The Committee has nearly reached a consensus on the mandate of an ad hoc working group, which represents a positive outcome of the work done in the Committee under your guidance, Mr. Chairman, as well as under the chairmanships of the distinguished representatives of Nigeria and Pakistan.

At the same time, we are disturbed at the lack of results in the contact group dealing with the question of the mandate of the future ad hoc working group.

As you know, the group of socialist countries has adopted a definite position on the question of the mandate of the future working group. Basically we believe that it is necessary to begin negotiations with a view to drafting a treaty or treaties on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. This firm position is reflected in document CD/272, which was submitted by the Mongolian delegation. The Group of 21 also has the same object in mind and its position is clearly set forth in document CD/329.

However, delegations of the group of Western countries are still not ready to agree to such a constructive approach to the consideration of this question, and its solution in a positive way. It is for this reason that the Committee has already lost so much time.

If, during the time remaining before the closure of this session, the Committee does not manage to reach agreement on the question now under discussion, we shall at that stage see no other solution but to inform the world community of the actual state of affairs and to give the reason for the situation that exists in the Committee on Disarmament with respect to the consideration of item 7 of its agenda.

Mr. LI LUYE (China): Mr. Chairman, first of all, allow me in the name of the Chinese delegation to congratulate you on your assumption of the Chair of the Committee on Disarmament for the current month. I am convinced that, under your experienced and efficient guidance, the Committee will be able smoothly to fulfil its heavy tasks in the remaining month of the summer session. You can expect full support and co-operation from my delegation. I also wish to take this opportunity to thank your predecessor, Ambassador Ahmad of Pakistan for the excellent and effective guidance he provided in conducting our business last month.

Today, I wish to make a few comments on a question of general concern, the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

With the rapid advance of space science and technology, people have come to see more and more clearly the immense potentialities that the peaceful uses of outer space have for promoting the scientific, technological, economic and cultural development of all countries, as well as for enhancing international co-operation. We are all encouraged by the prospects of conquering and utilizing the universe of mankind. On the other hand, however, people are concerned about the continuing escalation of military activities in outer space, and particularly about the development of outer space weapons. In the countries that possess the most advanced space technologies, "space war" weapons, which once existed only in the realm of science fiction, have now found their way from the designing board and laboratory into the stage of experimentation for use, and will probably be deployed in the not too distant future. Information provided by well-known international research institutes has shown that over a decade ago, one space power, the Soviet Union, had already started research and development on anti-satellite weapons. In 1982, the Soviet Union further carried out an anti-satellite weapon test in co-ordination with the test launching of its intercontinental ballistic missiles and anti-ballistic missiles tests. The other space power, the United States, is also stepping up its research into anti-satellite systems and is developing a research programme into space-based lasers as anti-ballistic missile weapons. The Soviet Union is said also to have a similar programme. Both are currently working on particle-beam weapons. All this shows that outer space is becoming a new arena for the superpowers to engage in arms expansion. By carrying the arms race into outer space they are opening the way for a hitherto relatively calm outer space to become a scene for military confrontation, which will inevitably increase instability and the danger of war.

We are now standing at a crossroads: either we take measures to halt an arms race in outer space so that the utilization of this common heritage of mankind can be for peaceful purposes to the benefit of all, or we allow it to become a theatre for the arms race and thus present an even greater threat to the whole of mankind. The Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which was held last year, also expressed grave concern about the expansion of the arms race into outer space, demanding that effective measures be taken as soon as possible to prevent the increasing militarization of outer space and an arms race therein.

(Mr. Li Luye, China)

China has consistently maintained that the exploration and use of outer space must serve peaceful purposes. The increasing militarization of outer space consitutes an obstacle to its peaceful use. Efforts must be made to halt and reverse such a dangerous trend. In our view, the question of the militarization of outer space consists mainly of the following two aspects. On the one hand, various kinds of space weapons are being developed by the two major space powers. Their success in this field will result in a tremendous threat to peace and security. Therefore, it is of immediate urgency to adopt measures to prevent the testing, production and deployment of such weapons. On the other hand, there exist some one thousand military satellites which belong to the three-C system, i.e. command, control and communication. Most of these satellites belong to the two States which possess the largest arsenals and have already become an important component part of their respective military systems in their rivalry for world domination. They constitute the basis of their military superiority. In a word, the existence and emergence of either outer space weapons or military satellites do not conform with the purposes and objectives of the "demilitarization of outer space" or the "use of outer space solely for peaceful purposes". Therefore, in principle, they should be prohibited or restricted. Of course, military satellites are a relatively complicated issue in that they can serve both military and civilian purposes. Some countries believe that these satellites should not be prohibited because they have certain stabilizing effects. Although it cannot be denied that some of these satellites can play a certain role in the monitoring of the implementation of disarmament agreements and in giving advance warning in the event of a surprise attack, we cannot ignore the fact that the absence of limitations and restrictions on these satellites will by no means help check the arms race, particularly the nuclear arms race, between the two superpowers. We believe, therefore, that at present we can start by prohibiting all outer space weapons. The question of how to limit and restrict military satellites, however, should also be dealt with in the future, in an effort to reach the final objective of the demilitarization of outer space.

It should be pointed out that, as regards the demilitarization of outer space and the prevention of an arms race therein, the superpowers which possess the most advanced space technology and are engaged in intensifying contention for supremacy have special responsibilities.

Based on the above position, our delegation maintains that the Committee on Disarmament, in accordance with the relevant resolution adopted at the thirty-seventh session of the United Nations General Assembly, should speedily establish an ad hoc working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

(Mr. Li Luye, China)

The mandate of the working group would be to negotiate and elaborate an international legal instrument on the prohibition of the research, production, deployment and use of all types of outer space weapons. Some delegations have already expressed their views as to what outer space weapons are. We on our part are now studying this issue and are willing to exchange views with other delegations so as to reach a precise and scientific definition of these weapons. As to the number and specific form of the international legal instruments to be concluded through negotiations, we are flexible. We can also agree to starting our negotiations first on the prohibition of outer space weapons already in trial production.

Now, we have only two weeks left before the closure of this session of the Committee on Disarmament. In spite of the repeated consultations, regrettably, a working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space has still not been established. Many States have been pressing for an agreement on the mandate of the working group, so that substantive negotiations can begin earlier. There is no excuse for the Committee not to live up to the expectations of the international community which urgently demands the curbing of an arms race in outer space.

Mr. VEJVODA (Czechoslovakia):

Allow me to focus my attention on one of the very important questions of disarmament -- the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

As was stated at the meeting of heads of States parties to the Warsaw Treaty held recently in Moscow, they consider it necessary to start as soon as possible negotiations on the prohibition of the deployment of weapons of any kind in outer space and thus to prevent the extension of the arms race to this sphere.

The Soviet Union proposed a draft treaty banning the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space. At the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE 82) held in Vienna last summer, the overwhelming majority of countries said they were worried about the issue.

But primarily because the United States was not willing to countenance anything stronger, the final report of the Conference merely expressed general concern.

The conclusion in 1967 of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies closed the possibility for the placing in outer space of weapons of mass destruction. This Treaty prohibits the creation on celestial bodies of military bases, installations or fortifications, as well as the testing of weapons of any kind and the conducting of military manoeuvres. However, from the legal point of view, the possibility remains of the placing in outer space of such types of weapons as are not covered by the definition of weapons of mass destruction.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

We are now witnessing attempts to make use of this possibility. Science and technology have made such a progress that it is now practically possible to create laser weapons based in space.

It has been disclosed that the Pentagon is funding research into a laser beam system for use as a weapon in space. This could conceivably be ready for flight testing by 1993, at a cost of $30 million. Major-General Donald Lamberson, responsible for directed-energy weapons to the United States Under-Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, told a Congressional committee in March that new Pentagon studies would define for the first time "the scope of the remaining uncertainties as to whether an effective weapon system can be achieved and the size of the risk involved in a greatly accelerated programme." The Pentagon has so far committed about $900 million for the five years 1982-1988.

The novelty of beam weapon systems -- "brand new weapon forms that have never been developed and deployed before," as Major-General Lamberson called them -- suggests that they will draw little upon existing weapons systems technology (although they may draw extensively upon NASA's space shuttle programme to test the components).

However, this is only one side of the possible use of outer space for military purposes. There are already technical possibilities also for setting up and stationing in outer space military facilities which could strike against targets on the earth's surface or in its vicinity. And it is commonly known that specific projects are being worked out for setting up laser and beam weapons systems also for that purpose. So we cannot pay attention to only one system in outer space; we have to prohibit any kind of weapon in that environment. This would be the only really effective solution to this question.

Anything else would be simply a waste of time, which is running against us. President Reagan has proposed that we start investigating whether in the next century technology may offer a solution to security that does not rest on the prospect of mass and mutual death. But this is nothing other than an attempt to cover the reality, a dangerous step toward the militarization of space.

The decision by President Reagan to start research on the creation of a global ABM system based in space would undoubtedly give new impetus to the arms race in outer space. The Soviet-American ABM Treaty prohibits the development, testing and deployment of ABM systems and their components based in space. As is well known, each development of a new type of weapon starts with research, which forms an organic part of the development stage. We are afraid that the United States President's decision breaks the provisions of the important Treaty on the limitation of ABM systems. One should also fully take into account the fact that the development of a new ABM system in the United States would result in the creation of a highly unstable and dangerous situation.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

We have also heard and read arguments that the best place for a future war is outer space, not only because it is distant but also because the United States can permanently hold the lead. What can be said in response to such a thesis? As I have already said, the party and State leaders of the socialist countries parties to the Warsaw Treaty stated that they "resolutely stand for the maintenance of a balance of forces at the lowest possible level. But in the interests of peace and self security the States in question proclaim that in no case will they allow anybody to achieve military superiority over them". And this is what both sides should realize -- that there is no kind of scientific wizardry to assure superiority anywhere. It would also be wise if this fact were realized by the United States. It would also be wise to bear in mind the words of Richard L. Garwin, who helped build the H-bomb and has worked for 32 years on exctic weapons and defence development. He said recently, "Space wars are not an alternative to war on earth." Military systems in space are in fact designed to produce military advantages on the ground. We cannot but agree with several members of the United States Senate and Union of Concerned Scientists saying "It will be far more difficult to keep weapons out of space once testing begins". And if we take into consideration how much the weapons race taken into outer space would cost, we cannot escape the fact that it would undoubtedly become the most costly armament programme ever undertaken.

There is still time to do something to stop this madness. But for that we need concrete negotiations.

The best way to do that is to set up the working group and to start serious negotiations based on the principle of equality and equal security. The fact that we must do something concrete is fortunately understood by many delegations. For example, in document CD/375, "Prevention of arms race in outer space", prepared by France, it is very clearly written that "the 1967 Treaty on outer space deals very inadequately with the problems posed by the arms race in outer space. The only limitation placed on military activity in outer space is the prohibition, in the first paragraph of article IV of the Treaty, of the placing in orbit of nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction".

Such a Treaty in its time was a great step forward. But the time has come to extend the prohibition to any other weapon which can be used in outer space. This is also reflected in the French document, although we cannot agree with the formulation that "The Treaty thus, on the contrary, authorizes other military uses of outer space". There is not a single word about such an authorization in the Treaty. It would be more correct to say that the prohibition of the placing in orbit only of nuclear weapons or other weapons

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

of mass destruction contained in the Treaty was misused for the development of other weapons not defined in the Treaty. I repeat, misused, but not authorized by the Treaty.

So, I think there is a common agreement that something concrete must be done. But concrete negotiation cannot start at plenary meetings, formal or informal ones.

Let us, then, establish an ad hoc working group and begin serious negotiations, because it will be far more difficult to keep weapons out of space once their testing begins and once they become a part of the military arsenal of some State.

In this connection, I would like to evaluate the efforts of the United Nations aimed at the exploration of outer space for peaceful purposes only. As you know, there has been functioning in the United Nations for many years the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The work of this Committee and of its two sub-committees, the one scientific and technical, and the other legal, deserves the maximum attention of all Members of the United Nations. And you know that it has already brought concrete results. I would like to mention the agreements which modify the co-operation of States in outer space. These are, in particular, the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, which I mentioned earlier, the 1968 Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space, the 1972 Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects, the 1975 Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space and the 1979 Agreement concerning the moon and other celestial bodies. I think that nobody can doubt the usefulness of these documents. It is only regrettable that after many years of existence of the Committee -- it is more than 20 years -- such results are not more plentiful. It is well known that because of the lack of interest of Western countries, and especially of the United States, and because of their lack of a positive approach, it has not been possible to achieve the international legal regulation of long-distance research of the earth from outer space, nor has it been possible to adopt a legal definition and delimitation of space. We are of the opinion that this -- I mean the co-operation of States in the peaceful exploration of space and the regulation of concrete questions -- is a sphere in which States should also concentrate their attention and efforts. We, in the Committee on Disarmament, could help quite a lot in the endeavours to ensure the peaceful use of outer space by preparing a treaty prohibiting any possible misuse of that environment for military purposes.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): Mr. Chairman, the Soviet delegation would like to dwell upon item 7 of the agenda, "Prevention of an arms race in outer space".

The Soviet Union consistently advocates the elaboration of international legal rules protecting outer space against various aspects of the arms race. As far back as in 1958, soon after the launching of the first Soviet artificial satellite, which marked the beginning of the space era, the USSR put forward a proposal for the prohibition of all types of military use of outer space without exception, on the basis of strict observance of the principle of equal security and the non-admission of military advantage for any side.

In the following years, on the initiative of the Soviet Union and with its active participation, international agreements were elaborated and concluded aimed at the use of space only for peaceful purposes and for the benefit of mankind.

The Committee on Disarmament has been dealing with the subject of the prevention of an arms race in outer space only relatively recently -- since the last session. The inclusion of this item in the agenda was necessary because in spite of the existing agreements and treaties there are still wide gaps whereby outer space can be filled with lethal weapons. In this connection, the concern of the States members of the Committee reflects the legitimate concern of the entire international community, alarmed at the ominous prospect of the transformation of outer space into a potential theatre of military activities.

The rapid development of military space technology has made the extremely important task of firmly preventing the extension of the arms race to outer space a priority international problem. The maintenance of peace and security in outer space has tremendous significance for the preservation of peace on earth. In the final analysis, any space weapon has a terrestrial orientation. War in space will not be an alternative to war on earth; it will be a mere prelude to war on our entire planet.

Mr. Yuri Andropov, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, in his reply to the address of a group of American scientists and public figures emphasized that "prevention of the militarization of outer space is one of the priority problems facing mankind, and much here on earth will depend on whether it is solved".

The militarization of outer space would complicate the international situation as a whole, increase distrust in the relations between States, create obstacles to international co-operation in the sphere of the peaceful use of space, reduce the prospects for the limitation of the arms race in other fields, have a destabilizing effect on the strategic situation and inevitably increase the probability of the outbreak of a nuclear war.

But even if not used for its primary purpose, military space technology causes tremendous damage, depriving the international community of immense funds and material resources. For example, during the current fiscal year, the United States has increased the allocations for the development of space weapons systems up to $2 billion. The deployment of combat systems of space weapons would cost hundreds of billions of dollars. At a time when many countries need material assistance for their social and economic development, expenditure of truly astronomical sums on the arms race in outer space is nothing but the robbery of peoples.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

Some delegations, hindering the starting of negotiations on item 7 of the agenda, argue that at present there are no specific types of weapons designed for use in and from outer space.

Such an approach seems to us incorrect. Common sense and logic call for the preventive prohibition of new types of weapons before their deployment, creation and development. The facts show that we are on the threshold of the appearance of space types of weapons. At present the United States is completing the development of an anti-satellite missile system (ASAT) on the basis of the F-15 fighter plane. There is no doubt that the deployment of anti-satellite weapons will threaten both peaceful activity in space and the existence of national systems of communication, control and command, which would lead to the most dangerous destabilization of the strategic situation.

It is also known that the United States is developing directed-energy laser- and particle-beam weapons, which it is planned to deploy in space. Their main task would be the destruction of space-, air-, ground- and sea-based targets. If anyone thinks that the appearance of laser weapons in space is possible only in the distant future, he is mistaken. The appearance of laser space weapons in the 1980s and 1990s is not improbable. According to information from the American press agencies published in the International Herald Tribune of 27 July 1983, the United States Air Force recently tested a laser weapon against real targets. An airborne laser device destroyed five "Sidewinder" missiles over the testing ground in the state of California. There is no doubt that after this weapon is fully developed it will be tested in outer space. Space-, air- and ground-based objects may become its targets.

In the opinion of United States experts, many of the key types of technology necessary for the development of combat space systems already exist. Other, more sophisticated types of technology for the conduct of war in space are being developed in research programmes. The press has published information about such projects as the stationing in space of huge mirrors which would aim a laser beam at missiles and destroy them during flight. The possibilities are being discussed of implementing the project of Edward Teller. The project envisages the creation of a powerful space-based X-ray laser which would have as its energy source the radiation resulting from the explosion of a "small nuclear charge launched into orbit".

The creation of space weapons is being intensified. Large sums are being allocated for their development. According to information in the magazine Aviation Week and Space Technology, the United States Defense Department's plan envisages a more than twelve-fold increase in the amount spent on the development of laser systems for use in and from space by 1988.

During the current session of the Committee, our anxiety concerning the negative consequences of an arms race in outer space has increased still further as a result of the decision taken by the United States administration to begin developing a global anti-missile defence system which could be deployed in space. This was the subject, in particular, of the speech made by President Reagan on 23 March 1983.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

The decision to develop a new space-based ABM system is an extremely dangerous step which opens up a new avenue for the arms race in outer space. The implementation of this decision would inevitably destabilize the strategic situation in the world and would thus increase the danger of the outbreak of nuclear war. There is a strict linkage between offensive and defensive systems of strategic weapons. This linkage was recognized by the official United States representatives at the SALT talks. If this linkage is upset by one side, that will inevitably lead to the adoption of retaliatory measures by the other side. As was pointed out by the eminent Soviet scientist, Vice-President of the USSR Academy of Sciences E.P. Velikhov, whatever the efficiency of a new ABM system, whatever the degree of its reliability in destroying missiles, efforts would immediately be made to improve them, precisely in order to overcome this system. The arms race would be raised to a new and more dangerous level, and military confrontation would become still more threatening. Academician E.P. Velikhov stated that "the so-called defensive weapon would be followed in space by the offensive one. This would represent the greatest threat to the security and sovereignty of all peoples on the planet, since the system would be deployed over their heads, in their sky".

The development of a global ABM system, while intensifying the strategic arms race as a whole, inhibits the adoption of new measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space. In addition to that, it inevitably undermines the foundation of the treaties and agreements existing in this field. The decision to develop a new ABM system is contrary to the 1972 Treaty between the USSR and the United States on the limitation of anti-ballistic missile systems. According to the Treaty (article V), the parties undertook "not to develop, test or deploy ABM systems or components which are sea-based, air-based, space-based or mobile land-based".

It cannot be excluded either that in an attempt to implement the decision of President Reagan certain technical projects might be adopted which would jeopardize the implementation of the Moscow Treaty of 1963 banning nuclear explosions in outer space. We have already mentioned one project which envisages nuclear explosions in outer space in order to provide X-ray lasers with energy. In connection with this project one of the participants in the negotiations which resulted in the conclusion of the Moscow Treaty, Mr. Averell Harriman, not long ago stated the following: "I am disturbed to hear consideration of discarding the limited test ban to test nuclear weapons for use in outer space in the naive belief that war in space will not reach back to earth". (International Herald Tribune, 28 July 1983).

The facts and examples stated above, in our view, quite convincingly show what a tragedy it would be for mankind if outer space were transformed into a source of disputes between States, and more particularly a sphere of military confrontation between them. Only a complete lack of understanding of a heavy responsibility and extreme madness can lead to a policy whereby the space over man's head contains a threat to his very existence.

The draft treaty submitted by the Soviet delegation on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space is designed to prevent such a threat. We proposed that States should undertake not to place in orbit around the earth objects carrying weapons of any kind, install such weapons on

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

celestial bodies or station such weapons in outer space in any other manner. According to the draft the parties to the treaty should use space objects in accordance with the principles of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, and in the interests of maintaining peace and security and developing co-operation and mutual understanding. The Soviet draft was met with understanding by the international community. In its resolutions 36/99 and 37/83 the United Nations General Assembly urged the Committee on Disarmament to work out an appropriate international agreement. On this basis, the delegations of the socialist countries in the Committee already have for two years now been advocating the establishment of an ad hoc working group to elaborate a treaty or treaties.

We are prepared to go even further -- to agree on the prohibition in general of the use of force both in outer space and from outer space in respect of earth. The Soviet Union is ready to enter into negotiations on these subjects without delay. Our proposal for the holding of a meeting of Soviet and American scientists and experts to discuss the possible implications of the creation of a full-scale ABM system also remains in force. I wish to recall also that at the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly the Soviet side reaffirmed its readiness to resume bilateral Soviet-American talks on anti-satellite systems.

This is the essence of our position on item 7 of the agenda - not to start an arms race where there has been none, and to put a stop to it where it is now taking place. The Soviet delegation believes that further delay in starting negotiations on item 7 is inadmissible. Even during the short time since the inclusion in the Committee's agenda of the item on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, the ominous scripts of "star wars" have been embodied in quite real military space programmes.

Mr. Andropov stated in his reply to the address of the group of American scientists and public figures, "We have now reached a truly decisive moment: either the States concerned must immediately sit at the negotiating table and start to elaborate a treaty banning the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space, or the arms race will spread to outer space".

This position corresponds to the interests of the overwhelming majority of peoples and States. The international community is becoming more and more clearly aware of the danger looming over it. The scientists of various countries have been warning markind of the possible implications of the extension of the arms race to outer space. A special declaration on this subject was adopted by Soviet scientists. A number of scientists from the United States and other Western countries have also condemned the plans for the development of a full-scale ABM system. More than 100 United States congressmen and 40 eminent scientists and arms control experts have sent letters to President Reagan calling for immediate agreement with the Soviet Union on the establishment of a bilateral moratorium on the testing of anti-satellite weapons in outer space. The letter of the congressmen states: "We are deeply concerned at the threat of an arms race in outer space and are convinced that it is in the United States national interests to avoid it. Such an arms race will threaten our security and undermine international stability and the possibility of achieving future agreements in the arms control field".

The representatives of 36 academies of sciences resolutely advocated a peaceful outer space in the declaration they signed in Rome in September 1982.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

Finally, the secretariat of the Committee on Disarmament has received in recent weeks hundreds of letters from representatives of non-governmental organizations and private persons demanding the adoption of measures to prevent an arms race in outer space. Here is one of them, and it is echoed by thousands of others. United States citizen Mrs. L.E. Cole from Tempe writes: "I add my voice to the millions of Americans who long for peace. Please do what you can to achieve agreement among delegates attending the Committee on Disarmament -- particularly for a treaty aimed at banning weapons of any kind in outer space. I understand there is a possibility that a working group might be set up to draft such a treaty".

The Committee can no longer disregard the desire of mankind for the boundless ocean of space to remain clean.

The prevention of an arms race in outer space is closely linked with the prevention of nuclear war and the limitation of the arms race in its principal manifestations. These questions are at the centre of the attention of the world community and of many international forums, including the Committee on Disarmament. There were recently published in the Soviet Union the replies of the Minister of Defence of the USSR, Marshal Dmitri Ustinov, to questions put by a TASS correspondent, replies which express the Soviet point of view on a whole range of these issues. The replies of the Minister also explained the USSR position regarding the talks with the United States on nuclear arms limitation in Europe and on strategic arms limitation and reduction. Marshal Ustinov also gave the Soviet assessment of the state of affairs at these talks and their prospects.

The Soviet delegation has transmitted the text of the replies of the USSR Minister of Defence to the questions of the TASS correspondent to the secretariat for distribution as an official document of the Committee. We hope that the replies of the USSR Minister of Defence will be carefully studied by delegations.

Mr. TURBANSKI (Poland):

Like a number of speakers who recently took the floor in plenary, I would also like to focus today on item 7 of our agenda "Prevention of an arms race in outer space". Everybody realizes that it is one of the most important questions in this complex problem of disarmament. We also seem to agree that this negotiating body in the field of disarmament should take firm and concrete action in order to prevent the militarization of outer space and the arms race there. In fact, it is one of our most important and urgent tasks. It is so because the conquest of outer space by man and the success achieved in that area cannot -- unfortunately -- be separated from both the progress and the threats on earth. The successful conquest of space by man has already played and will continue to play a beneficial role. Thanks to the satellites placed in outer space, communication systems have been revolutionized, allowing man to hear, to see and to witness events taking place at the same moment tens of thousands of miles from him. Satellites help man in weather forecasting, making a forecast credible and allowing him to undertake appropriate measures in case of danger. The full exploitation of satellites in the field of education is still being awaited, but the numerous experiments so far conducted appear to be encouraging. Studies and research of the earth's natural resources from outer space, for the benefit of man, are becoming or may become one of the great values of the exploitation of outer space. Remote sensing satellite data has already proved very useful for environmental monitoring, geological prospecting, water resource development, agricultural and forest inventories, and so on.

On the other hand, as specialists indicate, two of every three spacecraft launchings serve military purposes. During the debates of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, held in Vienna just a year ago, the potential danger of the use of outer space for military purposes was expressed with grave concern by most delegations. Many of them, including the delegations of socialist countries, were of the view that the Committee on Disarmament is the most appropriate forum for discussing such concerns, and urged the conduct of negotiations leading to the elaboration of legal, internationally binding instruments to protect outer space from the arms race and military confrontation.

(Mr. Turbanski, Poland)

The United Nations General Assembly, for its part, during its last two sessions, the thirty-sixth and the thirty-seventh, adopted, either by consensus or with an overwhelming majority of votes a number of resolutions which also call for concrete negotiations to be undertaken in this connection.

Before I dwell on specific provisions of at least some of these resolutions and on the views of my delegation, as well as the Committee's duties in their implementation, let me shortly go through the existing international, legally binding rules concerning outer space. Up till now six disarmament agreements have been concluded, containing provisions aimed at prohibiting, to a certain degree, military uses of outer space. Some of them, for example, the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies of 1967, which in a sense, is the present "Charter of outer space", in its article IV provides, inter alia, that "States Parties to the Treaty undertake not to place in orbit around the earth any objects carrying nuclear weapons or any other kinds of weapons of mass destruction, install such weapons on celestial bodies, or station such weapons in outer space in any other manner ..." and that "The moon and other celestial bodies shall be used by all States Parties to the Treaty exclusively for peaceful purposes". Others, like the three Soviet-American agreements dating from the early 1970s, provide regulations in certain specific fields. As an example one may quote the ABM Treaty of 26 May 1972. None of them, however, prohibits in a comprehensive manner all types of military use of outer space. Therefore, following the recommendation contained in paragraph 80 of the Final Document that further measures should be taken and appropriate international negotiations held in accordance with the spirit of the outer space Treaty of 1967, the United Nations General Assembly, at its thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh sessions, adopted four resolutions in which it recognized the importance of the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes. At the same time, it recognized the urgent need to prevent outer space from becoming an area of military confrontation. It is very important to note that in all its resolutions in this field i.e. resolutions 36/97 C, 36/99, 37/83 and 37/99 D, the General Assembly requested the Committee on Disarmament to consider the question of negotiationg effective and verifiable agreements aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space. The Committee on Disarmament, for its part, has affirmed its competence by making this subject a specific item on its agenda from the beginning of its 1982 session.

We have already heard in this room a number of interesting statements on political, military and environmental aspects of the importance of outer space. My delegation greatly appreciates these pronouncements as a genuine contribution to the fulfilment of the mandate of the Committee on Disarmament. Wishing not to be repetitious, I shall refrain from restating arguments already provided. I wish, however, to recall that under the resolutions mentioned above, this Committee has been specifically requested to establish an ad hoc working group, "with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space". That is a quotation from one of the operative paragraphs of resolution 37/83. In the considered view of my delegation, this Committee should have agreed a long time ago, during this session, on a mandate for such a working group so that it could start substantial work from the beginning of its 1984 session.

(Mr. Turbanski, Poland)

We fully share the view that the rapid development of military space technology requires a decisive and specific action by this Committee because, indeed, the maintenance of peace and security in outer space has tremendous significance for preserving peace on earth. In the final analysis, as the head of the Soviet delegation said last week, any weapons placed in outer space have none other than a terrestrial orientation.

Let me recall the decision of the United States President according to which the United States it to embark on a long-term research and development programme whose ultimate goal will be a new, space-based anti-ballistic missile system. The specialists and the proponent himself recognize that it has limitations and raises problems, and that its accomplishment will take years, if not decades, of efforts on many fronts. But a real problem has been posed before mankind now: the implementation of such a decision will inevitably cause the destabilization of the strategic situation among the existing military blocs, with all its consequences. It should be stated that the said decision gives the Committee on Disarmament a new and eloquent justification for commencing without further delay substantial discussion, aimed at the elaboration of specific legal instruments. We would like to reiterate in this connection our position, namely, that the implementation of this programme will be contradictory to the 1972 ABM Treaty which, in article V prohibits the development, testing or deployment of, inter alia, space-based ABM systems.

An overwhelming majority of delegations in this Committee have pronounced themselves during the 1982 and 1983 sessions for the adopting of specific measures aimed at banning any military use of outer space. We therefore regret that a handful of delegations still hold a different view. Let me express the hope that they will use the recess in the work of our Committee to reconsider their position and that they will be able to join in a consensus from the beginning of the 1984 session in establishing an ad hoc working group with a sound mandate. In fact, we have on the table a number of documents whose consideration could provide a good base for the commencement of a substantial discussion. I have in mind, in particular, the draft treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space, introduced by the Soviet Union originally at the thirty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly and circulated in the Committee on Disarmament as its document CD/274.

Among other valuable contributions, documents CD/272, CD/320, CD/329 and the latest, CD/410, could be mentioned.

My delegation welcomes also the Soviet statement made here one week ago that the Soviet Union would be prepared to agree on the prohibition, in general, of the use of force both in outer space and from outer space in respect of earth as well as on the reaffirmation of the Soviet readiness to resume bilateral Soviet-American talks on anti-satellite systems. In other words, a mandate of a future working group should provide for the possibility of negotiations leading to the conclusion of an agreement or agreements for the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects. We support in this connection, the proposal

(Mr. Turbanski, Poland)

contained in document CD/410, introduced recently by the distinguished Ambassador Erdembileg of Mongolia. Once the mandate is agreed on, the ad hoc working group could, indeed, in the first phase of its negotiations, identify questions which are of immediate concern to the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

In concluding, I would like to emphasize, once again, the main theme of my statement today: existing agreements on outer space prohibit certain kind of activities. However, they leave loopholes which cause a threat of the filling of outer space with lethal weapons. Technological advances will, no doubt, tend to create uncontrollable instabilities. That is why, to follow an approach that would provide for treaty formulations is today a must in all our deliberations on the agenda item entitled, "Prevention of an arms race in outer space".

(Mr. Ramaker, Netherlands)

On previous occasions, my delegation has taken the opportunity to voice its concern about the possible dangers which could result from an arms race in outer space, which would add a new dimension to the already existing world-wide arms build-up. Maybe one could say that this is a more narrowly defined subject-matter, as compared to the previous one. Yet it is a very urgent issue, and what is more, it tends to become more complex as time goes by and rapid technological developments take place. Perhaps not so much the vastness of the subject-matter but the sheer complexity of it calls for an initial exploratory phase enabling the Committee to decide, in a pragmatic way, how best to prevent military activities in outer space becoming another source of instability which will make itself felt on earth. In view of the urgency of the matter, my delegation favoured from the beginning a pragmatic approach when it comes to finding the appropriate wording for the mandate of a working group which would have to delve into this very topical issue. Since the establishment of a working group on this subject-matter in itself is acceptable to every delegation in this Committee, my delegation would deeply regret it if a broad, yet meaningful common-denominator type of mandate, accommodating the views of all delegations, could not be agreed upon.

Mr. ONKELINX (Belgium) (translated from French): Mr. Chairman, I promise that I shall be as brief as I was at our meeting last Thursday.

I am taking the floor on behalf of Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

Document CD/413, which is submitted this morning by our countries, contains a draft mandate for the ad hoc working group which could have been set up at this session under item 7 of the Committee's agenda, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. This text is the product of the many informal consultations which have been held under aegis, Mr. Chairman, as well as under that of your predecessors. I should like here to pay a particular tribute to the successive chairmen of the Committee for the way in which they have carried their task in this respect.

You know, as do our colleagues in the Committee, how diffiult it is to reconcile the different approaches which have been advocated as to the most appropriate way of dealing with this important question, to which our States attach the greatest importance.

The draft mandate contained in the document which has been submitted to you constituted an equitable compromise between the various proposals which have been put forward to date by different groups of States.

Its acceptance by the members of the Committee would have represented an effort on the part of each.

Had it decided to set up a working group with such a mandate, the Committee would have been able, at the beginning of the next session, to organize and initiate in substance the consideration of this item on its agenda, which it has not so far been able to do.

The States sponsoring this document still think that their proposal could win the support of all delegations and they earnestly hope that the Committee will continue its efforts to organize the debate which all of us want on this important issue.

Mr. ERDEMBILEG (Mongolia) (translated from Russian): Mr. Chairman, in its statement at the Committee's plenary meeting on 11 August, the Mongolian delegation observed that the delegations of the Western countries are not at present showing a willingness to conduct real negotiations in this body on the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The group of socialist countries, including Mongolia, and the Group of 21 countries have made concrete proposals on this question. The socialist countries are in favour of the immediate establishment of an ad hoc working group with a mandate to conduct negotiations towards the conclusion of an agreement or agreements on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. We, for our part, have shown sufficient flexibility as regards the drafting of an appropriate mandate.

I do not wish to take up the time of the members of the Committee by repeating comments on the course and results of the consultations which have been held during the Committee's present session in the contact group under the guidance of the Chairman. We can only express our regret that these consultations did not have a positive outcome.

In our view, the draft mandate submitted to the Committee today by the group of Western countries (document CD/413) in its present formulation is very far from the specific positions and ideas upheld by the socialist countries in their approach to this question. Although it may contain some ideas put forward by certain delegations, this draft does not mention the most important thing — the conduct of actual negotiations for the purpose of drafting an appropriate international instrument.

We very much regret that the group of Western countries has once again not, for its part, shown flexibility in response to the efforts of the group of socialist countries.

We are in favour of the setting up of an ad hoc working group on item 7 of the agenda not simply for the sake of setting it up. We want real work to be done on the substance of the issue.

In the opinion of the Mongolian delegation, if the Committee on Disarmament cannot, after two whole years, respond positively to the repeated appeals of the United Nations General Assembly for the setting up of an ad hoc working group on item 7 of its agenda to conduct negotiations with a view to the drafting of an agreement or agreements on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, then it ought squarely to state that the responsibility lies with those delegations in the Committee which refuse to conduct concrete negotiations here, not only on that question but also on the extremely urgent and important question of the prevention of nuclear war.

The Committee on Disarmament ought to draw the appropriate conclusions from the serious situation which has come about in this body in the matter of the consideration of the urgent problems on its agenda and inform the world community of the actual situation in the Committee.

(Mr. Rose, German Democratic Republic)

Mr. Chairman, allow me finally some words on a question which increasingly attracts the attention of this Committee — the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Recent news underlines the topicality of this question. We have in mind the establishment of an outer space command, the on-going development of particle-beam weapons for use in outer space, the planned creation of a space-based ABM system and other activities by the United States of America. Taking into account this situation, my country welcomes and supports the new initiative of the Soviet Union to conclude a treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from outer space against the Earth. Only recently, the USSR has unilaterally declared that it will not be the first to send anti-satellite weapons into outer space. This moratorium is further proof of the constructive approach of the Soviet Union towards the prevention of an arms race in outer space. It is our hope that the other side will respond in the same manner.

Furthermore, we hope that the latest Soviet initiatives will stimulate the work of our Committee. Here, as in other fields, it is necessary to proceed to negotiations. We, therefore, advocate that the mandate to be elaborated for a working group on outer space should correspond to this goal.

Mr. EL REEDY (Egypt): The Group of 21 wishes to state its views regarding the question of the establishment of an ad hoc working group on item 7, "Prevention of an arms race in outer space".

Throughout the 1982 and 1983 sessions, the Group of 21 has consistently maintained that the establishment of such an ad hoc working group with an appropriate mandate offers the only practical course for the Committee to fulfil its responsibility under this item. It was in this spirit that the Group of 21 proposed during the 1982 session the following draft mandate for the proposed ad hoc working group, as contained in CD/329:

"Reaffirming the principle that outer space -- the common heritage of mankind -- should be preserved exclusively for peaceful purposes, and in order to prevent the extension of an arms race to outer space, and prohibit its use for hostile purposes; the Committee on Disarmament decides to establish an Ad Hoc Working Group to undertake negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement/or agreements -- as appropriate -- to prevent an arms race in outer space in all its aspects. The Ad Hoc Working Group will take into account all existing proposals and future initiatives and report on the progress of its work to the Committee on Disarmament".

At its thirty-seventh session, the General Assembly adopted by an overwhelming majority resolutions 37/83 and 37/98, in which the Assembly specifically requested the Committee to establish an ad hoc working group to negotiate an agreement or agreements aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space.

It may be observed from the pattern of voting in the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session, that no Member State voted against the establishment of an ad hoc working group with such a mandate. This was in consonance with the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which stated in paragraph 80 that:

"In order to prevent an arms race in outer space, further measures should be taken and appropriate international negotiations be held in accordance with

(Mr. El Reedy, Egypt)

the spirit of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies".

During the 1983 session of the Committee, consultations were held under the auspices of the Chairman with a view to reaching a consensus on a mandate for the ad hoc working group. In these consultations the Group of 21 was confronted by a position consistently held by members of the Western group, which sought to restrict the mandate of the proposed ad hoc working group to identifying "through substantive examination, issues relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space". While the Group of 21 expressed its readiness to accept such a task, as a necessary initial stage in the work of the ad hoc working group, it maintained that the mandate should spell out the ultimate objective of the ad hoc working group, namely to reach an agreement or agreements aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space, as specifically requested by the General Assembly. The Group of 21 still displayed flexibility and showed willingness to accommodate the States in question.

To this end, it submitted various alternative drafts and proposed amendments to the draft mandates submitted during the informal consultations. For example, on 1 August 1983, it proposed the following draft mandate:

"In discharging its responsibilities as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum in accordance with paragraph 120 of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the Committee on Disarmament decides to establish an Ad Hoc Working Group under item 7 of its agenda entitled 'Prevention of an arms race in outer space'.

"In carrying out its task, the Ad Hoc Working Group will take into account all existing proposals and future initiatives, and -- in the first instance -- identify, through substantive examination, issues relevant to the conclusion of an agreement or agreements aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space, and report on the progress of its work to the Committee on Disarmament."

In the last round of consultations, the draft mandate contained in document CD/413 was submitted by its authors for consideration. The Group of 21, in a further attempt to reach an agreed mandate, proposed to amend the second paragraph of the proposed mandate so as to read as follows:

"The Committee requests the Ad Hoc Working Group to identify, in the first part of its 1984 session, through substantive examination, issues relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space" (the underlined words constitute the amendment proposed by the Group of 21).

Such a formula would, if accepted, have led to the establishment of an ad hoc working group, and allowed it to carry out the task of identifying issues relevant to an arms race in outer space during the first half of the session. Following this, the Committee would be in a position to review the situation and hopefully be able to agree on the substantive mandate of the ad hoc working group. To the deep regret of the Group of 21, this proposal, moderate as it is, was not accepted by the authors of document CD/413, who have proceeded with the formal introduction of their proposal as a draft mandate for the ad hoc working group.

The Group of 21 feels it necessary to put on record these developments, about which it wishes to express its deep disappointment. The Group of 21 considers the mandate contained in CD/413 as inadequate, since it failed to spell out the objective to be reached by the ad hoc working group, namely, the negotiation of an agreement or agreements aimed at the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

(Mr. El Reedy, Egypt)

The Group of 21 believes that the absence of a time-limit in the mandate proposed in CD/413 may only plunge the proposed ad hoc working group into unnecessarily prolonged discussions on a number of unspecified issues.

Nevertheless, in view of the urgent need of initiating action in connection with the task of preventing an arms race in outer space, the Group has decided not to prevent the adoption of CD/413, if all other groups are willing to accept it.

In such a case, the members of the Group of 21 would participate in the ad hoc working group to be established, on the understanding that its mandate constitutes only an initial stage. The Group of 21 would, therefore, reserve its right to raise the question at any time and in any manner it deems appropriate, in the light of the course of discussion in the ad hoc working group, and it would then ask the Committee on Disarmament to fulfil its responsibility in providing the ad hoc working group with an adequate mandate.

Mr. IJEWERE (Nigeria):

The same sorry state of affairs can be discerned in our efforts so far on the "prevention of an arms race in outer space". Until now, agreement has not been reached on an acceptable mandate of a future working group whose principal objective would be to insulate outer space from the ever-destabilizing arms race by reaching an agreement on a generally binding instrument that would ensure that outer space is preserved as a common heritage of mankind and not another arena of military and ideological confrontation. It is the belief of my delegation that, in spite of the major responsibility of the Superpowers with regard to outer space, the subject remains a collective and multilateral one on which States share the responsibility to take appropriate measures. Paragraph 80 of the Final Document amply demonstrates this, and I quote:

> "in order to prevent an arms race in outer space, further measures should be taken and appropriate international negotiations be held in accordance with the spirit of the Treaty on Principles Governing Outer Space, including the Moon and other Celestial Bodies".

The Nigerian delegation will therefore continue to urge the space Powers to harken to the collective voice of peace-loving humanity and show much-needed flexibility with a view to implementing General Assembly resolution 37/83, adopted at its thirty-seventh session, which requested the Committee on Disarmament "to establish an ad hoc working group on the subject at the beginning of its session in 1983, with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race ... in outer space".

It is for this reason that the Nigerian delegation took the initiative to work towards the establishment of a contact group on the subject. While we appreciate the efforts on the part of all members of the Committee in their response to the setting-up of the contact group, it is disappointing to note that we are not yet sure whether there will be an agreement on the mandate. The only redeeming feature is that there are proposals to work on.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): The Soviet delegation has always attached and continues to attach great significance to the problem of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The question of the terrible and real danger of the extension of the arms race to space is one of exceptional importance. As is known, the Soviet Union has already expressed on more than one occasion the idea of prohibiting the use of force altogether, both in space proper and as regards the earth.

In this connection, the Soviet delegation would like to draw the attention of States members of the Committee to the new initiative put forward by Mr. Y.V. Andropov, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, in a conversation with United States senators on 18 August of this year. First of all, the Soviet Union considers it necessary to reach agreement on the complete banning of the testing and deployment of space-based weapons of whatever kind for use against targets on earth, in the atmosphere and in outer space.

Further, the USSR is prepared to resolve in the most radical fashion the question of anti-satellite weapons, to reach agreement on the liquidation of the anti-satellite systems that already exist and to prohibit the creation of new systems.

The Soviet Union has already submitted detailed proposals on this issue for consideration at the forthcoming session of the United Nations General Assembly. We have requested the secretariat of the Committee to circulate the relevant material as an official document of the Committee on Disarmament.

Furthermore, the Soviet authorities have taken an extremely important decision:

> "The USSR undertakes not to be the first to put into outer space anti-satellite weapons of whatever kind, that is, it is introducing a unilateral moratorium on such launches for as long as other States, including the United States of America, refrain from the deployment in space of anti-satellite weapons of any kind".

Our decision is yet another concrete and convincing proof of the Soviet Union's goodwill in the matter of strengthening peace and the security of peoples.

(Mr. Cromartie, United Kingdom)

We have had no greater success in starting substantive work on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, because of the failure of the Committee to agree on a mandate for a working group, although all delegations are agreed in principle on its establishment. Some delegations want to start at once on what they describe as negotiations; others have argued that in the first instance we should have an exploratory discussion in order to identify areas where progress is needed and would be possible. Surely, where differences of view persist, and where it is obvious that a phase of initial discussion is in any case necessary, it makes sense to get discussion going under a limited mandate, rather than to attempt to prejudge the issue by insisting on a mandate which is unacceptable to a significant number of delegations. My delegation is grateful to the Group of 21 for their willingness to get discussion going on the basis of the mandate proposed by ten western delegations, including my own. We were, however, surprised and disappointed to hear that the group of socialist countries were withholding their agreement and thus preventing the adoption by the Committee of a decision which would have enabled us to make a flying start on this important subject at the beginning of the 1984 session. We hope that the socialist group will reconsider their position during the recess, so that we can avoid the necessity of covering again in 1984 the same procedural ground as we have covered in this session, and can, instead, get down to discussing the substance of this important issue.

(Mr. Sadleir, Australia)

The prevention of an arms race in outer space is clearly one of the highest priority areas for a multilateral disarmament negotiating body. The opportunities for limitation, for control and for outright prohibition are there, and the risks of failure all too evident. This has been realized by many delegations and we applaud the effort by the Group of 21, in particular, to set aside procedural preferences and agree to a working group with a mandate which begins at the beginning. We regret that the group of socialist countries has not seen fit to join the consensus at this stage. My delegation hopes that early in the 1984 session a working group can be established and be given a free rein, free, that is, to work as it is supposed to. There should be no procedural hurdles once it is established early next year.

(Mr. Fields, United States)

Let me briefly touch also on agenda item 7, the prevention of an arms race in outer space. We conducted long and difficult consultations on this subject under our distinguished Chairman, Ambassador Morelli Pando, of Peru, and my delegation was hopeful for a positive outcome. Unfortunately, at the last moment we were denied that success by the position of one group, a situation surely to be regretted by us all. My delegation has admittedly been among those who were the most sceptical of the usefulness of a working group on this subject. But we listened to the arguments of our colleagues and, while not entirely convinced, we dropped our opposition to a working group per se. And the western group, after long consideration, proposed a compromise mandate contained in document CD/413 which was found acceptable to our colleagues in the Group of 21. With this development we had hoped that the dedicated and strenuous efforts made by successive Chairmen of this Committee to resolve the issue would be rewarded.

I would like to take a moment of the Committee's time to review the events of the past few weeks concerning outer space. The Chairman's consultations produced a series of compromise proposals for a mandate for an outer space working group. The members of the socialist group told us throughout the consultations that they would support the proposal of the Group of 21. Yet, when the Group of 21 accepted the final proposal of the western group, the group of socialist countries was apparently stunned and could only plead that it had come so late in the session that the Governments of that group of socialist countries had insufficient time to study the text and would, therefore, reject it.

Having thus ended the chance for a working group on agenda item 7 for this year — and possibly the next — the group of socialist countries referred the Committee to — and I quote from the Committee's report — "new initiatives (by the Soviet Union) including" a "draft treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space ... submitted to the United Nations General Assembly". Thus we have the curious situation in which the Soviet Union, possessor of the only operational ASAT system in the world and whose group prevented the Committee on Disarmament from forming a working group, now chooses to bypass the Committee and refer its outer space proposal directly to the General Assembly. Perhaps our distinguished Soviet colleague, who once spoke of the "cemetery of disarmament", is seeking to make this gloomy characterization a reality.

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(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

We would also like to emphasize that our flexibility should not be taken for unprincipled compliance. We consider such a warning particularly relevant in view of the fact that, during the current session, there have been certain attempts, so to speak, to put pressure on the group of socialist countries both on substantive and on certain organizational issues. In this context, I would remind you of the attempt to ignore the legitimate interests of the group of socialist countries in the distribution of posts of chairmen of the working groups at the beginning of the current session and of the recent attempt to make the socialist countries take responsibility for the failure of the talks on the possible mandate of an ad hoc working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, although everybody knows that, for two years, one group of States, and to be more precise the western group, has blocked, and continues to block, the adoption of the constructive proposal of the non-aligned and socialist countries concerning such a mandate. What a distortion of the truth to affirm here that it was because of the group of socialist countries that no agreement could be reached on the terms of reference of the working group. We would like to state firmly that such attempts are doomed to complete failure. Our goodwill should not be abused. We expect our flexible and constructive approach to meet with an adequate response.

(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

The last item on our agenda, which comes from the Committee itself, relates to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The French delegation attaches great importance to this; it produced a substantive document on the matter that was distributed at the beginning of the session. It welcomed the agreement reached on the principle of a working group. It had an open position regarding the terms of the mandate for such a group. It agreed to a formula, one which was relatively restrictive but made it possible to engage in the indispensable task of exploring and identifying the issues raised. It regrets that the objections of a group of delegations did not make it possible to achieve consensus. We hope that at the beginning of the next session an agreement on the mandate will make for a prompt start on the work.

Mr. ERDEMBILEG (Mongolia) (translated from Russian): Mr. Chairman, permit me, on behalf of the group of socialist countries, to make the following statement on the question of the establishment of an ad hoc working group under agenda item 7, "prevention of an arms race in outer space".

The question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space is becoming more and more urgent. Ever since consideration of this question began in the Committee on Disarmament, the group of socialist countries has consistently spoken in favour of the principle of constructive negotiations and the establishment of an ad hoc working group for this purpose, in implementation of the mandate of the Committee on Disarmament, the single multilateral negotiating forum. To facilitate the rapid establishment of such a working group, a draft mandate was proposed (CD/272), which states, in particular, the following:

"The Committee on Disarmament decides to establish, for the second half of its 1982 session, an ad hoc working group for the purpose of conducting negotiations on item 7 of the agenda, 'Prohibition of an arms race in outer space', and agreeing on a text for a corresponding international treaty, taking into account all existing proposals and future initiatives in that respect".

In addition, in order to ensure that consideration of the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space was businesslike and substantive, the Soviet delegation submitted a "draft treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space", contained in document CD/274.

Recently, the Soviet Union proposed the inclusion in the agenda of the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly the question of the "conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from outer space with regard to earth" and submitted a corresponding draft treaty. This draft treaty, which deserves serious consideration and in-depth study, has been distributed in the Committee on Disarmament as an official document.

At the last session of the General Assembly, the group of socialist countries sponsored resolution 37/83 which, in particular, suggested to the Committee on Disarmament that it establish an ad hoc working group at the beginning of its session in 1983 with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space.

Lengthy consultations took place during the Committee's 1983 session under the guidance of the Chairman of the Committee with a view to agreeing on a text on a mandate for the future ad hoc working group. As can be seen from the results of these consultations, the approach and position of the group of socialist countries and the Group of 21 coincided and were based on the provisions of the aforementioned General Assembly resolution. However, the group of Western countries took a different approach to the issue of the mandate of the ad hoc working group.

The group of Western countries insisted that the mandate of the working group should be only to "identify, through substantive examination, issues relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space", making no mention of the need for negotiations or of the end goal, namely the formulation of an agreement or agreements aimed at preventing an arms race in space.

It was under these circumstances that the group of socialist countries, demonstrating its goodwill and constructive attitude, expressed its readiness to take account of the position of the group of Western States and proposed a number of amendments and compromise formulae.

(Mr. Erdembilegt, Mongolia)

During the most recent phase of consultations, the Western countries in the contact group presented a draft mandate, which was distributed in the Committee as document CD/413. As we have already pointed out, this draft mandate does not take account of the interests and position of the group of socialist countries, since it makes no mention of the need for negotiations directed at the conclusion of an agreement or agreements aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space.

Given the vagueness of the draft mandate proposed by the Western countries and allowing for the fact that, because of lack of time, we have not been able to study document CD/413 closely enough and obtain the necessary instructions, the group of socialist countries does not consider it possible to agree with the draft mandate proposed by the group of Western countries.

In this connection, it should be emphasized that the group of Western countries is doing all it can to give the impression that the Committee could not agree on the question of the mandate because of one group of delegations. Such an interpretation is completely at odds with reality. Everybody knows that it was precisely the group of Western countries that rejected the draft mandate proposed by the socialist States and the Group of 21, as contained in documents CD/272 and CD/329, thus of course deliberately making it impossible for the Committee on Disarmament to agree on a mutually acceptable text concerning a mandate for the ad hoc working group in question.

The position of principle of the group of socialist countries on the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space is absolutely clear and unambiguous. We are in favour of effective negotiations and the formulation of appropriate international legal agreements in this field. We adhere firmly to this position, and we shall continue to work towards this end in the future.

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion, permit me to make a few comments on behalf of the Mongolian delegation.

In the face of the existing genuine danger of the spread of the arms race to outer space, the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries are firmly in favour of timely measures to prevent the threat of military confrontation in this sphere of human activity.

It is not by chance that the Soviet Union put forward a proposal to prohibit any use of force both in outer space and from outer space with regard to earth.

In his recent statement, President Y.V. Andropov once again affirmed that the Soviet Union is firmly in favour of reaching agreement on the complete prohibition of the testing or deployment of any weapon based in space to strike targets on earth, in the air or in space.

The Soviet Union thus expressed, in the most radical way, its readiness to resolve the question of anti-satellite weapons and to agree on the dismantling of existing anti-satellite systems and the prohibition of any new systems.

The Soviet Union has also decided to enter into a unilateral commitment not to be the first to introduce any type of anti-satellite weapon into outer space. The Soviet Union is introducing a unilateral moratorium on such launches for as long as other States, including the United States, refrain from introducing any type of anti-satellite weapon into outer space.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

This peace-oriented initiative of the Soviet Union has met with a broad international response and is regarded as a serious new contribution to the campaign to prevent an arms race in outer space.

In the Mongolian People's Republic, this exceptionally important action on the part of the Soviet Union has met with total support as a new and clear demonstration of the steadiness and consistency of Soviet foreign policy.

The Mongolian delegation is sure that this initiative of the Soviet Union will serve as an important stimulus in discussions and concrete negotiations aimed at achieving a positive solution to the problem of the prevention of the militarization of outer space.

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(Mr. Jaipal, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General)

"Another disarmament issue of particular urgency is the prevention of an arms race in outer space. I share the general anxiety about the possible uses of outer space for military purposes. I wish to urge this Conference to search for an agreed formula, so that substantive work can begin on effective and practical measures to reserve the use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes. Otherwise the past notable achievements in this field, which have contributed a sound basis of confidence among nations at least with regard to Outer Space, can be prejudiced. Military competition in this limitless area is bound to have devastating consequences to mutual confidence and mutual security.

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(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

To these three subsidiary bodies, whatever title they may finally be given -- committees, sub-committees or working groups -- we are convinced that three others should be added without delay: one to deal with the "prevention of an arms race in outer space"; another on "the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament"; and a third to deal with the "prevention of nuclear war".

Anyone who has studied even very superficially the first of these questions, or who has at least listened to the many well-documented statements made on it both in the Committee on Disarmament and in the First Committee of the General Assembly, will be well aware that this is something which allows no delay. We are facing a problem concerning which it is essential not to repeat the error committed in the case of the missiles with multiple independently targetable warheads, usually known as MIRVs. To see that this statement is self-evident it is enough to quote two paragraphs of the declaration entitled "Ban Space Weapons" published in the November 1983 issue of the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists and signed by a very large number of scientists specializing in that field, of whom I shall only mention Hans A. Bethe, Richard L. Garwin, Karl Sagan, Jerome B. Wiesner, Edward M. Purcell, George W. Rathjens and Herbert F. York, to give an idea of their status. In these paragraphs the signatories state:

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

"We believe that the testing or deployment of any weapons in space -- in part by threatening vital satellite assets -- significantly increases the likelihood of warfare on earth ... once such weapons systems are established in national arsenals they become very difficult to displace. Proposals, for example, to ban MIRVs before their deployment were rejected; today these destabilizing weapons systems are generally distributed and threaten the security of all nations. Failure to limit their deployment is now widely regretted. If space weapons are ever to be banned, this may be close to the last moment in which it can be done".

We believe that it will be relatively easy for our Conference to agree on the terms of reference which should be given to the subsidiary body to deal with this question. During the latest session of the General Assembly, the First Committee received three draft resolutions on the item, in the following chronological order: one submitted by Mongolia under the symbol A/C.1/38/L.24, which was twice revised and finally withdrawn by the delegation of that country; the draft submitted by 12 countries of what is known as the Group of Western European and Other Countries, which was also withdrawn by its sponsors; and finally, the draft which reflected the position of the Group of 21 of the Committee on Disarmament, sponsored by the delegations of Egypt, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Maldives, Sri Lanka and Sweden, under symbol A/C.1/38/L.36.

The latter draft was the subject of patient and prolonged negotiations, in which the distinguished representatives of Egypt and Sri Lanka played a prominent role. It is unquestionably thanks to their praiseworthy efforts that the draft, as revised, could be adopted by the General Assembly on 15 December 1983 by the impressive vote of 147 in favour and only 1 against. Furthermore, I venture to believe that if this vote had taken place one month later the resolution would have been adopted by consensus, since the negative vote of the United States on the resolution would today be wholly incompatible with the principles and purposes of the country's international policy eloquently set forth by none less than its President on two recent occasions, 16 and 25 January 1984. On the first of these occasions, furthermore, he stressed that "co-operation and understanding are built with deeds, not words". We therefore trust that there will now be no obstacle whatsoever for the Conference on Disarmament to give effect forthwith to operative paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 38/70 in which the latter requested the Conference on Disarmament:

"To establish an ad hoc working group at the beginning of its session in 1984, with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space".

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

Efforts by one side in the field of space armaments would trigger either parallel efforts or countermeasures by the other side in a new round of the arms race. An arms race in outer space would have profoundly disturbing effects on the strategic relations between the Superpowers, and not only as a potential threat to the ABM treaty. It would also seriously affect the monitoring of arms agreements.

The development of the anti-satellite systems (ASAT) causes immediate concern. This capacity to interfere with satellites means a threat towards the verification regime of existing arms control agreements. There would also be a harmful effect on efforts to negotiate new disarmament agreements. If a laser weapon could be driven by small nuclear charges this would be a violation of the 1967 Outer Space Treaty.

New weapon systems to be deployed in space would probably be followed by new advanced ASAT-systems as countermeasures. Furthermore, a futile race in acquiring weapon systems for use in relation to space objects would be very costly. They would require gigantic financial and technological resources.

The risk of an arms race in outer space is not science fiction but present-day reality. The Soviet Union has been testing its ASAT system for several years. And only a couple of weeks ago, the United States followed with a first test of a new ASAT system.

The Conference on Disarmament must now shoulder its responsibilities and start its work on elaborating a treaty with the aim of preventing an arms race in outer space. The expectations of the international community are great. We are prepared to discuss how the substantive work on this matter can be started.

Last year the Soviet Union proposed a draft treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from outer space. The Swedish Delegation has studied this draft with great interest. It contains many valuable and important suggestions and is a considerable expansion of an earlier text presented in 1981 on the same subject. Some aspects need to be discussed further, for example, the need for international verification.

Today, one of the most destabilizing tendencies in the nuclear arms race is the perception on both sides of increased risks for a build-up of first-strike capabilities. The importance of the Anti-Ballistic-Missile Treaty of 1972 can therefore not be over-estimated.

We are deeply concerned when a major Power starts to develop a war system in space. This would undermine the ABM treaty. The research programme to be launched by the United States has the aim of obtaining an ABM capability, e.g. by using space-based laser. This perspective should serve as a warning for the international disarmament community to focus attention on the question of the arms race in outer space. A dangerously unstable situation would emerge.

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(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

One cannot postpone the solution of the problem of the prevention of the arms race in outer space. Otherwise mankind will face a new threat on a scale which it is even difficult to imagine now. The new weapons systems being developed in the United States of America make such a prospect quite real. The Soviet Union has put forward concrete proposals on how to avert the threat of using force in and from outer space, and calls on the United States and its allies to start negotiations on this subject without delay. Washington should not continue to ignore the opinion of the 147 States which are in favour of such negotiations.

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(Mr. Alessi, Italy)

The prevention of an arms race in outer space remains one of our priority tasks. Activities in outer space carry the promise of vast benefits for mankind; they are uniquely suitable for promoting international co-operation. The mission accomplished by Spacelab is a recent example.

It must be ensured that the peaceful development of space is not endangered by space weapons competition. New threats of destruction from space must not loom over us. This is the task entrusted to the Conference on Disarmament. It is regrettable that another attempt has been made to call in question the full competence of this body by blurring the differences between its mandate and that of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, clearly defined in General Assembly resolution 1472 of 2 December 1959.

General Assembly resolution 38/70, the only resolution on the subject adopted in 1983 on the recommendation of the First Committee, reiterates "that the Conference on Disarmament ... has a primary role".

However, the resolution adopted by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Special Political Committee concerning international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space has introduced some elements of confusion. Because of this, and contrary to tradition, it was not adopted by consensus; an attempt has been made to insert into the mandate of COPUOS for the next session extraneous questions concerning the arms race in outer space which will no doubt give rise to sterile discussion and will neither advance disarmament nor the promotion of the peaceful uses of outer space. We hope that this regrettable initiative will not constitute a precedent.

To return to our present surroundings, we shall have to deal in particular with the question of setting up a working group on item 4 of the provisional agenda. Last year a special contact group explored and discussed the question of the mandate down to the smallest details. It would be advisable not to go back over ground already covered. The possibility of reaching a consensus emerged right at the end of the 1983 session; a rapid agreement is essential in order to allow the new subsidiary body to undertake its work without delay.

Any progress in the sphere of arms control in outer space requires difficult and complex substantive decisions by our Governments. Such decisions will not be facilitated by attempts to rush into detailed negotiations without the necessary preliminary work to identify problems and determine priorities. Among the latter, in my delegation's opinion, the immunity of satellites should be among the first. An exploratory mandate, such as the one given in document CD/413, is what would best suit a working group on outer space.

My delegation had these considerations in mind when it stated in an explanation of its vote in support of resolution 38/70, that the text of that resolution should not predetermine the results of the talks on the mandate, as would be in keeping with the autonomous status of our Conference.

(Mr. Imai, Japan)

As I touched upon earlier, advances in science and technology in the present world could enhance the risk of the escalation of the arms race into new arenas; to prevent such a risk in advance is our important task. Both the prevention of the arms race in outer space and the prohibition of radiological weapons may fall within the domain of this sort of preventive measures. In co-operation with other member States, we express our desire to find an early solution to these issues and we are ready to make every possible contribution during the course of our deliberations.

(Mr. Luce, United Kingdom)

I will now review some of the topics under consideration by this Conference. I made it clear in my statement to the First Committee that the United Kingdom believes that serious attention should be paid to preventing an arms race in outer space and that we are willing to pursue opportunities for agreements which would truly enhance security. We support the formation of a working group on outer space in the Conference on Disarmament, but we believe that for the time being it would be premature to charge this working group with negotiations. Its first task should instead be to examine existing agreements imposing obligations affecting outer space and to establish areas where further negotiations might take place. We therefore believe that the right course to pursue is to establish a working group with a mandate such as that accepted by most delegations in the last session. If the Soviet Union and its allies now join us in agreement, work can begin without delay.

(Mr. Butler, Australia)

The prevention of an arms race in outer space is another item on the Conference's agenda to which my Government attaches particular importance.

We are concerned that outer space is the coming area of Superpower competition and we firmly believe that limits to this competition must be set and that the arms race should not extend to outer space. The Conference should hold discussions aimed at exploring and identifying issues relevant to prevention of an arms race in outer space, and we support the establishment of a working group which would enable those issues to be addressed.

Australia voted for resolution 38/70 adopted at the last General Assembly of the United Nations. That resolution calls for the use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes and states that this Conference, as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, has a primary role in the negotiation of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The General Assembly requests us to do this as a matter of priority.

(Mr. Dhanapala, Sri Lanka)

Another cause of satisfaction to my delegation is the work accomplished at the United Nations General Assembly last year and which we have before us in document CD/428. We must pay tribute to our colleagues who were able to reach some areas of agreement and my delegation hopes we can build on these achievements. I am personally glad that unlike in previous years we were able to have one resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space — an issue with which my delegation has been associated for some time. The voting on this resolution is also a cause for justifiable optimism although we do not minimize the task ahead. These tasks are complex and demanding of patient negotiation. They also require mutual accommodation.

My delegation welcomes the proposals made by the distinguished Ambassador of Mexico for the creation of subsidiary bodies on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, prevention of nuclear war and the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament while re-establishing the subsidiary bodies on chemical weapons, radiological weapons and the NTB. We must persist in our search for a Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty. My delegation also welcomes the proposal of the distinguished leader of the Swedish delegation for a nuclear-arms freeze between the Superpowers.

Mr. TÖRNUDD (Finland):

The extension of activities of man into outer space has added a new dimension to international co-operation. This development has required enormous human and material investments. It is a paramount interest of all nations that these investments be used in a manner which would contribute to the solution of pressing global problems. The fundamental principle of the exploitation of outer space only for the benefit of humanity is of the utmost importance.

Finland is deeply concerned over the evidence pointing to an increasing military use of outer space. The introduction of the arms race into outer space further eludes the goal of the 1967 Outer Space Treaty that "the exploration and use of outer space shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all countries".

We do not disregard the fact that certain applications of military space technology can have a stabilizing effect. Satellites used for early warning of missile launches and verification are generally considered as examples of such development.

There are, however, other trends in military space technology which give cause for particular concern. A variety of activities not prohibited or regulated in the present treaty system seem to open up dangerous possibilities, and this trend towards instability must be reversed. What is needed now is a comprehensive approach which would as far as possible fill the gaps in the treaty system and exclude the extension of the arms race to outer space.

This goal is clearly reflected in resolution 38/70, adopted by the General Assembly by an overwhelming majority. The resolution contains a request that the Conference on Disarmament intensify its consideration of action to prevent an arms race in outer space. We fully agree that the Conference on Disarmament is the proper forum for this question, and my Government hopes that this Conference will be able to embark on concrete consideration of this issue as soon as possible.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

One of the priority items on the agenda of our Conference is the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The urgency, importance and magnitude of this problem are beyond doubt. This was clearly demonstrated yet again by the general debate and the resolution adopted at the thirty-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly. A major step forward in solving this issue is the draft Treaty on the Prohibition of the Use of Force in Outer Space and from Space

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

against the Earth, submitted at that session by the Soviet Union. The specific character and purposeful contents of the above-mentioned draft aroused great interest and received broad support both at the General Assembly and within our Conference.

The Soviet draft treaty provides a sound and constructive basis for starting negotiations with a view to the elaboration of an appropriate agreement which would prevent an arms race in outer space. Enough time has been devoted in this forum to preliminary discussions and exchanges of views. Now it is essential at last to set up an ad hoc subsidiary working body with a view to starting negotiations on the conclusion of an agreement or agreements for the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects, taking account of all relevant proposals, including consideration of the proposal for a draft Treaty on the Prohibition of the Use of Force in Outer Space and from Space against the Earth. Such are our concrete considerations on this important item of the agenda.

As for the statements of some representatives of Western countries at recent plenary meetings of the current session of the Conference, in which they clearly sought to take their wishes for reality when portraying the substance of the matter, and to impose on the majority of participants in this forum a draft mandate for the work of the future subsidiary body which is unacceptable to them, I should like to recall in that connection that the Mongolian delegation, speaking on behalf of a group of Socialist countries, has already stated that group's point of view at the plenary meeting held on 30 August 1983. On the same occasion it was clearly and unequivocally stated that: "... it was precisely the group of Western countries that rejected the draft mandate proposed by the Socialist States and the Group of 21, thus of course deliberately making it impossible to agree on a mutually acceptable text concerning a mandate for the ad hoc working group in question".

The Mongolian delegation intends to speak in greater detail on this agenda item when the Conference embarks upon its consideration.

(Mr. Datcu, Romania)

The prevention of an arms race in outer space should be tackled, we believe, in a more concrete manner, through negotiations during this session of the Conference on Disarmament. In the present circumstances, where major technological developments are taking place in this field, in the absence of concrete measures which can constitute an effective barrier to military uses, there is a danger of an escalation of anti-satellite and anti-anti-satellite weapons, and of other military systems in space, which will trigger off a quite unimaginable arms race. Like other delegations, the Romanian delegation believes that the preparation of concrete measures can prevent such an arms race and should be the object of specific negotiations within a working group set up for that purpose.

(Mr. Qian Jiadong, China)

In recent years, as the Superpowers are stepping up their development of outer-space military technology and sparing no expense in the development of various kinds of outer-space weapons, the question of preventing an arms race in outer space has become one of increasing concern to the international community. People are worried that the "Star Wars" scenario in science-fiction will become a real threat to mankind. The resolution adopted by an overwhelming majority at the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly, calling for the establishment of a working group at the outset of the current session of the Conference on Disarmament to conduct negotiations on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, reflects the urgent desire of the people of the world in this regard. China has consistently advocated that outer space should be used solely for peaceful purposes and is opposed to the arms race in outer space. A matter of immediate urgency is to work out measures aimed at banning each and every type of outer-space weapon. We agree that an ad hoc working group be established by the Conference on Disarmament to negotiate an international legal instrument or instruments on the prohibition of the development, manufacture, testing, deployment, and use of all outer space weapons. The Chinese Government acceded on 8 December 1983, to the 1967 "Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, Including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies". The Chinese delegation will continue to make active efforts with all the other delegations in negotiating at an early date a treaty on the complete prohibition of all outer-space weapons.

(Mr. Morelli Pando, Peru)

As regards the item on the prevention of an arms race in outer space and its due consideration in this Conference, the position of Peru is the well-known one of the Group of 21, so that there is no need to reiterate its fundamentals. Moreover, the delegations of various groups have already formulated, at this spring session, highly progressive and encouraging statements in favour of the future negotiation of an agreement or agreements on this basic issue.

I should merely like to emphasize that we are not simply faced with the danger of an expansion of the arms race. Qualitative and even quantitative aspects of this arms race in outer space, which is still avoidable, would lead to an unprecedented and potentially uncontrollable escalation of the present danger of a nuclear conflict.

It cannot be denied that this Conference is fully aware of these dangers, as was shown by its efforts — which were about to reach a conclusion at the end of the 1983 session — to establish a working group competent to negotiate the necessary agreement or agreements to prevent, in all its aspects, this arms race in outer space.

Accordingly, allow me to quote this very pertinent passage from the recent message of the Secretary-General of the United Nations in this forum: "I wish to urge this Conference to search for an agreed formula, so that substantive work can begin on effective and practical measures to reserve the use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes."

In short, specific and positive statements made in January by the Head of State of a major Power should enable the Conference, at this session, to find a speedy way out of the said deadlock reached at the end of the summer session.

As the representative of a non-nuclear-weapon developing country, I must of course draw attention to the impact on the world situation of the military expenditures incurred mainly by the big Powers, and the corresponding opportunities lost for diverting that expenditure to measures for achieving shared social and economic progress. This continuing concern of Third-World countries is particularly acute at the present time in view of the international economic crisis, since they are the ones most severely affected by its consequences.

(Mr. Morelli Pando, Peru)

In conclusion, I should like to draw attention to a view which my delegation shares with other delegations: not all the basic issues can be negotiated simultaneously in this Conference; but some of them, already identified, should be considered urgently and in depth. We already have a valuable example to follow on other items of our agenda: the Ad Hoc Working Group on Chemical Weapons has enabled us to demonstrate that a pragmatic approach to the items under consideration, and intensive, albeit slow, work on the substantive aspects of each of those items, may pave the way for substantial progress and prepare the necessary conditions for beginning negotiations on international legal instruments.

The vicissitudes of the international political scene should not be reflected in this forum by irreconcilable, paralysing positions. The time sometimes lost in interminable discussions on procedural questions seriously compromises the final solution of the task entrusted to this Conference — a task bound up with the survival of the human race.

(Mr. Ould-Rouis, Algeria)

The profile of an extension of the armaments race to outer space is becoming more and more threateningly clear. The preliminary signs of such a danger are multiplying to the point where every exploit achieved by man in the conquest of space meets with as much concern about the possibility of military use of its results as admiration for human genius. This is an area to which the Conference should give serious consideration. In our view, the process which led to the adoption of General Assembly resolution 38/70 was a positive step which holds out the promise of a possible consensus on the setting up of a subsidiary body to negotiate measures to prevent the extension of military rivalries to outer space.

(U Maung Maung Gyi, Burma)

The arms race in outer space has a new dimension and unless timely and appropriate steps are taken by the Powers concerned to prevent such a race, it could well act as a catalyst that would have disastrous consequences on Earth itself. The technical possibility of emplacing a vast array of weaponry in outer space has frequently been the subject of currently available literature.

(U Maung Maung Gyi, Burma)

Anti-satellite weapons are the fore-runners of space-age weapons, for they are now said to have operational capabilities, and assertions have been made in this Committee last year that such weapons are being emplaced in outer space. The arms race in outer space is said to be on the verge of taking place but the militarization of outer space by the use of satellites as eyes and ears to increase the fighting efficiency of the military forces of the two Superpowers is an accomplished fact. An arms race in anti-satellite weapons could, therefore, have a destabilizing effect on the strategic weapons systems which, consequently, would increase the hazards of a nuclear war.

It would be reasonably safe to say in the context of the existing situation, and as the title of the subject seems to suggest, that what we are dealing with is the non-armament of outer space. Without too much of an over-simplification of this extremely complex issue, it could be said that we are dealing with a situation that has not taken place as yet, and from the practical point of view the act of preventing an event from happening would prove to be less intractable than trying to rectify a situation which is already an accomplished fact; and this would be particularly true of disarmament, where security considerations are of a highly sensitive nature. At the same time, we cannot ignore trends regarding research and development of anti-ballistic missiles which could nullify efforts to prevent outer space from becoming a new arena for the strategic arms race. Technological developments have a momentum of their own that creates a forward drive for the deployment of weapons once they become technically feasible. Thus would begin the unilateral initiation of the arms race which in time enters into its bilateral stage. In seeking measures to prevent the arms race in outer space, the observance of existing legal principles is also important and the practical necessity of such a requirement is particularly relevant to prevent weapons of more destabilizing types from becoming operational.

During last year's discussions in the Committee, delegations that consider the banning of anti-satellite weapons as a priority issue stated that they were also prepared to consider other questions as well. At the same time, other delegations that were in favour of dealing more comprehensively with this issue also expressed that they were not averse to the consideration of questions relating to the prohibition of anti-satellite weapons. The two approaches seem to be mutually compatible. This compatibility of approach has found expression in resolution 38/70, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, at its thirty-eighth session, which has given a specific mandate to this Conference for the establishment of a working group with a view to undertaking negotiations for an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in outer space. The prevention of an arms race in outer space has been on the agenda for two years and it is now necessary for this Conference to move from discussion of generalities to more specific areas of work.

(Mr. Vidas, Yugoslavia)

The prevention of an arms race in outer space has acquired particular urgency at this moment. Some of the latest military developments in relation to outer space make this an issue whose consideration at the Conference on Disarmament should not be delayed any longer. The concern expressed in the Committee on Disarmament and in other international fora that outer space shall be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and that it shall not become an arena for an arms race has been voiced also by the General Assembly. The Conference on Disarmament has been requested by the General Assembly to consider as a matter of priority the question of preventing an arms race in outer space and to intensify its consideration of this question in all its aspects, taking into account all relevant proposals. It also requested the Conference on Disarmament to establish an ad hoc working group at the beginning of its 1984 session, with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space. The basis for such an undertaking is contained in various proposals which were submitted to the Contact Group established last year by the Group of 21 (CD/329), a group of socialist States (CD/272) and a group of Western countries (CD/413). We consider that the first task of the subsidiary body, which should be created without delay, should be immediately to consider all of the above-mentioned proposals in order to draw up the necessary recommendations on how best to fulfill the task given it by the United Nations General Assembly.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

We would like to hope that strategic planners in the United States, who recently persist in looking to outer space in an alleged quest for security, will eventually come to understand that mutual agreement is the only way to true security. They will never achieve reliable security through endangering that of others.

(Mr. Berg, Norway)

Norway considers that an extension of the arms race into outer space could threaten military stability both in space and on earth, while at the same time jeopardizing civilian uses of outer space. Every effort should therefore be made to prevent such a development.

Several important international treaties limit or prohibit various military uses of outer space. There is, nevertheless, a need to examine recent technological developments in relation both to existing obligations and to the need for further international legal instruments. In this regard I would like to add that we have studied with interest the Soviet draft treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from space against the Earth.

Norway welcomed the decision of the Committee on Disarmament to include prevention of an arms race in outer space as an item on its agenda in 1982. In our view, the Conference on Disarmament could start its substantive work along the lines of the mandate proposed last year in document CD/413. I would hope also that the Conference can agree on a mandate for a subsidiary body for this crucial question as soon as possible during the present session. For our part we would like to follow closely the substantive work of the Conference on Disarmament while drawing on our own technical expertise in this complex field.

(Mr. Meiszter, Hungary)

Before concluding this initial review of my Government's position on some of the major issues facing the Conference, I wish to underline the great importance we attach to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. We are aware of the rapidly growing danger of the militarization of that limitless environment. Therefore we have fully supported the initiation of urgent negotiations on the basis of the proposal made by the Soviet Union at the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly on the prohibition of the stationing in outer space of weapons of any type, and expressed our support also for the new Soviet proposal concerning negotiations on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from space against the Earth.

(Mr. Depasse, Belgium)

I should like to warn my colleagues: in the nuclear field, it seems to me that no substantial progress is possible unless relaxed and confidential (confidentiality and confidence have more in common than alliteration) talks are resumed between Moscow and Washington with regard to the INF and START negotiations.

At the most, we can hope to promote such talks by concentrating on an analytical search for elements that would make it possible to achieve progress on a series of issues mentioned here by many delegations, in particular the prevention of an arms race in outer space (Belgium voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 38/70 and proposed to the Conference on Disarmament, on behalf of the Western countries, a draft mandate for a working group (document CD/413) which remains on the table), the nuclear-test ban and the prevention of nuclear war. It was already from that standpoint that last year my country submitted document CD/380 on the elaboration of confidence-building measures, and document CD/411 proposing a method of work for the prevention of nuclear war.

(Mr. Fields, United States)

On the question of additional arms control arrangements that might apply to the environment of outer space, my delegation remains prepared, as it was last year, to join in a consensus of our Conference to establish a working group with the mandate proposed by the United States and a number of our colleagues in document CD/413, and supported by the Group of 21

I would also like to welcome the adherence of China to the Outer Space Treaty of 1967, as announced by Ambassador Qian Jiadong in his statement to the Conference on 16 February. China's ratification of this Treaty is an important step because, for the first time, all five nuclear-weapon States are pledged not to station nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction in outer space.

(Mr. Rose, German Democratic Republic)

No time must be lost in elaborating measures to prevent an arms race in outer space. We agree with all those delegations which pointed to the great urgency of this matter. Those States that voted in favour of resolution 38/70 will hopefully support the establishment of a subsidiary body whose task is defined in paragraph 7 of the above-mentioned resolution.

The two nuclear-weapon Powers that refrained from approving the resolution are invited to display the necessary flexibility to enable the immediate opening of treaty negotiations in the framework of the corresponding subsidiary body. Sufficient material is at hand to proceed in this way. In particular, we have in mind the draft treaty submitted last year by the Soviet delegation. That is why we see no sense in pretending that here we face a completely new problem and that it is necessary for this Conference to consider this issue from a theoretical angle. The mere examination of existing agreements would be of no practical value.

It is quite logical that negotiations on a new treaty should take into account all legal instruments which already exist. We cannot but hope that suggestions for a review of proven agreements are not in fact designed to question their validity and to impede the elaboration of new agreements on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

(Mr. Sharma, India)

Finally, this Conference must take up immediately and in all seriousness the question of an arms race in outer space. Recent developments would indicate that such an arms race is no longer a part of science fiction and is fast becoming a reality. Besides, these developments are fraught with grave consequences. First and foremost, they would involve ruinous expenditure involving hundreds of billions of dollars; some estimates put it at 500 billion dollars. Diversion of this magnitude of resources is bound to disrupt the economic structures of even the economically most powerful countries and would have disastrous consequences for the global economy, particularly for the economies of developing countries. This can make the entire North-South dialogue devoid of any significance for a long time to come.

Some of the weapon systems taken up for development will alter the basic concept of international security and strategic doctrines, and transform the very character and structure of power relations. If the countries concerned indeed succeed in developing what is being described as the ultimate weapon, or the weapon to destroy all weapons, there would be no incentive for disarmament. The world would perpetually live with nuclear arsenals and limited nuclear warfare would become a distinct possibility. However, the greatest danger of all lies in the very process of the development of such weapons triggering a nuclear war.

My delegation is constrained to point out with a sense of deep dismay that there is a tendency among some delegations to ignore these developments of catastrophic implications on the ground that what has been taken up now is only research and development. I do not want, at this stage, to go into the details of what is actually happening, how far the governments concerned are committed to developing such weapons

(Mr. Sharma, India)

systems and to what extent these weapons systems have already been developed. I would only like to point out that technological developments have a momentum of their own that creates a forward drive for the deployment of weapons once they become technically feasible. Besides, it is always easier to stop an arms race before, rather than after, the deployment of the bulk of the new weapons systems.

In the statements made so far in the Conference, a number of references have been made to the manner in which recent developments would affect existing treaties. While this is relevant, we do not think that the real challenge is merely legal or juridical. It is a more fundamental challenge, having a bearing on the very fate of mankind.

What I have stated about the gravity and seriousness of these developments would warrant our undertaking without delay serious negotiations on the subject with a view to reaching an agreement or agreements, to borrow the wording of the last year's General Assembly resolution on this subject. This resolution was adopted by the overwhelming majority of 147 in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention. The Assembly could hardly have been more unequivocal on what needs to be done on this subject.

We are really intrigued that the Western countries, which voted for this resolution, are now not prepared to accept the terms of reference for a working group on this subject as laid down in the resolution. They want to go back to the mandate discussed at the last session of the Committee on Disarmament. In justification of this position, they are giving the argument that what is required at this stage is to undertake the preliminary work of identifying the problem and determining the priorities and to find out what is actually happening. Mr. President, by taking this position, these countries are not only going back on the position they took at the General Assembly, but are also underestimating the grave implications of the developments in this area and the urgent need of taking action before it is too late. If indeed, during the next year or two, we find that we have reached a point of no return, these countries will have to bear the responsibility of the fate that may befall mankind then. These are strong words, but I am using them advisedly because of our belief that on a matter of such importance, there is no scope or justification for equivocation or for a wait-and-see attitude.

(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

The French delegation has stressed on many occasions the capital importance of preventing an arms race in outer space. Such an arms race could in fact lead to dangerous destabilization of the necessary strategic balances. Agreement was reached last year on the establishment of a working group, but not on its mandate. Several of us, basing our position on the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly last December seek a general negotiating mandate, which others cannot accept. The French delegation has an open position on this problem but believes that the extreme complexity of the subject requires, at least for the duration of one session, the exploratory work envisaged in the draft mandate presented last year. In the view of my delegation it would therefore be wiser at once to devote to essential preparatory work the time we risk losing in a possibly fruitless discussion in an effort to attain a more ambitious text.

(Mr. Skalli, Morocco)

The prevention of an arms race in outer space is another issue to which the General Assembly has given high priority. We ourselves are fully aware of this. The extension of the arms race to outer space has become a new motive and a new reason for concern on the part of the international community.

Instead of being regarded as the common heritage of mankind and a domain for peaceful activity benefiting all the nations of the world, outer space has become an area of competitition between the Great Powers. Each day that passes brings its quota of news on the development of or experimentation in some weapon whose field of action will be outer space. The launching of anti-satellite weapons or other missiles is no longer considered a futuristic scenario but a very real and threatening reality.

In view of the need to explore and use outer space for the good and in the interests of all, we must take the necessary measures to dispel the danger which an arms race in outer space would create for mankind.

Last year, there was unanimity on the subject of the creation of a subsidiary organ for that purpose. Unfortunately, we were unable to agree on the terms of its mandate.

At its latest session, the General Assembly, in resolution 38/70, called upon all States, in particular those with major space capabilities, to contribute actively to the objective of the peaceful use of outer space and to take immediate measures to prevent an arms race in outer space.

This resolution also requests the Conference to establish an ad hoc working group with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space. We hope that this appeal will be heard and that we can set to work without delay.

(Mr. García Robles, Mexico)

Item 5 on our agenda, entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space", is of similar importance and urgency, since it is clear that here we are facing a problem which does not admit of delay and concerning which it is important not to repeat the error which was made in the case of the missiles with multiple independently targetable warheads, commonly known as MIRVs. As was recently stated by a large number of scientists who are specialists in this field: "If space weapons are ever to be banned, this may be close to the last moment in which it could be done". It is therefore imperative for the Conference to set up without further delay an ad hoc subsidiary body for the purpose -- as recommended by the General Assembly in resolution 38/70 of 15 December 1983 -- of "undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space".

(Mr. Tellalov, Bulgaria)

A new dangerous element in the arms race is the Pentagon's endeavour to place new weapon-systems in outer space. The implementation of these designs would not remove the threat from existing nuclear arsenals. It would rather make their use more probable. The arms race in outer space carries with it a manifold increase of the risk of a nuclear war.

Mr. ERDEMBILEG (Mongolia) (translated from Russian): Comrade President, the Mongolian delegation would like to devote its statement today to agenda item 5, prevention of an arms race in outer space, a topic which the Conference on Disarmament began considering early this week.

Before doing so, I should like to extend to you, Comrade President, our sincere congratulations and wish you, the representative of fraternal socialist Romania, all success in carrying out your responsibilities as President of the Conference for this month.

The Mongolian delegation would like to express its gratitude to the Ambassador of Poland, Stanislaw Turbanski, for his great contribution to the work of the Conference at the beginning stage of its work.

The subject of the prevention of an arms race in outer space occupies a special place in the gamut of disarmament problems. It is an extremely urgent and timely matter. What is involved is primarily the prevention of a new and still more dangerous turn in the arms race and the elimination of potential opportunities for using space technology for military purposes.

It is well known that the most powerful and destructive modern weapon, the strategic nuclear missile, makes use of near space. There has been, furthermore, an increasing number of disturbing reports in the world press about other forms and means of using space technology for military purposes. In particular, such reports have referred to the development in the United States of space devices intended for carrying out military operations, including the development and testing of space components for anti-ballistic missile or anti-aircraft defence systems, orbiting attack systems and so forth. Such unprecedented plans and projects for extending the arms race to outer space and for the use of military force from space against the Earth are aimed at achieving military and strategic superiority, at obtaining a unilateral advantage and, ultimately, at gaining a first-strike potential.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

The idea of establishing an anti-ballistic system in space, put forward by the President of the United States on 23 March 1983, was aimed precisely at achieving those goals. Under the pretext of "defence" the United States is attempting to undermine the strategic balance, which is an important factor in averting the threat of nuclear war. Washington is seeking to protect its territory from the threat of a nuclear-missile response, thus maintaining for itself the freedom to use nuclear weapons in other areas. It is clear that the United States expects that no one will be able to match it in this field and that it will be able to have complete dominion in space.

The steps taken by the Pentagon to establish a unified space command covering all branches of the armed forces of the United States are aimed at this same goal. These steps are clearly aimed at gaining mastery in space for the United States. In the President's State-of-the-Union Message the establishment of a manned military space station is described literally as increasing American superiority and the building of new frontiers. United States National Security Directive No. 119, signed by the President on 6 January 1984, sets the same goals, calling for a multi-billion dollar programme of development of new space weapons and other sophisticated types of weapons.

The danger of the arms race spreading to outer space is quite obvious. The agreed completion-time targets in the Pentagon's plans relating to building up the strategic strike forces and deploying anti-ballistic defence systems on Earth and in space show that the aim is to complete the establishment of a so-called first-strike potential in the 1980s. The United States magazine "Business Week" describes with extreme clarity the future plans and activities of the United States in space: whoever manages to gain control of space, the main theatre for future wars, will be able to change the balance of forces decisively and this will amount to the establishment of world dominion.

The transformation of outer space into a theatre for the arms race is a matter of great concern to the world, which firmly and decisively calls for the peaceful use of outer space for the benefit of all States and in the interests of the development of friendly relations and mutual understanding among States.

This is the main reason for the urgent need to direct the space activities of States to peaceful purposes and to conclude effective international agreements that would place reliable barriers in the way of any attempts to turn space into a theatre for the arms race. This position on the prevention of an arms race in outer space is that of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, including the Mongolian People's Republic.

In his speech of 2 March 1984, K.U. Chernenko, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, referred inter alia to the importance of not transferring the nuclear-arms race to new areas, including space.

In that context, we should like to dwell in greater detail on the important new proposal of the Soviet Union to conclude a treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from space against the Earth, a draft that was introduced at the previous, thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly and received broad support and high praise from many States, including those represented at the Conference on Disarmament.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

As is known, the Soviet Union presented a proposal in 1981 for the conclusion of an agreement on banning the deployment of weapons of any kind in outer space. This proposal was endorsed by the General Assembly and a draft treaty on the subject was submitted later to the Committee on Disarmament. However, as is known to members of this body, it was not possible to begin negotiations aimed at preparing the appropriate treaty, owing to the negative position of some delegations, in particular the NATO countries.

It is our view that the new Soviet proposal effectively combines the political and legal obligations of States not to use force against each other in space and from space with measures of a substantive nature aimed at preventing the militarization of space. In specific terms, the Soviet Union proposes the following:

Firstly, to prohibit the use or threat of force in outer space, in the atmosphere and on Earth through the utilization, as instruments of destruction, of space objects in orbit around the Earth, on celestial bodies or stationed in space in any other manner, and to prohibit the use or threat of force against space objects in orbit around the Earth.

Secondly, to undertake not to test or deploy in space any space-based weapons for the destruction of targets on the Earth, in the atmosphere or in outer space.

Thirdly, to undertake not to test or develop new anti-satellite systems and to destroy existing anti-satellite systems.

Fourthly, not to destroy, damage or disturb the normal functioning or change the flight trajectory of space objects of other countries.

Fifthly, not to use space objects in orbit around the Earth or on celestial bodies as means to destroy any targets on the Earth, in the atmosphere or in outer space.

And finally, to prohibit the testing and use of manned spacecraft for military, including anti-satellite, purposes.

The proposal provides also for the appropriate control measures and a system of consultations and co-operation aimed at the implementation of the provisions of the future treaty.

Looking at the above-mentioned prohibitions as a whole, it is not difficult, in our view, to see that they constitute specific proposals aimed at a radical solution of a broad range of complex matters linked to the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

In addition to its new proposals the Soviet Union took an extremely important decision in committing itself not to be the first to launch anti-satellite weapons of any type into space and, in so doing, it established a unilateral moratorium on such launchings for as long as other States, including the United States, refrain from launching anti-satellite weapons of any type into space. That decision is yet another clear demonstration of the Soviet Union's determination to conduct negotiations aimed at arriving at the appropriate agreements and its willingness to take effective measures in order to prevent the arms race from spreading to outer space.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

There have been on several occasions broad exchanges of views on this subject in sessions of the General Assembly and the Committee on Disarmament, and it is now necessary to begin active negotiations without further delay. We feel that the time has come to establish a subsidiary working body of the Conference that would immediately begin negotiations on the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, appropriate to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space, taking into account all existing proposals, including of course the Soviet proposal on a treaty on the prohibition on the use of force in outer space and from space against the Earth. This is the very task envisaged in the General Assembly's recommendation in resolution 38/70, which was adopted by 147 Member States of the United Nations.

Owing to the negative position taken by the representatives of the United States and the United Kingdom and some other delegations of Western States, the establishment of a subsidiary body on agenda item 5 continues, unfortunately, to be delayed, as does agreement on its mandate. Those countries bear the entire responsibility, therefore, for the fact that the Conference has up to now been unable to begin negotiations on this important and priority topic.

In this connection we simply cannot understand the position of those Governments that were in favour of the adoption by the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session of the single resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space but do not, at the session of the Conference on Disarmament, seem willing to undertake negotiations aimed at the preparation of an agreement on the subject.

The negative experience of the work in this forum, when its subsidiary body was set up with a deliberately restricted and narrow mandate, must not be repeated. If some delegations of the Western countries again insist on their obstructionist position, such an approach can only be seen as a pretext to avoid a businesslike solution of the problems facing the Conference.

The Mongolian delegation, like many others, calls for the speedy establishment of an ad hoc committee on the prevention of an arms race in outer space with a mandate that would include the undertaking of negotiations aimed at the conclusion of an important agreement on one of the priority items on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament, and not general discussions and studies.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): Comrade President, today the delegation of the Soviet Union would like to dwell upon a question of extreme importance -- the great and real danger of spreading the arms race to outer space. The importance of this problem is determined by the fact that if urgent and effective measures are not developed to prevent the arms race in outer space, mankind will face a new threat on a scale which it is difficult even to imagine now.

During the current session of the Conference on Disarmament many delegations have already expressed their serious concern at the extremely dangerous consequences of the saturation of outer space with lethal weapons. The Soviet delegation fully shares this concern. We are convinced that the prevention of the militarization of outer space is one of the priority problems facing mankind, and here on Earth much depends on whether it is solved.

The Soviet Union has consistently advocated, and continues to advocate that the peaceful future of space should be ensured. We would like to stress this today too.

The beginning of the space age in the history of mankind is inseparably linked with the name of a citizen of the Soviet Union -- Yuri Gagarin. On 9 March, the 50th birthday of the first man to fly in space was celebrated. There are people in world history whose names embody an entire epoch, the beginning of a new direction, the outstanding achievements of their time, Yuri Gagarin is one of these in our century. His name symbolizes the space age, which started with the launching of the first man-made satellite of the Earth.

The Message of 12 April 1961 of the CPSU Central Committee, Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet and the Government of the Soviet Union in connection with the first flight of man to outer space pointed out: "We believe that the victories in the exploration of outer space represent the achievements not of our people alone, but of all mankind as well. We are glad to put them at service of all peoples, in the name of the progress, happiness and wellbeing of all peoples on the Earth. We place our achievements and discoveries not at the service of war, but at the service of the peace and security of peoples".

Guided by precisely those goals, from the first days of the space age the USSR advocated the development of concrete international co-operation in space and on 15 March 1958 put forward a detailed programme for the prohibition of the use of outer space for military purposes.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

The experience of international negotiations confirms that in those cases when realism and responsibility to mankind have prevailed over other considerations in the policies of States it has been possible to achieve mutually acceptable agreements aimed at preventing the militarization of outer space. The important list of such agreements is a valuable achievement by mankind, which should be preserved and multiplied.

However, the continuation of such co-operation at present and, what is most important, of the entire policy of using space in the interests of peace and preventing its transformation into a testing ground of military preparations, has been jeopardized.

That is why the task preventing the arms race in outer space has become particularly urgent. Moreover, a crucial moment has now been reached, and as matters now stand either the States concerned will sit down without delay at the negotiating table to work out an agreement or agreements prohibiting the stationing in outer space of weapons of any kind, or else the arms race will spread on outer space. The overwhelming majority of States is seriously concerned at the real increase in the danger of the arms race spreading to outer space.

The principled approach of the USSR to the solution of this problem was reaffirmed in the statement of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU, K.U. Chernenko, of 2 March 1984, the foreign policy chapter of which has been distributed as Conference document CD/444. He firmly spoke in favour of "not spreading the nuclear arms race to new spheres, including outer space". The Soviet leader stressed that the United States can also make a major contribution to strengthening peace by coming to an agreement on the renunciation of the militarization of outer space.

It is not by chance that the United States is mentioned in this context, if we take into account that, as recent events show, United States strategic planning, as proclaimed, inter alia, at the highest level, ascribes a growing role to the use of military space technology. It is in the United States that official plans and programmes have been announced for developing and using weapon systems in outer space and from it against the Earth. This is a question not of some abstract "star wars", but of a lethal danger absolutely relevant to the Earth, the creation of systems designed to destroy not only space-based, but also ground, sea and air targets.

The dangerous character of such a policy has been convincingly proved by scientists and experts of various countries. The Soviet scientists E. Velikhov, G. Arbatov, M. Sagdeev and others discuss it in their works. Many scientists and public figures in the United States also emphasize that the testing and stationing of any weapons in outer space considerably increase the possibility of unleashing war on Earth. The statements on this score made by former United States Secretaries of Defence Brown and McNamara, as well as by the eminent scientists Ch. Towns, I. Raby, R. Garwin, H. York, G. Bete, are well known. In connection with the development in the United States of one of the most sophisticated anti-satellite systems, a group of eminent United States scientists and public figures has warned that once such systems have appeared in the arsenals of countries it will be very difficult to remove them. One cannot but agree with the conclusion of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute that space technology promotes not only a qualitative nuclear arms race, but also the formulation of doctrines for conducting wars with the use of such weapons.

The United States is making tremendous efforts in order to achieve the goals of military superiority in outer space. According to the data of the United States National Science Foundation, United States aerospace companies employ more scientists for research and development work than the chemical, health, petroleum, automobile, rubber and engineering industries taken together.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

The United States is completing the design and has already started the testing of an ASAT system based on F-15 fighters equiped with intercepting missiles with self-guided warheads. At the same time the United States continues to develop weapons on the basis of new physical principles, including the laser. An important role in United States military plans is assigned to the reusable "Space Shuttle". It is envisaged to use it to launch military satellites, orbital command posts, and new types of space weapons.

The plan for the development of a "large-scale and highly efficient anti-ballistic missile defence" proclaimed by the United States Administration in March 1983 is particularly dangerous.

Implementation of the United States programme for the creation of space-based ABMs could disrupt the linkage between strategic offensive and defensive armaments fixed in the Soviet-United States agreements of 1972. In fact, it would result in opening the lock-gates for a new round in the strategic arms race. The attempts to create the impression that the space-based ABM system conceived in the United States will be defensive are beneath criticism. This programme is designed to destroy early-warning space systems and the command and communication centres of the other side, and thus to render the latter as vulnerable as possible to the United States nuclear "disarming" strike. Hope is placed in impunity, in being able to make a nuclear first strike while being secure against a retaliatory one. The new United States military space conception can only bring the world closer to the nuclear abyss.

As far as the economic side of the space arms race imposed by the United States is concerned, it involves tremendous resources. It should be noted that in accordan with Directive 119 concerning the beginning of a vast research programme to create new space weapon systems signed by the President of the United States on 6 January 1984, the allocations for development of laser space systems will grow by 12 times by 1988. Washington plans to spend $27 billion during the next five years and $95 billion by the year 2000 for the creation of the space-based ABM systems.

The programmes for the creation of space armaments determine in many respects the political actions of the United States and other NATO countries in the international scene. It was at the end of the 1970s that the United States suspended bilateral talks with the USSR on anti-satellite weapons. We have repeatedly, including from the rostrum of the United Nations, referred to the need to resume those negotiations, but the United States continues to avoid them.

In connection with this position taken by the United States, I should like to draw the attention of delegations to an item in today's issue of the International Herald Tribune which cannot fail to be of interest. I shall quote some extracts from the newspaper in the original: "Senior Pentagon officials, led by Assistant Defence Secretary, Richard N. Perle, are fighting to delay or prevent Administration initiatives in several secondary areas of arms control". I quote from further in the report: "Mr. Perle ... has managed to block any United States initiative on anti-satellite weapons and ratification of the threshhold treaty, citing difficulties in verifying Soviet compliance. He has slowed movement on the chemical treaty and in development of a new United States position at the Vienna talks on conventional troop reductions in Europe".

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

With regard to the delays in the submission by the United States of its widely publicised draft comprehensive treaty on the prohibition of chemical weapons and the possible consequences of those delays for the negotiations at the Conference, the Soviet delegation reserves the right to return to this question at the opportune time. Today we should like to point out that as a result of this activity by the Pentagon, and I quote once again from the newspaper item, "the Administration is not expected to propose negotiations to ban these [anti-satellite] weapons at this time".

The Western countries are also thwarting the beginning of practical negotiations on preventing the arms race in outer space on a multilateral basis. This is being done, however, somewhat more subtly. The United States and its allies do not explicitly say "no" to the negotiations, but try to shelve the matter by making different proposals about the need "to study the existing norms of international law concerning the use of outer space for peaceful purposes", as it was stated, in particular, at the Brussels session of the NATO Council. It is difficult to say which is greater in this position: the expectation that the negotiating partners are naive, or a lack of respect for them. It should be clear to anyone that there is no need to conduct international negotiations merely to study the existing norms of international law. It would be enough for that purpose to assign one of the experts of the legal department of any foreign ministry, delegation or secretariat of an international organization and one could count on obtaining sound information on this problem. If that is not enough, an appropriate research institute could be requested to deal with it and perhaps a scientific symposium could be held on the subject. To involve in this study such an important disarmament negotiating body as the Conference on Disarmament is unreasonable, to say the least. The Soviet Union, for example, knows full well its obligations under existing agreements concerning the use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

We are convinced that it is necessary reliably to bar the ways in which the arms race and military confrontation can spread to outer space, which has been peaceful up to now. This is precisely why the Soviet Union put forward in 1983, at the thirty-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly, a draft treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from outer space against the Earth, which on our request has been distributed as a document of the Conference on Disarmament (CD/476).

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 38/70, this draft was transmitted to our Conference for consideration.

The Soviet initiative -- I have in mind our draft treaty -- has been favourably received in the United Nations and has given rise to a wide political response all over the world.

The Soviet delegation would like briefly to describe the basic provisions of the draft treaty on the prohibition of use of force in outer space and from outer space against the Earth, having in mind that within the subsidiary body of the Conference on the prevention of arms race in outer space and with the assistance of appropriate experts we shall be able to give more detailed explanations.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

In our draft we propose to prohibit the testing and deployment in outer space of any space-based weapons, to solve completely and radically the problem of anti-satellite weapons and to ban the testing and use of manned spacecraft for military, including anti-satellite, purposes. Taking into account these new provisions, our initiative goes considerably further than our proposal of 1981 on the non-stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space. Its salient feature consists in the fact that it takes into account in many respects the positions of other, including Western, countries, and the considerations they have put forward in the United Nations and in the Committee on Disarmament.

The important feature of the document submitted by us consists in the combination of political and legal obligations of States not to allow the use of force against each other in and from outer space with measures of a material nature aimed at preventing the militarization of outer space. It prohibits resorting to the use or threat of force in outer space and the atmosphere as well as on the Earth through the utilization, as instruments of destruction, of space objects in orbit around the Earth, on celestial bodies or stationed in outer space in any other manner. At the same time it prohibits resorting to the use or threat of force against space objects.

The Treaty envisages the complete prohibition of the testing and deployment in outer space of any space-based weapons for the destruction of targets on the Earth, in the atmosphere or in outer space.

We propose also a radical solution to the question of anti-satellite weapons: the complete renunciation by States of the creation of new anti-satellite systems and the destruction of any such systems which they already possess. The parties to the Treaty would also undertake not to destroy, damage, disturb the normal functioning or change the flight trajectory of space objects of other States in any other manner.

In addition, it is proposed to ban the testing and use of manned spacecraft for military, including anti-satellite, purposes; they should be entirely dedicated to the solution of various scientific, technological and economic tasks.

The draft envisages the obligations of each party to take internal measures to prohibit activity contrary to the provisions of the Treaty.

The provisions on verification of compliance with the future Treaty deserve particular attention. The verification system envisaged in the USSR draft is quite extensive and far-reaching.

In our view, the control provisions provide for reliable implementation of the obligations by the parties to the Treaty. They are based on an effective combination of national and international varification measures. At the same time, the USSR is prepared to elaborate and agree upon some additional measures concerning mutual assurance of States parties in its implementation.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

Along with the presentation of the draft comprehensive international treaty, the Soviet Union has made important steps aimed at creating a more favourable situation for the prevention of the militarization of outer space.

The Soviet leadership has adopted an extremely important decision: the USSR undertakes not to be the first to launch into outer space any kind of anti-satellite weapons, in other words, declares a unilateral moratorium on such launchings for the entire period of time when other States, including the United States, refrain from launching anti-satellite weapons of any kind into outer space. Such a decision is another concrete demonstration of the good will of the Soviet Union, of its readiness genuinely to strengthen the peace and security of peoples. We would like to hope that the United States will follow this example.

Moreover, the Soviet Union displayed a readiness also to achieve an agreement on implementing the measures proposed by it on a bilateral basis with the United States, as we declared at the thirty-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly. In particular, we are ready to conduct separate negotiations on anti-satellite systems and to resume bilateral negotiations with the United States as a step towards a solution of the common task of prohibiting the use of force in and from outer space.

We are convinced that the Conference on Disarmament can do much to prevent the arms race in outer space on the basis of the draft treaty proposed by the Soviet Union. The USSR, together with other socialist States, has already spoken (in document CD/434) in favour of the establishment of an ad hoc committee of the Conference on the item "Prevention of the arms race in outer space". In advocating the creation of such a body, we believe that it should have a mandate which would provide the possibility of conducting negotiations aimed at concluding an agreement on this important and urgent question.

What is most important now is immediately to find ways to ensure in practice the earliest adoption of the range of political, legal and material measures which would reliably secure outer space from a military threat. If space weapons are ever to be prohibited we have apparently reached the time limit when it is still possible to do so.

We express our firm conviction that the elaboration of measures to prevent the arms race in outer space can already be initiated during the current session of the Conference on Disarmament. To this end it is necessary for all the States represented at the Conference to display political good will.

The task facing the Conference is absolutely clear, and our duty is to move from words to deeds, to the elaboration of concrete measures to prevent the arms race in outer space.

We should always remember that military preparations involving outer space are fraught with the appearence of weapon systems which will make arms limitation and the implementation of control measures in the field of disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, more difficult.

As far as the Soviet Union is concerned, our country shall continue to deploy every effort so that the ominous plans to spread the arms race to outer space do not become a reality.

Mr. EKEUS (Sweden): Mr. President, the General Assembly of the United Nations in its Resolution on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space last year directed a strong appeal to the Conference to intensify its consideration of the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. My delegation welcomes this resolution. The overwhelming support for it should be understood as an expression of concern of the international community that the Conference on Disarmament, as the multilateral negotiating body, has so far not been able to start negotiations on the question of the arms race in outer space.

An arms race in outer space could have far-reaching implications for international peace and security and the over-all stability in the world. It could also have negative effects on civilian activities in outer space. The application of space technology has already brought considerable benefits for various civilian uses such as telecommunications, weather forecasting and earth resources surveys. An arms race in outer space would pose a serious risk and obstacle for States which are, or contemplate being, engaged in peaceful space activities.

Outer space has up to now been an area free from arms. As time goes by efforts to keep it so will become more difficult and more complicated. We have all learned from our experience of the arms race on Earth how very difficult it is to reverse a process which has already received large financial and political investments. Therefore, action must be prompt.

Preventing an arms race in outer space is already a complex task. Problems have to be addressed concerning the distinction between civilian and military applications. Another distinction between categories is, for instance, the one between stabilizing or destabilizing systems, like, for instance, satellites for arms control verification on the one hand, or so-called killer satellites on the other hand.

Military use of space technology goes back to the early days of the Space Age. However, what we are facing at this juncture is a new turn in developments.

Space systems used for military purposes have in general been of a passive nature. By "passive" I mean in this case that they are not meant as weapons or as weapons platforms. Passive systems are mainly for intelligence gathering purposes such as early warning, reconnaissance, etc. Some of these systems are important to disarmament and arms control, as means of verification of disarmament agreements and confidence-building measures and for the control of weapons testing. Other passive space systems could, however, be of direct relevance for the execution of war or warlike actions. This includes navigation and communication satellites. Some of them could be considered to be dual-purpose systems, although normally used for peaceful purposes.

Now, however, we are facing the threat of the emergence of active space systems, inter alia, weapons with direct destructive effects, mainly for anti-ballistic and anti-satellite warfare.

The Soviet Union has for several years tested an anti-satellite (ASAT) system which attacks its target, after hunting it during a couple of orbits, by exploding close to it. The United States has recently carried out a test of a new ASAT system, a direct ascent system which destroys the target by colliding with it without using explosives.

(Mr. Ekéus, Sweden)

The ASAT systems in existence or under development today have a limited capacity. We understand that they can hit targets only in relatively low earth orbits. Even so they threaten important military satellites, such as surveillance satellites used for the verification of arms-control agreements. With the development of new space technology the situation might become even more serious. ASAT weapons could then reach targets in higher orbits, eventually even the geostationary orbit, where we find communication and early-warning satellites. The destruction of such satellites could have serious repercussions. Such a development would be looked upon with the greatest concern by the potential opponent and would trigger off some similar and even more destabilizing measures. Furthermore, the blinding of an early-warning satellite could be understood by the other side as nothing less than as a preparation for, or part of, a nuclear strike.

The ASAT systems have even further implications. An important part of an ASAT weapon is the so-called homing device. Once such a device is fully developed and tested for ASAT purposes, it could with some modifications be used for the purpose of targeting the opponent's ballistic missiles, thus constituting an Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) system. An advanced ASAT system could imply a dual capacity of both anti-satellite and anti-ballistic missile capability. A disturbing consequence could be that testing of ASAT weapons could in fact be used as a cover for ABM weapons testing.

Consequently there is a potential risk that the development of ASAT weapons could already erode one of the most important treaties in the area of arms control, namely, the Anti-Ballistic-Missile Treaty of 1972.

With this development we might in fact be facing a quantum leap in the arms race. But the possible developments do not stop here.

Increased resources are spent for research on and development of beam weapons. If developed, such weapons could be used for ASAT purposes. However, what has attracted more attention is their possible use for ABM purposes.

The leading military Powers build their national security on a policy of deterrence and their mutual security relations on a functional balance of deterrence. The balance of nuclear deterrence is based upon the threat that if one Superpower attacked the other Superpower with nuclear weapons, the attacking party would bring a nuclear attack upon itself. The consequence of the policy of nuclear deterrence is that if it fails, catastrophe is inevitable. Sweden questions nuclear deterrence policies and philosophies as such. I will come back in more detail to this problem later during the session. This being said, we still have to recognize that deterrence is the guiding doctrine against which the present development must be analysed. Thus, the balance of nuclear deterrence would be disturbed if one side acquired a first-strike capacity. If one of the major Powers succeeded in developing an effective anti-ballistic system, this would give it a possibility of striking at the opponent and at the same time avoiding destruction of its own territory. The mutual deterrence would be undermined and likewise the international security situation. There is therefore reason for serious concern if any of the major Powers devotes further resources to research and development on systems which, if transformed into deployment, would not be in conformity with the ABM Treaty. Such a new phase in weapons development would be detrimental to stability in international security relations.

(Mr. Ekéus, Sweden)

Although much less than is necessary has been achieved in the field of disarmament and to prevent an arms race in outer space, some significant measures have been taken. I will mention some of them.

The provisions relevant to the use of weapons in space are both of a general and a specific nature. We have the United Nations Charter, and we have provisions which apply to space activities. Specific rules can be found in multilateral instruments and in bilateral treaties between the Soviet Union and the United States.

To start with, Article 2:4 of the Charter of the United Nations prohibits the use of force or the threat of use of force. A first attack on a space object belonging to another country is thus clearly outlawed according to the United Nations Charter. In certain cases some might argue that an attack on a space object is a measure of self-defence, in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter. It is, however, inconceivable that this Article could be interpreted as permitting an attack on non-military space objects.

As far as the military systems are concerned, some of them, e.g. surveillance satellites used for verification, are protected as national technical means of verification under the bilateral SALT Agreements. Early-warning satellites are likewise protected under the United States-Soviet Accident Measures Agreement. Thus an important sanctuary is provided for certain satellites. For other military space systems the situation might not be so clear.

Among specific multilateral treaties the 1963 Partial Test-Ban Treaty was the first treaty to contain provisions relating to the use of weapons in outer space. This treaty bans the testing of nuclear weapons inter alia, in outer space.

In 1967 the United Nations adopted the Outer Space Treaty containing the fundamental principles for space activities. It marked an important step in that it bans certain arms from outer space. However, others are not covered by this treaty. It is generally stated in the Outer Space Treaty that space activities shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interest of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development and in accordance with international law, including the United Nations Charter. Article 4 prohibits the placing of nuclear weapons and other kinds of weapons of mass destruction in earth orbits and on celestial bodies. This provision does not, however, impose restrictions on conventional weapons or on military space systems. The moon and other celestial bodies are to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and all kinds of military activities are prohibited on those bodies. The Outer Space Treaty also contains provisions against potentially harmful interference with peaceful space activities and provisions of interest for verification, but they do not contain any clear obligations to provide information or about inspection.

Since radio communications are vital for space activities the International Telecommunication Convention deserves special mention. Its Article 35 prohibits harmful interference with radio services which are operated in accordance with the Radio Regulations of the ITU.

The 1975 Registration Convention deals with notification of space activities. However, the information supplied is so general that it can only be guessed what purpose a space mission has, and sometimes considerable time passes between launch and notification.

(Mr. Ekéus, Sweden)

The latest of the international space agreements which have been elaborated by the United Nations is the 1979 Moon Agreement.

From its provisions it can be concluded that the Moon Agreement would demilitarize all of outer space except the proximity of the Earth, or more precisely orbits around the Earth. But this Agreement has not yet entered into force.

As mentioned earlier, some provisions in the bilateral arms control agreements between the United States and the Soviet Union relate to space activities.

The two SALT Agreements, of 1972 and of 1979, to the last of which the Soviet Union and the United States abide unilaterally, while awaiting ratification or new negotiations, contain similar provisions about verification (Articles V and XV, respectively). According to these provisions the Contracting Parties shall use "national technical means of verification" to monitor the adherence to the provisions of the Agreements. These national "means of verification" must not be disturbed or "interfered with". It is assumed that surveillance satellites are among those "means". The SALT II Agreement (Article IX) includes a relatively unnoticed expansion of the Outer Space Treaty in that it forbids development, testing and deployment of systems for placing in orbit nuclear weapons, etc. It also prohibits testing, development and deployment of Fractional Orbital Bombardment Systems (FOBS).

According to the ABM Treaty of 1972 the two Superpowers undertake not to develop, test or deploy ABM systems or components which are "sea-based, air-based, space-based or mobile land-based". It is clear as earlier touched upon, that the placing of ABM systems in outer space would be a breach of this bilateral treaty, as would also be the development and testing of such systems.

The "Accident Measures" Agreement (1971) and the Prevention of Nuclear War Agreement (1974) together oblige the Soviet Union and the United States to refrain from interfering with or attacking early-warning systems of either side, including satellites which are components of such warning systems.

The fact that most of the financial and technical investments in space development takes place in two countries may imply that bilateral agreements are sufficient to regulate international relations in this field. However, according to my delegation, this is to seriously underestimate the technological developments outside the two Superpowers. As a matter of principle, as well as with long-term practical and technical considerations in view, it is important that the aspects mentioned with regard to the militarization of outer space be subject to multilateral negotiations and agreements. The principle aspect is, of course, founded on the general acceptance of the fundamental idea that the exploration and use of outer space shall be carried out for the benefit and in the interest of all countries.

It is clear that some significant measures relating to the risks of an arms race in outer space have been taken. However, the existing body of international law contains too many loopholes to effectively prevent an arms race in outer space. What we have learned about the testing and development of anti-satellite weapons confirms that additional measures urgently need to be taken.

(Mr. Ekéus, Sweden)

The main task ahead of us should be to negotiate an international treaty banning all space weapons, including weapons directed against targets in space. Such a ban should cover the development, testing and deployment of ASAT weapons on earth, in the atmosphere and in outer space and must include the destruction of all existing ASAT systems.

Furthermore, damage, disturbance and harmful interference in the normal functioning of permitted space objects should be forbidden in international agreements in order to strengthen the Outer Space Treaty and confirm the International Telecommunication Convention.

The banning of the development, testing and deployment of space-based ABM systems, as agreed upon in the 1972 ABM Treaty between the Soviet Union and the United States, should also be reiterated in a multilateral treaty.

A prohibition of Fractional Orbital Bombardment Systems (FOBS) should likewise be included, in line with SALT II.

In addition, efficient measures should be adopted regarding the verification of the compliance with such a treaty or treaties. At the present stage of technical development it appears inescapable that some sort of international direct inspection be applied, including on-site inspection whenever feasible.

In the process of creating an international legal system prohibiting an arms race in outer space, military space systems which could have particularly destabilizing characteristics must be identified. It would also be essential to recognize that certain military space systems can have a stabilizing effect and that they can be a valuable contribution to disarmament measures.

The international use of satellites for the monitoring of disarmament agreements should be considered in the context of the proposal of France to establish an International Satellite Monitoring Agency (ISMA).

The notification procedures in the 1975 Registration Convention could be further developed to serve as a collateral measure to strengthen disarmament agreements related to space. Such a measure, and other similar confidence-building measures, would be helpful in the efforts to create a system of international agreements to curb an arms race in outer space.

Three proposals have been presented in intergovernmental fora containing draft agreements relating to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The first was presented by Italy in 1979 in the Committee on Disarmament. The two latest were presented to the United Nations by the Soviet Union in 1981 and in 1983, the latest of which has been distributed today as document CD/476.

The two first proposals demonstrated constructive attempts to come to grips with the problems in this area. They did, however, contain important shortcomings, inter alia, in that they did not cover the ASAT systems as they are conceived today.

(Mr. Ekéus, Sweden)

The latest proposal of the Soviet Union introduced today also by Ambassador Issraelyan contains a draft treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from space against the Earth. When the Conference has been able to establish an ad hoc committee on the arms race in outer space, my delegation will come back with detailed comments on this draft treaty. However, already now I note a welcome improvement compared to the 1981 proposal in that it covers ASAT weapons as known today and contains a ban on some specific activities directed against space objects.

The Soviet proposal addressed a number of important issues that need to be solved. Some proposed clauses, however, are ambiguous and would have to be clarified. Such solutions and clarifications could only be made through a substantive examination by the Conference on Disarmament.

Let me conclude by reiterating that the Conference on Disarmament must now actively engage itself in dealing with the growing threat of an arms race in outer space. An ad hoc committee should be established without further delay for this purpose. As a negotiating forum the Conference should of course aim at negotiating an agreement or agreements to prevent the extension of the arms race into outer space.

The Swedish delegation is prepared to consider all constructive proposals which mean that a substantive examination can be promptly initiated. An analysis of lacunae in international agreements against the background of existing and potential military applications of space technology seems to be a natural first task for an ad hoc committee. I have in this statement tried to contribute to this.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

In this statement I would like to explain why my delegation asked for the inclusion of the item on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in our agenda and what it expects from it. I will also deal with reasons behind our proposal to establish a relevant subsidiary body with a mandate, suggested in the document (CD/434) submitted by a group of socialist countries.

The importance and urgency of the problem of the prevention of an arms race in outer space are determined by the fact that in recent years the real danger of the creation and deployment of various systems of space weapons, leading to the saturation of outer space with weapons capable of destroying objects both in outer space and on the Earth, has sharply increased. For this reason we do not feel any need simply to discuss this problem or to deal with it in any general way whatsoever. We believe that this has already been successfully done in other fora. In fact, the problem of securing outer space from military threat and its various aspects have for a number of years been generally discussed in the First Committee of the General Assembly, in the United Nations Disarmament Commission, in the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and at UNISPACE 2.

Unfortunately, we should also add that even this body, which aspires to be a single multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament, dedicated several years to activities of this kind in dealing with the problem of outer space. Indeed, going through the records of our meetings of recent years one finds a great number of statements addressing the problem of outer space. In these statements we have all exhaustively evaluated the existing treaties, which put up some barriers to the spreading of arms into outer space. We have generally come to a concordance of views on what the positive aspects of these treaties are, as well as on the remaining loopholes. In virtually all statements the conclusion is reached that further measures are necessary. At least as far as our delegation is concerned, we have not found a single statement that explicitly or implicitly denies the urgent need for such additional measures.

A considerable part of the statements on outer space dealt with the technical aspects of the development of new weapons and systems of weapons to be used in outer space or from space against the Earth. The "leading role" of the United States in this field has been impressively demonstrated, especially with regard to the March 1983 "initiative" of President Reagan to create a space-based defence system. It was convincingly argued that one attempt to misuse one of the above mentioned loopholes in the existing military regime for outer space is under way, namely, the accelerated efforts to develop and put into practice laser and other directed-energy weapons. Though some delegations tried to raise doubts about the feasibility of these weapons, it did not escape the attention of others that in May and June of last year the United States Air Force undertook a test of a laser weapon. At a testing ground in California, this weapon, placed on board a C-135 aircraft, succeeded in destroying the navigational systems of five Sidewinder anti-aircraft missiles.

Due attention was paid also to the economic side of the problem. No type of weapons and no field of their application would consume as many resources as the development and emplacement of weapons in outer space. With the adoption, last January, of Directive 119 in the United States, for the remaining years of this century alone almost a hundred billion United States dollars are involved, without counting vast, indirect human and material resources taken from various civilian sectors.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

Much of what has been said around this table could undoubtedly also be qualified as an identification of problems which could be addressed in negotiations on practical measures to prevent an arms race in outer space. Drawing a conclusion from the views offered to the Conference on Disarmament, my delegation considers that a whole range of political, legal and material measures should be negotiated in the relevant subsidiary body. Anti-satellite systems are one of these, although not the only one. My country, a relatively small one, with no adequate defence against an attack "from above", is concerned mainly with possible danger coming from weapons emplaced on objects capable of overflying our territory at an altitude of some tens of kilometres.

Thus, it would seem to us that the time has come to close this "general" and "exploratory" chapter in our dealing with the prevention of an arms race in outer space and to open a new one which should bring us to the elaboration and adoption of the relevant practical and effective measures. The best way to enter this new chapter would be the creation of an ad hoc committee of the Conference on Disarmament on the item "Prevention of an arms race in outer space", with terms of reference calling for the undertaking of negotiations aimed at concluding an agreement on this urgent question.

We maintain that certain recent developments fully justify this demand. Firstly, we have the Soviet draft treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from space against the Earth, submitted to the United Nations at its thirty-eighth session and tabled last week in the Conference on Disarmament. Since this draft was distributed last fall in New York, we presume that all delegations had a chance to study it in detail. As far as my delegation is concerned, it considers that the main virtue of the draft is that it deals with the problem of securing outer space from the arms race in a comprehensive way, encompassing measures of a political, legal and material nature. At the same time, it is yet another example of the Soviet Union's constructive approach and readiness to compromise in order to make it possible to move ahead, since the draft treaty takes into account in a number of its provisions the positions and views of other countries, including Western countries. This important move also reminds us that expressions of good will, in order to bring positive results, must be reciprocated. In this respect I would like to note that it is exactly in this field that the United States lags behind, and by a large margin. This was most obviously demonstrated by the fact that the United States leadership failed to respond positively to the commitment assumed by the USSR last August not to be the first to put into outer space any type of anti-satellite weapon, thus imposing a unilateral moratorium on such launchings for the entire period during which the other States, including the United States, refrain from stationing anti-satellite weapons of any type in outer space. This initiative creates a significant potential for the solution of the problem of ASAT systems and convincingly demonstrates the readiness of the Soviet Union to do away with this type of weapon. But in its approach to this problem the present United States leadership is acting not only contrary to the interests and requirements of the international community, but also against the vital interest of its own people. This was again confirmed last summer, when more than 100 American Congressmen and scientists addressed an appeal to President Reagan to declare, simultaneously with the Soviet Union, a moratorium on anti-satellite-weapon testing.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

Since I have touched upon the problem of ASAT systems let me add, Comrade President, that arguments about the need for the United States to catch up in this kind of weapon can't be taken seriously. It is well-known that already 20 years ago the United States developed the manoeuvrable SAINT (Satellite Inspector Technique) spacecraft. In the course of the 1960s two ground-based anti-satellite systems were developed -- in 1963 on the basis of Nike Zeus anti-missile missiles on Kwajalein Island and in 1964 on Johnston Island using various modifications of the Thor missile. And recently, a sophisticated ASAT system based on F-15 aircrafts equipped with intercepting missiles with self-guided warheads has already been tested. Thus, after breaking bilateral negotiations with the Soviet Union on anti-satellite weapons in 1978 it indeed requires a peculiar kind of logic for the United States seriously to play the role of an inferior in this field. Echoing this, distortion, to put it mildly, a limited number of Western delegations is rendering invaluable service to the United States but acting clearly against the vital interest of the peoples of their own countries.

Another positive development testifying to the growing comprehension of the urgent need to adopt specific measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space was the adoption last fall of the United Nations General Assembly resolution 38/70. Mere comparison of this resolution with, for instance, resolutions 36/97 C and 36/99 of 1981 clearly shows that the majority of States speaking in favour of specific action has further grown, while the minority has reached its limit -- that of a single country.

The ad hoc committee on outer space, if established, would certainly not suffer from a lack of specific proposals or material to work on. Besides the Soviet draft treaty I have already mentioned, which the committee could consider in detail, some delegations have advanced ideas which could be dealt with as well. I may mention just the statement of Ambassador Ekéus of last Thursday, in which he put forward a whole set of measures which could be looked at in the ad hoc committee. It is therefore particularly regrettable that there are still delegations which keep on blocking the adoption of a meaningful mandate for the subsidiary body on outer space. It is our strong feeling that the Mexican amendment to the draft mandate considered last week by no means deserved the treatment it received, the more so since it only reflected the provision of the United Nations General Assembly resolution adopted by a vote extremely close to a consensus.

The problem of securing outer space from the arms race is not a new one. The relevant peaceful initiatives of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries go back to the 1950s. But some recent developments in the space policy of the United States and the ensuing accelerated development of space weaponry render the problem of the prevention of an arms race in outer space extremely urgent. Let me, before concluding my statement, point out just some of these dangerous developments.

In President Reagan's statement of 4 July 1982, priority in United States space activity is, for the first time, given openly to its military aspects. The relevant presidential decree on policy in the exploration and use of outer space clearly assigns priority to military purposes. Previously United States leaders used peaceful rhetoric to cover the military aspects of their space policy. Now this has become not only unnecessary but practically impossible, since the military nature of the recent programmes for outer space is only too obvious.

This applies, in the first place, to the United States plan to build a space-based defence system. Since this plan was heralded in March last year, much thought has been given to its possible implications, especially with regard to the

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

Soviet-United States ABM Treaty of 1972. It was virtually unanimously concluded that the development of such a system would constitute a flagrant breach of the Treaty. Some dissenting voices were heard, naturally, from the United States. Thus, referring to the plan, the White House spokesman, Larry Speakes, said: "you can go a considerable distance in research and development without conflicting with the ABM Treaty". We would appreciate if the United States delegation could enlighten us on what is meant by the "considerable distance" and how it can be reconciled with Article V of the ABM Treaty. Let it also be noted that, as far as we know, this treaty is of unlimited duration.

Another disquieting phenomenon is the application of the so-called "bargaining chips" policy. Last year a United States interagency report resulting from months of study by scientists and policy analysts stated that the demonstration of United States technology would strengthen military and "negotiating stances". We have a very sad experience of such an approach which shows that all kinds of bargaining chips have always served only as catalysts and accelerators of the arms race. They have always led to qualitatively new spirals of the arms race despite the clear fact that neither side can achieve permanent superiority in arms technology. A parallel could be drawn here with the problem of MIRV's. Looking back, Henry Kissinger said last year: "I wish I had thought through the implications of a MIRVed world".

Just a few days ago, from 8 through 11 March, the Disarmament Committee of the World Federation of Scientific Workers met in Prague. Prominent scientists from five socialist countries, as well as from the United States, Great Britain, France, Denmark and the Federal Republic of Germany came to the conclusion in their joint statement that "the United States decision to embark on a massive research and development programme for the militarization of space has introduced a new qualitative factor to the arms race" and called for the establishment of "a moratorium on the testing and deploying of ASATs and other space weapons, and the establishment of a policy of the non-use of force in and from outer space". Let us listen more carefully to the impartial and informed opinion of scientists from various countries, lest our beautiful blue planet, which has too many problems of its own, face a new threat, as immense and limitless as space itself.

Mr. ALESSI (Italy) (translated from French):

I intend to devote my statement today to a problem to which my Government attaches particular importance. I refer to the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

I deeply regret that, in spite of all your personal efforts, item 5 of our agenda still lacks a framework to make structured substantive discussions possible.

Meanwhile, we have no choice other than to use the plenary meetings to continue our exchanges of views. I do not wish today to dwell on matters relating to the establishment of a subsidiary body; the unofficial meetings and consultations which you have held have provided my delegation with an opportunity to express at some length its views on the subject. I would rather wish to put forward a few ideas on the basic questions which we are called upon to consider under item 5.

I believe there is agreement on the fact that the discussions to be held, once the subsidiary body is created, should be of a comprehensive character. The question of the prevention of an arms race in space should therefore be thoroughly considered in all its aspects, with neither preconditions nor limitations.

It is clear that such an exercise should be carried out in a rational manner and, in the opinion of my delegation, an analysis of relevant international agreements; both multilateral and bilateral, could constitute a useful starting point.

(Mr. Alessi, Italy)

In his statement of 22 March 1984, the distinguished representative of the Soviet Union held that such suggestions would merely be an astute means of avoiding true negotiation.

I would see in them, much more modestly common sense suggestions aimed at beginning our basic work without further delay. The analysis of existing agreements provides a starting point; I do not claim that it would be the only one but it seems to me to be logical to start by looking at what already exists if we wish to discuss what is to be added. This first step would be an aid to identifying the different questions related to the prevention of an arms race in space and would, moreover, allow us to spot loopholes in the existing legal system: we would then be able to decide on remedial measures.

Progress in this area, which is so important for international security and stability, calls for difficult and complex substantive decisions on the part of our governments. My delegation, which is of the opinion that it is still bound by paragraph 80 of the Final Document (the wording of which was submitted by my country for the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament), remains convinced of the considerable urgency of the problem. It is also aware that such decisions can only be taken on the basis of thorough preliminary work, which brings to light all possible data and solutions.

A collection of extracts from relevant agreements, both multilateral and bilateral, might constitute the documentary basis for the work to which I referred. I also note that the documents presented by Canada (CD/320) and France (CD/375) contain a list of such agreements as well as comments of a preliminary nature. Similarly, the statement by the distinguished representative of Sweden, Ambassador Ekéus, on 22 March 1984, broadly covers the same problems and places emphasis on a series of major questions concerning the interpretation and application of existing agreements.

An analysis of these agreements would also be useful in connection with the draft treaty presented by the delegation of the Soviet Union in document CD/476, to which the distinguished representative of Czechoslovakia referred today. The title of the treaty, its preamble and article 1, relate to the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from space against Earth. A preliminary study of Article 2, paragraph 4, of the United Nations Charter and its implications for activities in outer space seems to me to be called for. Moreover, other clauses of this draft treaty -- in particular certain subparagraphs of article 2 -- deal with questions which have already been covered, at least partly, by existing treaties. Here again, a preliminary study of those instruments would be useful.

My delegation remains willing to make detailed comments on the Soviet draft treaty at the appropriate place and time. Its introduction by the distinguished representative of the Soviet Union in a plenary meeting provides us with other elements which are worthy of reflection: I will merely mention here the readiness to envisage additional measures of verification.

(Mr. Alessi, Italy)

The Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, which entered into force in 1967, is certainly the most important of these agreements: in addition to the fact that it has been ratified by a considerable number of States, the general opinion is that it contains the basic principles of international law in relation to space. This Treaty is important because it establishes certain specific prohibitions (particularly article IV, paragraph 1) and for the principles which it sets forth and which it recalls (particularly in the preamble). However, also evident in this Treaty are its "silences" and "loopholes", which allow States a large amount of freedom.

This freedom is at the basis of a number of subsequent agreements which, as in the case of the bilateral Soviet-United States agreements concluded within the framework of the SALT negotiations, also cover the use of space.

The idea of developing space law in the direction of a kind of demilitarization or "sanctuarization" has been advanced several times in the past. We ourselves raised the question of a review of the Outer Space Treaty in 1968 (document A/7221 of 9 September 1968). The Treaty, it should be recalled, does not contain a clause providing for periodic review. Subsequently, we presented a draft additional protocol aimed at extending the scope of the 1967 Treaty (documents A/AC.187/97 of 1 February and CD/9 of 26 March 1979).

It must be admitted that this direction was hardly promising. Gone are the times when the President of a Superpower could propose, at the fifteenth session of the United Nations General Assembly, that the principles established for the Antartic should be applied to outer space.

The characteristics of the space environment, rapid technological progress in this field, the multi-faceted nature of spacecraft and the established and now irreversible link between civil and military uses of space hardly make it practicable to have recourse to formulae or concepts which have been applied in other contexts. The mere transposition to outer space of concepts such as "hostile act", "measure of a military nature", "offensive or defensive deployment", "exclusively peaceful aims", etc., comes up against a reality which does not lend itself to clear classification. The varying interpretations which the space Powers themselves give these concepts and the ambiguity which hangs over the lawfulness of certain activities in space confirms this state of affairs. It would seem to me to be extremely useful to be able to record the positions of the different delegations on these fundamental matters and, to the extent possible, clarify them. The working document presented by France (CD/375) contains, in section III, a series of relevant and delicate questions which deserve further consideration.

To take account of this evolution it seems to us to be preferable to adopt another approach: in 1981, in the General Assembly, Italy co-sponsored resolution 36/97 C. This resolution, like the one co-sponsored the following year, proposed a gradual approach focused on the need, first of all, to ensure the immunity of satellites and prohibit ASAT systems.

Even from this point of view, a study of existing legal instruments remains an essential exercise in our opinion. By way of example, reference can be made to the question of the links between a possible agreement on ASAT systems -- whatever its contents -- and the 1967 Outer Space Treaty; in addition to the basic obligation by which activities in the exploration and use of space should be carried out

(Mr. Alessi, Italy)

"in accordance with international law", the most significant clause in this respect is article 9 of the Treaty. This article, which provides for appropriate international consultation in the event of activities in space likely to cause a potentially harmful disturbance to others, seems to me to offer the basis for the efforts which we must make.

Other agreements, to a certain extent, cover acts of interference against satellites.

Article III of the bilateral Agreement on Measures to Reduce the Risk of Nuclear War (1971) envisages inter alia, cases of interference in rapid warning systems when liable to create a danger of nuclear war. Satellites are naturally a part of rapid warning systems. It might also be considered that reference could likewise be made to the bilateral Agreement on the Prevention of Nuclear War of 1973. The SALT agreements also provide for subsequent limitations on acts of interference with satellites: in relation to verification, parties to these agreements rely on "national technical means", a concept of a general nature which includes a whole range of methods for data collection and which, in the context of the SALT agreements, includes reconnaissance satellites. Moreover, the parties undertake to refrain from recourse to methods of dissimilation which might hamper verification of the application of agreements, including, naturally, verification from space.

As a result of bilateral agreements, satellites thus benefit from the beginnings of legal protection. Our main task in this respect is to study the content and limits of such protection in order subsequently to study the way to extend it beyond non-interference with national means of verification and to make it general.

There are 16 years between now and the year 2000; the answers which we can give to the challenge of arms control in space may have serious consequences on the way in which mankind will enter the next century. It has been said that the control of space weapons must inevitably become the number one problem of disarmament in the twenty-first century. It may be wondered if it is not already that.

(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

Last week, in accordance with the programme of work for the spring part of its session, the Conference on Disarmament devoted two plenary meetings to the consideration of agenda item 5, entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space".

The outcome of these two plenary meetings consists of some statements, certainly valuable and interesting, but also very few in number. This morning they have been followed by the statements of the distinguished Ambassadors of Czechoslovakia and Italy. This does not alter the fact, however, that this exercise has been repeated along similar lines since early 1982 when the then Committee on Disarmament decided to include in its agenda the question of the military use of outer space.

It may legitimately be asked if the single multilateral negotiating body in the field of disarmament, the Conference on Disarmament, is even remotely performing its duties when it devotes to the consideration of a problem whose scale and urgency are universally recognized barely two weeks a year, or four meetings a year — I repeat, four meetings a year. There can be no doubt as to the answer to this question. It may therefore also legitimately be asserted that the Conference on Disarmament cannot continue this abnormal state of affairs much longer without undermining its prestige and its mission, I might even say its raison d'être.

We must not forget that in 1982 the Committee on Disarmament agreed to include in its agenda -- not without difficulties, it should be added -- the present agenda item 5 in response to a clear concern on the part of the international community which was expressed in General Assembly resolutions 36/97 C and 36/99 of 9 December 1981. A few years earlier the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to Disarmament had recognized, in paragraph 80 of the Final Document, the implicit need to take "further measures" and hold "appropriate international negotiations" -- and I stress the word "negotiations" -- "in order to prevent an arms race in outer space".

It is not my intention to begin listing all the steps taken by the international community with a view to regulating the use of outer space since the launching of the first Sputnik in 1957 marked the dawning of the Space Age. Furthermore, the excellent statement made by Ambassador Ekéus on 22 March provides a very useful summary of the instruments negotiated on the question.

We must agree, however, that those instruments are insufficient. Otherwise, there would be no sense in the various resolutions adopted every year by the United Nations General Assembly, with widespread support from all sectors.

(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

For some years there has been growing concern at the discovery of the existence of loopholes in the legal regime governing outer space, a concern which has heightened in line with the discovery of the intensification of space operations which the Superpowers are studying, planning, preparing and even carrying out.

It is not easy for those who still consider that space activities belong to the realm of science fiction to understand fully all the aspects and consequences of what is at stake. Whatever judgement may be made on the statements and prospects opened up by the much-quoted speech of President Reagan on 23 March 1983, there can be no doubt that it aroused interest, and I would add, concern, among large sectors of world public opinion with regard to issues having tremendous implications for their future, which until then had been confined to specialized magazines and institutions.

Since then there has been extensive spoken and written comment on the possible military use of outer space, and the least that can be said in this connection is that the situation that is described is alarming. The wars of the future appear to be drawing closer at a dizzy pace.

The development of a military space race is today a reality. No one can reasonably dispute this statement, and no one can claim to be unaware of it, because there is a wealth of literature on the subject. An overview of the articles and publications appearing increasingly frequently shows general agreement on the frantic activity on which the Superpowers have embarked, far beyond what is indicated by the newspaper headlines. The sums invested in research and development are on an overwhelming scale, and a source of concern in view of their ultimate military destination, as well as a source of dismay when compared with the economic and social needs which are daily left unmet.

For some time now the Pentagon's budget for space activities has been greater than that of NASA, and the gap between the two is tending to increase. Furthermore, it is considered that at least a quarter of the NASA budget itself really has military applications. The information on the expenditures of the other Superpower is, as always, scanty, but it may justifiably be presumed that they too are enormous.

The description of the various activities planned and underway generally includes the same projects: anti-satellite systems of various types (launched from Earth or from F-15 aircraft), killer satellites with various characteristics, use of the space shuttle for military purposes, development of laser beams and particle beams, anti-missile defence systems, and so forth. Attempts have been made to classify the different types of space weapons: conventional and non-traditional direct weapons, indirect weapons of an informational or military kind, each of which may be in turn broken into a number of sub-categories.

I shall not embark on even a summary account of everything that is currently, right now, being done, and everything that is shortly to come. I repeat, the information on this subject is no longer confined to specialized magazines and may be found in publications on international politics and even in the daily press. There have even been cases of the use outer space for military purposes, directly experienced by my own country itself.

(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

There are two possibilities as regards this state of affairs: either all these activities are being carried out in violation of the multilateral or bilateral agreements existing in this field, or else these international instruments are utterly inadequate to prevent an arms race in outer space.

We would like to believe that the former alternative is wrong, and we are therefore left with the second: the international agreements governing activities in space are incomplete and present many gaps and loopholes which must necessarily be filled if we sincerely wish to preserve outer space for exclusively peaceful uses for the benefit of mankind.

Any analysis of the instruments in force, and even of those which have not yet come into force, clearly reveals that indeed they are not comprehensive and leave out many activities of a dangerous nature, perhaps because when they were drafted the technological advances which today open up vast prospects did not exist.

What is even more alarming is that some basic concepts included in some of the existing treaties have been interpreted in differing manners. This has not so far been very obvious because the treaties have not yet been in force for long, relatively speaking, and because the number of States with a space presence is extremely limited. However, the intensification of the space race suggests that this lack of legal clarity will not last much longer.

I shall give some examples. The very idea of "the peaceful use of outer space" has a different meaning for the main protagonists. On the one hand, it is argued that it is synonymous with the non-military use of outer space, as provided in the Antarctic Treaty, which makes an express exception solely to enable the use of military personnel in scientific research (article 1, paragraph 2). It should be pointed out that the Outer Space Treaty of 1967 contained a similar provision in article IV, as does the Treaty relating to the activities of States on the Moon of 1979, article 3, paragraph 4.

On the other hand, according to the other interpretation, "peaceful" use should be understood as "non-aggressive" use; in other words, space may be used for defensive purposes or, what is much more serious, also for deterrent purposes, on the ground that the maintenance of peace is thus ensured. If we recall a famous statement made on 23 June 1982 at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in which it was asserted that nuclear weapons were the best guarantee of the preservation of peace, we may easily imagine that the logical corollary would be that to extend the doctrine of nuclear deterrence to outer space would guarantee its use for exclusively peaceful purposes.

Without reaching these extremes, however, merely to open the possibility of the existence of "defensive" but not "aggressive" weapons in space is to reproduce in outer space a dichotomy which has already proved insurmountable.

Another example of the differences in interpretation to which I referred a moment ago may be found in the expression "weapon of mass destruction", words which lie at the core of the 1967 Treaty. Not only do some ongoing space activities clearly escape the rules contained in that Treaty, but also it does not appear clear, in the thinking of some governments, exactly what is prohibited, as the meaning of the term "weapon of mass destruction" does not appear to be the same for all. Whether or not laser beams or anti-satellite weapons are weapons of mass destruction, for example, appears a moot point, and one that has been argued.

(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

It may even be wondered if the very concept of "weapons" does not present particular problems in the context of outer space, in view of the ambivalent, both peaceful and military, characteristics which devices capable of operating in space have or may have.

Everything I have said so far -- and I could certainly say much more -- reveals in my opinion a self-evident truth: there is much that needs to be done in this field, and it must be done as soon as possible. My delegation cannot accept the argument that it is first necessary to determine whether or not it is necessary to do something. This standpoint is now indefensible. The question of where to begin may be discussed, but not the need to resume without further delay international activity in this field.

While we remain unjustifiably immobile, the world continues to advance and reality continues to change. The world of science and technology is increasingly far removed from that of negotiations, and political decisions appear to keep step more with the former than with the latter.

At present the possibility of a nuclear catastrophe appears threatening, and the prevention of nuclear war is anxiously called for. However, if the world is today in a state of precarious balance which may at any moment be broken, we can imagine what the situation would be once space has been invaded by weapon systems of all kinds, regardless of whether they are considered defensive or aggressive, weapons of mass destruction or not. The factors of destabilization will have multiplied and it would be both a childish and a fatal delusion to believe that a space war would leave our planet untouched. The protagonists will act from the Earth and it is precisely to gain mastery over the Earth that attempts are made to control space, as in the past the aim was to control the seas in order to have dominion over the continents.

A comprehensive legal regime governing the space race in order to keep it entirely free from military implications is now a pressing necessity. At the request of the General Assembly, the Conference on Disarmament has taken up this task by including it, by consensus, in its agenda. This Conference is an organ which, through its competence, the status of its members, and the wealth of experience acquired over long years of negotiation of international disarmament instruments, has all the necessary conditions to undertake effective and fruitful work. The flexibility provided by its rules of procedure has not yet been fully exploited, and in my opinion there are possible formulas which would make it possible to hold within it, for example, bilateral informal meetings, if necessary, to enable the work of the Conference to advance. There is already an abundant basis for work, including draft treaties which deserve most careful consideration.

All this is open to our Conference. All that is lacking is the decision finally to begin substantive consideration of the item included in its agenda for two years. It is no secret that the great majority of delegations have long been prepared to undertake this task. This was called for once again a few months ago in resolution 38/70, adopted by the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session by a truly outstanding number of votes.

We cannot, we must not postpone this decision any further. Let us establish once and for all a body, an ad hoc committee, for this purpose and give it a meaningful mandate with a concrete content; and let us set to work, as too much time has already been lost.

Mr. DHANAPALA (Sri Lanka):

Mr. President, in my statement of 14 February 1984, I indicated that my delegation would be addressing itself later in the session more specifically to the various items of our agenda. I propose to deal today with item 5, the prevention of an arms race in outer space, a subject in which my delegation has had a sustained interest, dedicated as we are to preventing an extension of our terrestrial arms race into another part of our universe -- outer space. Sri Lanka's lack of a space capability does not diminish our profound concern over recent trends in this field which enhance the risk of armed conflict. Since the dawn of the space age in 1957 with the launching by the USSR of the Sputnik, we have witnessed the incorporation of satellites in modern weapon systems. The increasing allocations for space-related activities in the military budgets of nations having a space capability have underlined the military significance of space. History has taught us that the prevention of militarization is self-evidently easier to achieve than demilitarization. While we do believe that world security is indivisible, we would like to preserve and seal off outer space as a zone of peace for the use of mankind's progress rather than its destruction. Sri Lanka's role in the still unfulfilled task of making the Indian Ocean a zone of peace again stemmed from a basic desire to prevent the militarization of an area of the world's surface where Great Power competition was in 1971 only incipient.

The undeniable technical complexity of this aspect of our work in the Conference should not be an argument to postpone or avoid its urgent consideration. Complexity can be unravelled through collective study and analysis. But we must embark on such an endeavour. The complexities of this issue, as my delegation sees it, lie more in the political sphere than in the technical. Where no international law covers the myriad possibilities posed by space technology we must create law through international agreements. It is not enough to say that the existing agreements are inadequate.

Taking cognizance of the need to continue to take preventive action in this regard, the Final Document of the first special session of the United Nations devoted to disarmament declared by consensus that -- and I quote:

"In order to prevent an arms race in outer space, further measures should be taken and appropriate international negotiations held in accordance with the spirit of the Treaty on the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies."

(Mr. Dhanapala, Sri Lanka)

My delegation considers that the inscription, in 1982, of this item in the agenda of this sole multilateral negotiating body was symbolic of the importance and urgency attaching to this question and the manner in which the international community wanted it treated by this forum. Even while we in the Committee, and Conference, on Disarmament have been seized of the problem, we have been witnessing disturbing and accelerated trends relating to space-weapon developments. Last year and the year before, the international community quite rightly urged this body, which has primary responsibility for dealing with this issue, to make haste in averting the imminent danger of launching an arms race into outer space. And yet while we appear to be paralysed in a state of inaction over the modalities of dealing with the question, the dynamics of the arms race seems to proceed on its own momentum. ASAT competition has begun. One ASAT system has probably reached operational capability and its rival system has recently made its test appearance. The major nations with a space capability seem to be poised to embark upon the development of space-based defensive weapons. High energy laser, particle-beam weapons and outer-space ballistic missile defences are being developed. The investment of resources thus involved is enormous. My delegation makes no apology for quoting the following from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute publication "Outer Space - a New Dimension of the Arms Race" because of its striking relevance. I quote --

> "During the time it takes to read this sentence, the United States will spend some $2,000 on its military space programme. Assuming that the Soviet budget is the same, then the amount spent every 10 seconds amounts to over $4,000. The military space effort includes the launch of one military satellite every third day, the prime aim of these being to increase the fighting efficiency of the military forces on Earth."

The figures quoted are two years old. They would be much higher today. An arms race in outer space is as unwinnable as on earth. And yet the spiral has entered outer space, threatening cosmic chaos.

What we see as disturbing is the gradual but inexorable process of integrating space capabilities to the strategies and doctrines associated with nuclear weapons. Here on earth we are told that nuclear brinkmanship rather than common security could preserve peace. Even if one were to agree that there is a correlation between the doctrines practised by the nuclear-weapon Powers and the preservation of peace since World War II, which assertion has been questioned by the international community, it is an irrefutable fact that this method of peace-keeping has correspondingly increased instability in terms of ever-increasing levels of armaments. If the consequences of the arms race on earth are any indication, further refinement and sophistication of these doctrines through space capabilities would only lead to greater instability. If the research and development effort on military-related space activities currently under way in the major countries with a space capability are brought to their logical conclusion, which is the testing and deploying of space-based defensive weapons, it would gravely undermine, if not totally negate, whatever credibility there is in the current doctrines which have ostensibly kept

(Mr. Dhanapala, Sri Lanka)

peace since World War II. The past experience with regard to the technological momentum of the arms race does not make us believe that the results will be otherwise. This is perhaps the point, as the United Nations Study on Nuclear Weapons puts it, at which history might disprove the theory of keeping peace through nuclear terror. Moreover, if these developments culminate in actual testing and deployment they will have serious repercussions on the viability, let alone the spirit, of such existing treaties as the ABM treaty and the Outer Space Treaty of 1967. These are perhaps the paradoxes of the nuclear age. But we cannot afford to be awed into silence or inaction by the complexities of these developments, because the consequences of the dangers inherent in these developments will be far reaching.

The importance and the urgency of dealing with this question is therefore clear. However, as I mentioned earlier, this Conference continues to debate the modalities of dealing with the question. We have a very practical and important basis for work on this question in the recommendation contained in General Assembly resolution 38/70 which has been hailed by many delegations here as a substantial achievement. This resolution is very important, not only because it is the only resolution on this question that emerged from the last session of the United Nations General Assembly, but more importantly because it reflects the widest agreement achieved so far amongst the Member States of the United Nations as to how the international community should handle this question. Other bodies, in addition to concerned citizens, look to this Conference to deal with this subject on a priority basis in acknowledgement of our primary role. My delegation would like to address itself as to how these expectations can realistically be fulfilled.

My delegation does not harbour the illusion that the exhortations for the peaceful use of outer space and the prevention of an arms race in outer space contained in resolution 38/70 -- worthy as they are -- can be translated into instantaneous reality. We are aware that this Conference -- unlike the United Nations General Assembly -- has to work by consensus. I would therefore like to dwell upon the common elements of various approaches adopted by the delegations in this Conference rather than dealing with the differences that seem to exist. Last year my delegation had occasion to identify and examine in detail the various approaches adopted by delegations on this question. We did so with a view to delineating the common elements of these approaches which could provide a basis for our work in accordance with the mandate of this body. We pursued this at the last session of the United Nations General Assembly and the resolution which I referred to earlier reflects the results of this work. There is a broad general agreement in this Conference on the principle that a subsidiary body should be set up to deal with this question, in accordance with the mandate of the Conference. The mandate of this Conference is that it should undertake negotiations on disarmament issues. It is also clear from the documents submitted by all three groups in this Conference (namely CD/329/Rev.1, CD/413 and CD/434) that they explicitly or implicitly acknowledge the negotiating responsibilities of this body in relation to this agenda item, prevention of an arms race in outer space.

(Mr. Dhanapala, Sri Lanka)

Quite apart from this technical and legalistic approach it seems to my delegation that the only way of preventing an arms race in outer space would be to negotiate on and conclude an agreement or agreements on this question which could be acceptable to all. What is at issue, however, seems to be how we should frame the stages of our work leading to negotiations. It is clear that if we are to negotiate, any work preparatory to negotiations should be oriented towards that end.

The position of the Group of 21, with which my delegation is fully associated, indicates a great degree of flexibility about this aspect, whilst setting forth clearly the objective, which is negotiations on this question. It is also clear that to give the subsidiary body a mandate which accepts the objective of conducting negotiations does not prejudge the substantive position of any delegation. My delegation for one does acknowledge that identification and study of the issues are an integral part of any meaningful negotiations. But this is only a part of the negotiating process. Without a proper linkage to negotiations, this exercise could not have an intrinsic value of its own as far as the mandate of this forum is concerned. The exercise, therefore, should be given a time-frame and conducted within a framework of an all-inclusive and comprehensive approach leading to negotiations and should take account of the complexities and interrelationships involved. It does not, however, mean that the examination of issues per se should be an end in itself, since it would not be in line with the final objective to which I referred earlier. If however, in the process of this examination, there is agreement that any particular issue or an aspect of the issue should be dealt with and negotiated on a priority basis, then the Conference could deal with that issue or issues accordingly. My delegation, for example, would be willing to discuss and negotiate separately on anti-satellite systems or on other military-related space applications if there is agreement in the Conference to do so. What my delegation cannot understand is how the recognition of the logical and explicitly stated link between preparatory work and negotiations could prejudice the substantive positions of any delegation.

Having said this, I must add that we should not lose time in obtaining a clear comprehension of the fundamental issue. Are we here to come to grips with the problem of an emerging arms race in outer space or to keep on examining issues until the problems become unmanageable or insurmountable, with the attendant complexities getting compounded? As I have explained earlier this has occurred in other areas of disarmament effort in the past, for reasons known to all of us.

There have been many contributions towards negotiating agreements on this issue, the earliest in the Committee on Disarmament being the additional protocol to the 1967 Outer Space Treaty submitted by the delegation of Italy (CD/9) in 1979. The most recent contribution of the USSR in submitting a draft treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from outer space against Earth, as reflected in document CD/476, is another constructive effort in this regard. In the same spirit my own delegation outlined possible areas of work on this subject in its

(Mr. Dhanapala, Sri Lanka)

statement of 14 April 1983. Our concept of the scope and objectives of an Ad Hoc Committee is a comprehensive one which would even include a formulation of confidence-building measures through greater international co-operation. Just as the absence of war is not peace, my delegation does not believe that the absence of an arms race in space will ipso facto result in a stable peace among the stars. Consideration must be given to incorporating some of the worthwhile features of existing agreements. For example, Article 5 of the Moon Agreement and Article 11 of the Outer Space Treaty of 1967 prescribe procedures concerning information to be provided on activities concerned with the exploration and use of the moon and outer space. This is a practical recognition of the concept that outer space is a province of all mankind, requiring a free flow of information on the subject. The introduction of secrecy into the development of science and technology in space denies the people of the world the right to know, and creates suspicion and distrust.

My delegation acknowledges the valuable statement made by the Swedish delegation on 22 March, particularly as regards the useful survey of existing agreements for the prevention of an arms race in outer space highlighting some of their inadequacies. This contribution only served to underline the vital necessity of embarking on a serious and structured study of the problem within the framework of an ad hoc committee as a means of negotiating an agreement or agreements banning an arms race in outer space which would effectively plug the loopholes. The vital necessity of creating an ad hoc committee on Item 5 of our agenda was also stressed in the valuable statements made by the ambassadors of Mongolia, the USSR, Czechoslovakia, Italy and Argentina in our current session.

It is therefore the hope of my delegation that the position put forward by the Group of 21, which does not prejudice the substantive position of any delegation, would be understood in that light. Bearing these considerations in mind, my delegation hopes that the Conference, through the consultations which are currently being held on this subject, would be able to come to an agreement on a formulation for the mandate of the subsidiary body to be set up on this question without further delay.

May I conclude by adapting the dictum made famous in mankind's exploration of space to state that one inch forward by creating an ad hoc committee in consonance with the mandate of this Conference would be a giant step in the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

(Mr. Alfarargi, Egypt)

If all men have an equal right to the exploration of outer space and its use for peaceful purposes, as well as a common interest in exploiting the benefits of that exploration to promote well-being, they also have the right, as they expect benefits from man's expansion into space, to be profoundly concerned at the increasing competition, particularly among the countries possessing sophisticated technological means, in the field of the deployment of weapons in outer space.

It has been argued that this competition has not yet begun; whether this statement is true or false, that has not prevented the most optimistic scientists from saying that they have no doubt that today the world is on the brink of a perilous age. That opinion is strongly confirmed by the constant increase in military budgets for space programmes and research and by the statistics which show that eight out of ten spacecraft are part of nuclear or conventional forces.

Today, the militarization of outer space is no longer confined to the qualitative development of the arms race; it also contributes to the elaboration of new military theories which take account of the possibility of using outer space in future wars. The policy of the militarization of outer space now goes beyond the deployment of missiles intended to attack enemy satellites and extends as far as the use of satellites to support land forces. It is as if mankind, not content with the destructive and devastating armaments accumulated on earth, which would suffice to destroy the world several times over, also needed outer space to set up new systems of destruction.

The Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space held in Vienna in 1982 stressed the gravity of this situation and noted that the extension of the arms race into outer space would be a source of profound concern to the international community. It appealed to all countries, particularly those having major space capabilities, to contribute actively to preventing an extension of the arms race into outer space and to refrain from any act contrary to that objective. It also strongly recommended the Committee, now the Conference, on Disarmament to give priority to this question.

Subsequently, General Assembly resolution 38/70 reaffirmed that the utilization of outer space should serve exclusively peaceful purposes. It stressed that "further effective measures to prevent an arms race in outer space should be adopted by the international community" and called on all States, particularly those with major space capabilities, "to contribute actively to the objective of the peaceful use of outer space and to take immediate measures to prevent an arms race in outer space". It also called on the Conference on Disarmament to set up an ad hoc working group on the question.

Aware of the disastrous consequences if the world embarked on an arms race in outer space, Egypt has from the start urged and invited the international community to shoulder its responsibilities and halt all attempts at the militarization of outer space and to ensure the use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes.

(Mr. Alfarargi, Egypt)

Attempts to study this matter within the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space met with fierce opposition from some countries which claimed that the Committee was not competent to deal with that subject, and that the Conference on Disarmament was the sole body empowered to do so.

What is obvious to everyone is that the Conference has never undertaken any serious work on the item although it is included in its agenda, and that even the efforts made to set up a working group have been vain, despite agreement in principle on the creation of such a group, because of disagreement on an appropriate formula for its terms of reference.

We are all agreed that it is unthinkable to speak two languages at the same time, and it is also unthinkable for our Conference to wait any longer before responding to the aspirations of the entire international community as reflected by the General Assembly at its latest session.

The Group of 21, in which Egypt participated, stressed in document CD/329/Rev.1 the importance of the creation of a subsidiary body for the negotiation of an agreement or agreements aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space; in fact, this is the wish of 147 Member States of the United Nations Organization which have willingly accepted the latest General Assembly resolution.

We are deeply concerned at the lack of results of our efforts in this field, and fear that one day mankind may regret its exploration of outer space, a magnificent exploit in which it initially rejoiced, on which it based dreams of prosperity, and which it never considered as a new dimension for the forces of evil.

(Mr. Alfaraqi, Egypt)

If all men have an equal right to the exploration of outer space and its use for peaceful purposes, as CD/PV.252 rightly asserts, they also have the right, as they expect benefits from [illegible], to be profoundly [illegible] increasing [illegible] the countries [illegible] by the deployment [illegible]

(Mr. Alfaraqi, Egypt)

Attempts to study this matter within the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space met with fierce opposition from more countries which claimed that the Committee was not competent to deal with that subject, and that the Conference on Disarmament was the only appropriate to do so.

What is certain is that the outer space treaty [illegible] may [illegible] and that even the efforts made to [illegible] good [illegible] may [illegible] in principle on the problem of [illegible] because of disagreement on an appropriate forum [illegible] of reference.

We are [illegible] to the [illegible] of [illegible] space, and [illegible] by our [illegible] to [illegible] the negotiations [illegible] for the [illegible] in outer space) is [illegible] of the member States of the [illegible] United Nations Organization [illegible] General Assembly [illegible]

It is [illegible] of outer space [illegible] of [illegible] space [illegible] the [illegible] stream [illegible] space [illegible] Areas, [illegible] actively to [illegible] immediate [illegible] on the Conference [illegible] question.

Aware of the [illegible] race in outer space, [illegible] the International community [illegible] at the militarization [illegible] exclusively for peaceful [illegible]

Mr. VIDAS (Yugoslavia): Mr. President, today I shall deal with agenda item 5, entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space", but before doing so I would like to associate myself with your warm welcome to Mrs. Inga Thorsson, former head of the Swedish delegation to the Committee on Disarmament, with whom the Yugoslav delegation has enjoyed very fruitful co-operation in the past. This question deserves our attention, because ever since the first man-made satellite was launched into outer space, heralding the "Space Age", and in view of the rapid development of space technology since then, the inherent dangers of a potential arms race in outer space have become a matter of increasing concern. As time has gone by, this concern has increased along with the transformation of the potential into a real arms race in outer space and its far-reaching implications for international peace and security and over-all stability in the world.

Although outer space is a relatively new field of human activity, considerable results have been achieved so far in opening up the undreamed-of possibilities for its peaceful uses. The practical and very useful applications of the achievements of space technology for peaceful purposes are, for instance, in telecommunications, navigation, weather forecasting and earth resources surveys. Unfortunately, there are also many achievements, some of which are still in the process of development, which, apart from their peaceful uses, can even have a destabilizing effect, just as there are those which are designed exclusively for military offensive use.

The peaceful uses of outer space have become the constant concern of the United Nations General Assembly, which in 1959 set up the Ad Hoc Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space as its permanent body. Over the years, as a result of its work and in other negotiating forums, a number of instruments were concluded concerning the military and peaceful aspects of the use of outer space, such as the Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water, 1963, which prevented, among other things, the testing of nuclear weapons in outer space. In 1967 a further success was achieved with the elaboration of the principles governing the activities of States in the exploration and use of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, contained in the Treaty having the same title. The Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space (1968), the Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects (1972),

(Mr. Vidas, Yugoslavia)

and the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space (1976) are also agreements regulating some of the important questions relative to human activities in outer space. The last of such agreements, which was endorsed in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly and opened for signature and ratification, was the Agreement Governing Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, which elaborates, in greater detail than the 1967 Treaty, the obligation of States to ensure that the Moon and other celestial bodies within the solar system, other than the Earth, are used exclusively for peaceful purposes.

The United Nations has this far sponsored two conferences on the exploration and peaceful uses of outer space. The second United Nations Conference (UNISPACE 82), held in Vienna in 1982, primarily dealt with future developments -- including such things as space transportation systems, space manufacturing and solar power stations in space -- and their potential benefits to international co-operation and the hazards that might arise from these activities. The military aspects of the question, however, also received considerable attention. Although the question of the competence of that Conference with respect to the issues relating to the arms race in outer space did not meet with the approval of all participants, the Conference, nevertheless, examined and approved in its report three paragraphs which, in general, recognized the grave dangers presented by the extension of the arms race into outer space and urged "all nations, in particular those with major space capabilities" to contribute actively to the prevention of such an eventuality. It also called on all States to adhere to the Outer Space Treaty and strictly to observe its letter and spirit; and strongly recommended that the competent organs of the United Nations -- the General Assembly and the Committee on Disarmament in particular -- give appropriate attention and high priority to the grave concern expressed about the question.

In continuing its activities, the Legal Sub-Committee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which is now holding its twenty-third session here in Geneva, is considering three very important items:

Formulation of the draft principles on the legal implication of remote sensing of the earth from space. This concerns the detection and analysis of the earth's resources by sensors carried in aircraft and spacecraft;

Definition and/or delimitation of Outer Space and Geostationary Orbit; and

Consideration of the possibility of supplementing the norms of international law relevant to the use of nuclear-power sources in outer space, that is, to the procedure for notification in case of malfunctioning of a spacecraft carrying a nuclear-power source on board.

I have mentioned all these United Nations related activities and the existing body of international agreements only to point out that even the very complex problems of relations in outer space can be solved. What I particularly had in mind was to draw attention to the urgency of the problem and the existing gap in

(Mr. Vidas, Yugoslavia)

the resolution of the problems related to the arms race in outer space, and to the danger of turning outer space into an arena of armed conflict.

It is estimated that 75 per cent of all space activities are military-related. There can hardly be a day that the press does not disclose something new on the testing of weapons for use in outer space, or concerning immediate plans for their development. Although the information published in the press cannot always be considered reliable, in particular when military research or programmes are involved, we, as a negotiating forum which does not have access to such information from other sources, should be grateful to the press for giving us from time to time information, which may provide sufficient background as a warning, thus confirming the old saying: where there is smoke there is fire.

The consideration of the issues connected with the extension of the arms race into outer space is within the competence of the Conference on Disarmament. It has not, unfortunately, managed to make even the first step towards resolving these problems, that is, to establish a working body "with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space", as called for in General Assembly resolution 38/70. The Conference has wasted much of its energy on the harmonization of views with respect to the mandate of the subsidiary working body, proceeding from different viewpoints on the scope of the mandate of such a subsidiary body, although many members of the General Assembly Committee and here at the Conference have made enormous efforts to have this problem get off the ground.

At the meeting on 22 March we had an opportunity to hear two important statements on outer space. In one of them, the distinguished representative of the USSR, Ambassador V. Issraelyan, presented the views of his Government on the problem and submitted, at the same time, the text of a draft treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from space against the Earth. This text, in our view, deserves attention because, inter alia, it suggests the ways to resolve the question of the use of force in outer space, including the prohibition of anti-satellite systems. What should not be overlooked, however, in assessing the proposal made by Ambassador Issraelyan is the willingness of the USSR to negotiate the draft text and the readiness displayed to conduct separate negotiations on anti-satellite systems and to resume bilateral negotiations with the United States in this field. We consider this sign of goodwill to hold negotiations on outer space as very important at this moment when other channels of negotiation on some major issues of reduction of armaments and disarmament have been closed.

The statement made by the distinguished Ambassador of Sweden, Mr. R. Ekéus, offered, in a way that can hardly be improved, a very solid analysis of the existing space systems used for military purposes. He has also drawn attention to the solutions contained in the existing agreements on outer space and made a list of suggestions on what to do to amend them and make then comprehensive.

(Mr. Vidas, Yugoslavia)

This is, in our opinion, the manner in which we should approach our work, instead of wasting time on the artificial problem of the mandate of the working body.

Apart from these, several other useful documents were also submitted to the Committee on Disarmament in the past, among which I would like to mention document CD/320, submitted by the Canadian delegation, entitled "Arms control and outer space"; and document CD/375, submitted by the French delegation, entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space". It is also worth recalling in this connection the earlier French proposal for the establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency and the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Study on the implication of establishing an international satellite monitoring agency". The distinguished Ambassadors of Czechoslovakia, Italy and Argentina on 27 March, and today the distinguished Ambassador of Sri Lanka, in their speeches to the Conference, also made some useful suggestions.

All these and many other proposals which I have not mentioned represent a solid basis for the start of negotiations which would deal with a wide range of issues. In our view, a number of necessary steps should be made in that direction. Not desiring to give any priorities, we think that there is a need to identify the areas and activities which so far have not been covered by the existing international legal instruments, along the lines suggested by the distinguished Ambassador of Sweden. There is also a need to draw up, on the basis of the existing proposals, a programme of work within the competence of the Conference on Disarmament, that is to say, of the subsidiary working body, which should be established as soon as possible. The programme of work of the subsidiary working body for outer space should be the mandate of that working body: it is only in this way that we can concretely fulfil the negotiating mandate entrusted to the Conference. It would be pertinent to recall, however, that the Conference has completed the second month of its work this year, and that during that period only one of the ad hoc committees which were created is working actively -- the Ad Hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. Could anyone convince the proverbial man-in-the-street that the Conference on Disarmament is unable to negotiate only because the delegations cannot agree on the mandates of individual working bodies? We have our doubts about that.

(Mr. Rose, German Democratic Republic)

Finally, the prevention of nuclear war would be greatly assisted by the prevention of an arms race in other dangerous areas, in particular in outer space. The Working Paper (CD/484) points to the conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from space against the Earth, as well as to the unilateral undertaking by the Soviet Union not to be the first to place any type of anti-satellite weapons in outer space.

Mr. TURBANSKI (Poland):

Following a number of speakers in the previous plenary meetings, I propose to discuss once more the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space, a question of extreme importance for all of us living on the good old planet Earth.

The militarization of outer space, or the danger of deployment of weapons of mass destruction there, became at the beginning of the present decade more than an ominous reality. Outer space is being transformed into the arena of a large-scale arms race. Like many delegations which have spoken here on this subject, we are also of the view that the militarization of outer space is, unfortunately, only a part of a larger process which started earlier. The doctrine of military superiority in outer space gained popularity in the United States in the late 1950s. What was most important was not the exploration of outer space, but the fact that it was, indeed, the space where strategic warfare could be conducted more effectively. According to United States politicians of the late 1950s, the nation that first gained access to this new theatre of operations would inevitably become a leading Power in the world. The United States Administration's efforts in this direction had, and continue to have, an extremely negative effect on the international situation as a whole, contributing to a heightened threat of war. According to current plans and declarations of the present Administration in the United States, outer space is to be a show-place for more and more sophisticated weapons.

Directive No. 119 of 6 January 1984, which has frequently been mentioned during our debates this year, on the start of the implementation of a large-scale research programme on new systems of weapons to be deployed in outer space, capable of a retaliatory nuclear strike, is only one of the recent proofs of these plans. The "Shuttle" and "Challenger" programmes conducted by the United States space agency NASA include, among other tasks, the testing of military and intelligence systems, and the "inspection", if one may say so, of orbiting satellites or their capture. The United States mass media make no secret that the Pentagon is the main beneficiary of these programmes.

(Mr. Turbanski, Poland)

When more than a quarter of a century ago, thanks to human genius and imagination, the first man, Yuri Gagarin, entered outer space, the world community certainly did not expect such ominous developments. This disarmament forum has therefore to do everything possible to ensure that the further exploration and use of outer space is carried out in the interest of all countries and all nations, for their benefit and not for their destruction.

The experience gained so far in disarmament negotiations shows that it is easier to stop an arms race before, rather than after, the deployment of new weapons systems. Accordingly, a serious attempt to reverse the present trends still has a reasonable chance of being successful. It is evident that military developments in outer space have a global impact on international security by the very nature of the circumplanetary coverage of satellites. The outer-space arms race is thus a direct prolongation of the traditional one on Earth and, as such, offers extremely disquieting threats of nuclear confrontation.

While discussing military activities in outer space, one must realize that they cannot be separated from the issue of peaceful uses of outer space. We do admit that many of the peaceful applications of outer space in fields such as telecommunications, navigation, photographic reconnaissance, have also, sometimes with only minor modifications, important military uses. Meteorological, navigations, communications and other types of satellites can be used to perform command and control functions, to conduct ground surveillance, to collect intelligence or to target intercontinental ballistic missiles, etc. The possible overlap with civilian applications — as can be seen — is quite large. But many activities are of almost exclusively military interest. It is disquieting that these are receiving more and more emphasis. On the other hand, it has often been remarked, also in this chamber, that satellites have an important verification function and, if further emphasized and accepted by all interested parties, could become effective instruments in this respect. The trend in these developments, according to specialists, is towards a higher degree of perfection in sensor technology, photographic reconnaissance, nuclear-explosion detection, etc.

The possible military use of outer space against an adversary on the Earth also signifies the development and deployment in that environment of efficient and specific direct weapons. After the so-called "Star Wars" speech by President Reagan in March 1983, a possible exploitation of outer space for specific military purposes appears to focus attention on a domain of new technology and weapon development which may have profound implications for international security. If one adds the so-called laser and directed-energy weapons, the essential components of which already exist and which offer the possibility of an almost instantaneous "kill" mechanism, the militarization of outer space and its exploitation for military purposes appear as a complex issue which is, therefore, ripe for concrete negotiations. Otherwise the 1980s may become a decade of advances in military technology for deployment in that environment. Current and future developments in this regard may bring profound changes in strategic thinking and international security issues.

(Mr. Turbanski, Poland)

Quite a number of treaties concerning outer space activities already exist. They have been listed and discussed in this chamber by many speakers during this current session and in recent sessions, from the time when the problem of the arms race in the outer space was put on the agenda of the Committee on Disarmament. They were also discussed, permit me to recall, Mr. President, in my statement here on 18 August 1983. I think we all agree that if the spirit of the existing treaties and their underlying principle of making outer space a peaceful environment were followed in practice, the situation in that environment, and in different fora debating on its future, would be far better. Unfortunately, this is not so. The General Assembly, in resolution 38/70, very rightly recalls past international treaties, the Final Document of its tenth special session and its past resolutions on outer space, and notes with concern that despite the existing instruments, the extension of an arms race into outer space is taking place. Indeed, the spirit of the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, whereby outer space was to be a domain of peaceful exploitation, is not respected. The effectiveness of a more specific treaty, such as the 1972 ABM Treaty, is now threatened because of new developments in direct weapons based on laser and particle beams. These two instruments are mentioned only as a minimum illustration. The only specific negotiations so far aiming to control the militarization of outer space, the bilateral talks of the late 1970s between the USSR and United States on ASAT weapons, have been broken off by the United States.

Thus, the analyses, the statements of politicians and also our statements on the subject reveal a gloomy picture of this complex problem. The only solution is to start acting now. I share the view expressed here by the distinguished representative of Czechoslovakia, Ambassador Vejvoda, in his statement of 27 March, that the time has come to bring to a close — as he put it — "general" and "exploratory" discussions regarding the prevention of an arms race in outer space. We are convinced that the time has come to start elaborating relevant practical and effective measures which by mutual agreement could prohibit deployment of any weapons in outer space. In this connection it should be recalled that in August 1981 the Soviet Union submitted to the thirty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly a draft treaty on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space, showing thus its readiness to take partial steps, but excluding any upsetting of the approximate parity of forces between the main politico-military blocs. The United Nations General Assembly overwhelmingly adopted, as we remember, a resolution in which it recognized the need to take action to prevent the spreading of the arms race to outer space and requested the then Committee on Disarmament to start negotiations with a view to producing and agreeing on the text of a corresponding international treaty. That initiative, however, was opposed by the United States which tried to reduce the essence of the problem to the banning of anti-satellite systems, leaving open the question of the stationing of other types of military installations in outer space. Last year, during the thirty-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly the Soviet Union proposed the conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from outer space against the Earth, which was circulated as a document of this Conference (CD/476) and introduced by the distinguished representative of the USSR, Ambassador Issraelyan, on 22 March 1984.

(Mr. Turbanski, Poland)

We would like to emphasize the great political importance of both these proposals. Their main political objective is to prevent an arms race in outer space, and this is their most important, human feature. In addition, with regard to the draft treaty prohibiting the use of force in outer space, due attention should be paid to the fact that it combines political and legal obligations of States not to use force against each other in or from outer space with the implementation of far-reaching substantive measures intended to prevent the militarization of outer space. We hope that this new Soviet initiative will be favourably received by this Conference and will make a major contribution to full-scale, concrete, multilateral negotiations on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

The gravity of the problem is evident and great. It is even greater today than it was a few days ago. According to informed sources in the United States Administration, as yesterday's International Herald Tribune puts it, President Reagan signed last Saturday, 31 March, before submission to the Congress, a report according to which, "... the Reagan Administration plans to develop and test an anti-satellite weapon and does not plan to seek a comprehensive ban on such weapons with the Soviet Union...". Thus, the gravity of the problem cannot be underestimated. I therefore join all those who spoke here in favour of the early establishment of an ad hoc committee in the framework of this Conference to initiate such negotiations as soon as possible. Various proposals concerning its mandate have already been considered extensively last year and during the current session. My delegation fully shares the analyses and conclusions expressed in this respect by you, Mr. President, on 29 March last. Indeed, the problem should be approached in a comprehensive way within the framework of a future ad hoc committee. While recognizing that identification of different aspects and of multiple questions of this complex problem should be undertaken in the first instance, this cannot be conducted for the sake of such identification itself and without the basic link which leads to negotiations. In other words, the future mandate of the said body cannot be limited only to the identification of issues. In the light of the latest news on the subject, what is urgently needed is concrete negotiations. There is no lack of examples from the recent past or from parallel exercises, and we are therefore in fact suspicious that the insistence by some Western delegations on the identification of issues is aimed rather to block than to advance substantive work, i.e., the undertaking of negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space, as proposed in the course of the recent informal consultations.

We are entering the third month of this session without even having solved its basic organizational problems. Outer space free of arms and of the arms race is no longer a problem for petty tactical games. This is the problem of huge political dimensions, deserving the most serious attention on our part.

Mr. President, there is still time to prevent an arms race in outer space, but we have to act now. I hope that under your leadership this Conference will embark on successful negotiations in this direction.

CD/PV.256
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(Mr. Lopez Oliver, Venezuela)

Another area where we consider that positive results could be obtained is the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Bearing in mind that although the danger which that arms race represents has already technically materialized, it has not reached the level at which it cannot be stopped, and considering the serious strategic destabilizing effects of the development of anti-satellite systems (ASAT) or intercontinental anti-ballistic missile (ABM) systems, there can be no doubt that this subject must be tackled without delay, in accordance with the spirit and the letter of General Assembly resolution 38/70, adopted on 17 January 1984. The current instruments governing the use of outer space are certainly inadequate and full of gaps, but in optimistic terms, these gaps should permit the Conference, in filling them, to complete and perfect those instruments. As a member of the Group of 21, Venezuela has expressed its support for the proposals which that Group submitted last year in the respective contact group in document CD/329; in addition, in so far as it is bound by the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, of 1967 it has a particular interest that the threat of war should not be taken into that sphere.

CD/PV.258
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(Mr. de la Serna, Spain)

It is the wish of the Spanish Government that the exploration of space should be continued and indeed expanded, with the participation of an ever larger number of States, provided that the fruits of this great enterprise should rebound to the benefit of the international community as a whole. We are therefore firmly in favour of qualitative and quantitative progress in the exploration and utilization for peaceful purposes of outer space.

Nevertheless, the Spanish Government is concerned at the possible stationing of means of destruction in outer space, a possibility that is increasingly close at hand, which could represent yet another step in the arms race with unforeseeable consequences which should be studied in depth.

Satellites, the product of technological research and the instrument of space exploration, should be devoted to exclusively peaceful purposes: peaceful objectives include, inter alia, both those which contribute to mankind's present store of scientific knowledge, and those which strengthen international stability and security by facilitating the verification of compliance with the disarmament agreements entered into, or by serving as a secure network of intergovernmental communications which are so necessary at times of crisis and indeed once a conflict has already broken out.

(Mr. de la Serna, Spain)

It is the responsibility of each and every one of the States of the international community to preserve outer space in as peaceful a state as it has enjoyed since the beginnings of the universe, but this responsibility is particularly great in the case of States which have the honour to belong to this negotiating body, and even greater for the States which today possess developed space technology.

Spain will support the future work of this Conference aimed at developing the existing agreements on the exploration and use of outer space and at drawing up new arms control and disarmament agreements made necessary by the development of new technology.

(Mr. de Souza e Silva, Brazil)

The prevention of nuclear war, and all related matters, can hardly be seriously tackled if one simply takes into account that the adoption of concrete legal measures to prevent nuclear war would run counter to the professed doctrine of nuclear deterrence, that is, the capability and the stated willingness to wage nuclear war as the only way to prevent it. As a contemporary thinker has correctly observed, the doctrine of nuclear deterrence, which ultimately rests on making a threat credible, deters even the possibility of its own discussion.

A similar conclusion may be applied to the state of play on the item on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, this once undiscovered country that may become soon a new launching pad for threat and destruction, still for the sake of upholding and strengthening deterrence.

(Mr. Morshed, Bangladesh)

Another disarmament issue which is of particular urgency is the prevention of an arms race in newer horizons namely, the extension and the escalation of the arms race in outer space. We believe that all attempts to use outer space for military purposes should be halted immediately and outer space declared to remain as the common heritage of mankind to be used only for peaceful purposes.

Mr. FIELDS (United States of America):

In my statement today, I wish to address the subject of item 5 of our agenda, "Prevention of an arms race in outer space".

My delegation fully realizes the important uses of outer space. There are many peaceful uses which enrich mankind. These include: the exploration of neighbouring planets in our solar system, the establishment of reliable and economic world-wide communications, the prediction of weather, the accurate mapping of the earth's surface, and the discovery of the keys to unlock the mysteries of the earth's past and to help to predict its future. I have only mentioned a few of the benefits that mankind's efforts in space offer us. My country has, I am proud to say, contributed much in these and other peaceful endeavours in space. Furthermore, we recognize that other countries, including the Soviet Union, have also made significant contributions in these fields.

We likewise recognize that there is another side to man's use of outer space and it is clearly ambiguous. The same satellites that provide military intelligence information provide an important means of ensuring that parties comply with provisio of arms control agreements. Early-warning satellites contribute to international stability by making a surprise attack, nuclear or conventional, a more difficult and risky undertaking. Navigational satellites can assist both naval and civil maritime vessels. Finally, the same communication satellites used for the command and control of military forces for combat are of equal, or even greater, importance in crisis control to prevent war. It is this duality which often confuses our efforts to understand this extremely complex subject.

The United States is a party to the Outer Space Treaty which bans weapons of mass destruction from outer space and limits the use of celestial bodies exclusively to peaceful purposes. We are also a party to the Treaty on the limitation of anti-ballistic missile systems and, in fact, unlike the Soviet Union, chose not to continue to exercise the provision in that treaty allowing limited anti-ballistic missile system deployments. Long and tireless United States efforts to negotiate these agreements are historical evidence of my country's commitment to the principle of using outer space in ways that promote peace and international stability. We appreciate and value the contributions to security which they represent.

My delegation indicated over a year ago our willingness to consider the vast range of issues dealing with the "prevention of an arms race in outer space" and to that end co-sponsored document CD/413 which called for the identification, through substantive examination, of issues relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. In so doing, the proposed mandate specifies that the Ad hoc Subsidiary Body should take into account all existing agreements, existing proposals and future initiatives.

(Mr. Fields, United States)

We therefore reject the assertion that we have held up significant work in this Conference on the question of preventing an arms race in outer space. The Conference's work has been held-up by those who persistently strive to impose preconditions on our discussions. They believe the cart should be put before the horse. We can hardly talk about negotiations before we have a clear idea of the issues involved. My delegation was prepared a year ago, and continues to be prepared, to consider these issues in detail in an ad hoc committee. While I agree with those who seek a proper examination of these issues, appeals for immediate action, based on the notion that technology will soon pass us by, are not shared by my delegation. We simply do not see the logic in establishing an ad hoc committee which would not begin at the beginning in order to define clearly possible areas of negotiation.

On 22 March, my distinguished colleague from the Soviet Union, Ambassador Issraelyan, addressed this Conference on the subject of the spread of the arms race to outer space. The inconsistency on which his statement was premised is apparent and it is unnecessary to dwell upon it; however, I am concerned that some misperceptions could still remain, based on the exaggeration and distortions in that statement. For this reason, I feel it is necessary to set the record straight.

First, let me discuss the Soviet announcement of a unilateral moratorium on the launching of anti-satellite weapons. I think it is instructive to note that neither Ambassador Issraelyan nor any other Soviet official has yet acknowledged the existence of the operational Soviet orbital anti-satellite interceptor system. It is common knowledge that the Soviet Union has tested this weapon system over a dozen years. It is, and has been for over a decade, the world's only operational ASAT weapon system. In addition, this very system was tested in June 1982 in conjunction with a major exercise of Soviet nuclear forces, a co-ordinated test that military experts judge to have important strategic implications. Now, having established this military advantage in space, for the Soviet Union to propose a moratorium on testing of such systems strikes my delegation as monumental cynicism. The announcement was made practically on the eve of my country's first test of a system designed eventually to counterbalance this long-held Soviet advantage. The Soviet Union also proposes to eliminate existing ASAT systems. But the draft treaty text deals in generalities with the enormous verification problems involved in such agreement. The draft treaty provides for an unspecified combination of national and international verification measures as well as some undefined "additional measures" to be employed to solve these problems. The Soviet objective here is clear and not without precedent. Their objective is to preserve unchallenged a unilateral Soviet strategic capability in outer space.

I would like to call your attention to another case that brings into question Soviet intentions in outer space. I refer to the Soviet ocean surveillance satellites designed to provide targeting data for the attack of naval ships and maritime vessels. Their existence is well known since two of these nuclear-powered satellites caused world-wide alerts during their break-up and re-entries to the earth in 1978 and 1983. On one of those occasions considerable nuclear residue was spread on the territory of a nation represented in this body today.

These are two examples of Soviet deeds that are widely known and certainly at variance with the Soviet Union's exaggerated claims to a commitment to the preservation of outer space for peaceful purposes.

(Mr. Fields, United States)

Mr. President, before closing, allow me to note Ambassador Issraelyan's considerable use of the free press of the United States as a source for criticism of my Government. He obviously places significant trust in the accuracy of opinions expressed in that medium. As we are all aware, a genuinely free press offers many views, often conflicting, in order for the reader to assemble the facts, assess the arguments and decide for himself. In this spirit, I want to offer additional material from a United States publication for the consideration of the representatives here. The following paragraphs are from a 1982 New York Times magazine article written on the 25th anniversary of the Soviet launching of Sputnik I which marked the debut of the Soviet Union's satellites into outer space:

"Last year alone, despite severe problems in its domestic industry and agriculture, the Soviet Union devoted an estimated $18 billion to its space programme. In proportion to the size of the Soviet economy, that is five times the size of NASA's current budget. In absolute terms, the Soviet budget is three times the size of NASA's and about 30 per cent more than the combined space budgets of NASA and the Department of Defense."

"The United States last year launched a total of 18 satellites, the Soviet Union put a staggering 125 satellites into orbit. What do the Russians do with all of these satellites? Sixty-nine per cent are designed for military purposes, in the last two or three years, Moscow has launched 10 times as many military satellites as Washington."

"By undertaking a massive military space programme designed to gain control of space, Moscow is attempting to shift the balance of power substantially in its favor."

"How much significance should be attached to Russian space stations? Military uses of these stations are certainly a part of Soviet planning. Two of the seven Salyuts launched thus far have been singled out by the Russians themselves as military, and observers of the Soviet programme believe that others may be also."

These, Mr. President, are the opinions voiced in the New York Times in 1982.

There are numerous other articles along similar lines. Taken together they present a far different picture of Soviet intentions in space than what some would have us believe. We long for the day when we might see an article in Izvestiya by some prominent Soviet citizen criticizing the official line on the Soviet space programmes. We long for the day when everyone in the Soviet Union will have the ability, right and responsibility to judge the Soviet Government by their actions as well as by their noble-sounding calls for peace.

My purpose today has been to provide a different perspective from that portrayed by my distinguished Soviet colleague on 22 March. I leave it to our colleagues in this chamber to decide if his criticism of my country's actions is well founded, and if on the other hand his country has pursued only peaceful and humanitarian goals in outer space.

Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian): Mr. President, today the Soviet delegation takes the floor in order to submit an official document of the Conference on Disarmament, CD/497, distributed at our request, which contains the answers of the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, Konstantin Chernenko, to questions by the newspaper "Pravda", published in the Soviet press on 9 April 1984.

These answers touch upon the whole range of the most acute problems of the present-day international relations. They clearly lay down the position of the USSR on the basic problems of arms-race limitation and disarmament, including those which are on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament.

In particular, K.U. Chernenko recalled that it is not the first year that the Soviet Union is pressing for an accord directed at preventing the arms race from spreading to outer space. The USSR is constantly raising this question before the leadership of the United States. It is doing so because the Soviet Union clearly realizes the formidable consequences that the militarization of outer space would have.

"But meantime", Comrade K.U. Chernenko pointed out, "the American President officially informed the United States Congress a few days ago that the Government is starting the fulfilment of a broad programme of the arms race in outer space and has no intention of reaching agreement with the Soviet Union on preventing the militarization of space supposedly because of the difficulties of verification".

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

This lack of any desire on the part of the United States to achieve an agreement on the prevention of an arms race in outer space is well known to the members of the Conference on Disarmament, where the United States thwarts the negotiations on this item. As Comrade K.U. Chernenko pointed out, the United States "is expressing readiness to talk with the sole aim of agreeing that accord on this issue is impossible". Different manoeuvres here in Geneva, as evidenced specifically by today's statement by the representative of the United States, are designed to impose upon the Conference's subsidiary body on the prevention of the arms race in outer space a mandate which would be confined to a fruitless examination of the existing norms of international law concerning the use of outer space.

Let us take another issue -- the prohibition of chemical weapons. It was already in 1972 that the USSR and other socialist countries proposed in the Disarmament Committee the conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction. It was also then that they submitted a draft of such a convention.

Subsequently the USSR returned to this matter more than once, specifying its proposals. But all these years the United States impeded the conclusion of a convention on the total prohibition of chemical weapons, suspended in 1980 the bilateral Soviet-United States negotiations, which as is well known to the members of the Conference produced many positive results.

In the answers of Comrade K.U. Chernenko, an important place is attributed to the questions relating to the state of bilateral Soviet-United States relations.

In this connection the Soviet leader pointed out that in spite of the fact that peace-loving rhetoric is sometimes heard from Washington it is impossible, however hard one tries, to discern behind it any signs whatsoever of readiness to back up these words with practical deeds; in other words, the introduction of new words does not mean a new policy.

The actions of the United States, stressed Comrade K.U. Chernenko, "do not tally in any way with the task of ending the arms race. And it is not at all by chance that the United States has deliberately frustrated the very process of limiting and reducing nuclear arms, and torpedoed the talks both on strategic arms and on nuclear arms in Europe".

Referring to the necessity for people to stop living in a state of constant fear for the world, Comrade K.U. Chernenko pointed out that first of all it is necessary for the policy of States, especially States possessing nuclear weapons, to be oriented at eliminating the danger of war, and at consolidating peace.

Along with the solution of the other major problems mentioned above, we are convinced that a resolute turn for the better in the world would have been facilitated by an undertaking by all nuclear-weapon States not to be the first to use nuclear arms and also on the quantitative and qualitative freezing of nuclear arsenals.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

It is extremely important in general that certain norms, directed towards aims of peace, shall be introduced in relations between States possessing nuclear arms. The position of the USSR and other socialist countries on these issues is laid down in detail in documents CD/444 and CD/484.

The task of creating an atmosphere of trust in international relations is an urgent one. This requires a responsible and balanced policy on the part of all States and also the adoption of relevant practical measures leading in this direction.

"The Soviet Union", Comrade K.U. Chernenko stressed, "is prepared to co-operate with all States in the attainment of these aims." Efforts should be directed first of all at stopping and reversing the arms race. It is time to move from generalities about the usefulness of talks to eliminating the serious obstacles that have been erected in the way of the limitation and reduction of armaments, the development of trust and mutually advantageous co-operation.

The Soviet delegation expresses the hope that the answers of Comrade K.U. Chernenko will be carefully studied by the delegations represented at the Conference.

With regard to the remarks contained in the statement of the representative of the United States at today's meeting, we would like to point out that they constitute yet another attempt to camouflage the United States unwillingness to negotiate on the question of preventing an arms race in outer space. However, we wish to comment on some points of that statement.

The representative of the United States attempted to demonstrate that the Soviet Union has an alleged superiority in anti-satellite weapons and that supposedly that is why the USSR is proposing the introduction of a moratorium on such weapons. As we may see, the method is the same as the one the United States uses in refusing, for instance, a freeze on nuclear weapons or a moratorium on nuclear-weapon testing: the method of asserting the existence of a so-called "Soviet superiority".

The question must be asked, however, does the Soviet Union in fact have a so-called anti-satellite superiority? No, it does not. In the 1960s the United States already began testing such weapon systems. This idea began to be carried into practice 20 years ago with the development of the manoeuvrable SAINT (Satellite Inspector Technique) spacecraft. In the 1960s, two ground-based anti-satellite systems were developed: in 1963, on Kwajalein Island, in one of the Micronesian atolls, on the basis of Niki-Zeus anti-missile missiles, and in 1964 on Johnston Island using various modifications of the Thor missile. Currently, an airborne ASAT anti-satellite system based on the F-15 fighter is being completed. It is planned to establish two squadrons of F-15 jets equipped with interceptor missiles with self-guided warheads.

Or there is a very recent fact: the United States has just used the space Shuttle to remove an Earth satellite from its orbit. That is a fact. On this occasion it was done, we are told, for peaceful purposes. But who can guarantee that the United States will not do the same for military purposes at a convenient moment? As is well known, the Soviet Union has never done anything of the kind. Who then can be said to have the superiority in the development of anti-satellite systems? Ambassador Fields tried to create the impression that the Soviet Union

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

is in favour of an arms race in outer space, and quoted an article from the New York Times magazine concerning the 25th anniversary of the launching of the first Sputnik into space. To reciprocate, so to speak, I shall quote from the Soviet press, likewise from an article on the 25th anniversary of the launching of the Soviet Sputnik into space, and answering the question of the Soviet Union's purposes in space: "The Soviet Union, which 25 years ago opened the era of the peaceful use of outer space, today remains true to its position. This is illustrated by the successful activity of the Soviet section of the international COSMOS-SARSAT system for searching for ships or aircrafts which have suffered accidents. With the help of 'satellite rescue', as many United States sources call our 'COSMOS 1383', a number of aircraft which have been involved in accidents have already been found. The flights of the Soviet automatic spacecraft 'Venus-13' and 'Venus-14' which set off for that distant, entirely mysterious planet over a year ago, are of great usefulness for Earth sciences. Using Soviet, French and Austrian devices mounted on those spacecraft, the study of the atmosphere and surface of Venus is continuing, and they have carried experiments to study interplanetary space." Soviet experiments in outer space are widely used for peaceful purposes, and redound to the benefit of mankind. Clear evidence of this is provided by the large number of joint flights between Soviet cosmonauts and cosmonauts of other countries. And I am glad today to express our gratification that yesterday a joint flight of Soviet cosmonauts and an Indian cosmonaut came to an end; it had exclusively peaceful purposes, needless to say, as in the case of previous flights.

Another question may be raised: what is the position of the United States on the issue of outer space? Is the United States trying to achieve equality, so to speak, in this field or not? To this question we must answer with a clear negative: this is not what the United States is trying to do. They are trying to extend the arms race into outer space, to achieve superiority over the Soviet Union in this field too. And although my colleague, Ambassador Fields, clearly does not like it when I quote from the American newspapers, I cannot help quoting a very interesting article, which I recommend everyone to read carefully, that appeared in today's International Herald Tribune. The author is Peter Clausen. Allow me to read out a few extracts in the original:

> [Speaking in English]: "Hiding behind dubious arguments about verification, the Reagan Administration refuses to negotiate with the Soviet Union to restrain anti-satellite weapons. In January, the US Air Force began testing an anti-satellite weapon which could wreck hopes of controlling these weapons. Meanwhile, the United States is pressing ahead with the President's star wars programme - an implausible quest for weapons to shield the American people from nuclear attack by intercepting Soviet missiles in flight. These ill-advised policies foreshadow a new space race at great peril to US security".

I quote from further on in the article: "Why then does the Administration shun negotiations?" asks the author of the article. And he replies: "For two reasons. The first is straightforward, if shortsighted: the Administration wants the option of attacking Soviet satellites, even if the price is to forfeit any restrictions on Soviet anti-satellite weapons. The second reason is the 'Star Wars' connection. Development and testing of the weapon offers technological stepping stones to missile defence systems operating in space".

(Mr. Israelyan, USSR)

And finally, the author draws the following conclusion:

"To prevent a new arms race in space, the United States must shift course. It must suspend testing of anti-satellite weapons and start negotiations to halt the further development of them, and give up the costly futile and dangerous pursuit of 'Star Wars' missile defences".

[Speaking in Russian] I share the views of the author of this article, and should like to point out that whether Ambassador Fields wished it or not, today he has been drawn into a discussion of the draft Soviet treaty on the non-use of force in outer space and from space against the Earth. This is merely an illustration of the fact that both the Soviet draft and the issue itself are of crucial topicality, and that the draft may be the basis of negotiations.

I should like to point out here that many other delegations have publicly, at the meetings of the Conference, and in talks with us put forward their remarks, observations and even amendments concerning the Soviet draft. Surely all this indicates that the time has come for negotiation: tomorrow may be too late.

Finally, I cannot pass over in silence something to which I have heard references too often: I mean the so-called "free press". I read this "free press", which every day throws mud at my country, my Motherland, my people; the "free press", in which a good word is rarely found for the Soviet Union. No one should wait for the day when Izvestiya would publish articles criticizing the position of the Soviet Government on the issue that outer space should be peaceful. That will not happen. The Soviet people wants outer space to be peaceful, and only articles to that effect appear in Izvestiya. But to have a correct perception of the Soviet press, I would strongly urge you, including my colleague from the United States, to read that press better. If you did so, you would know that it contains a considerable amount of critical material concerning various aspects of the life and activities of the Soviet people. The Soviet people is a self-critical people; and our press is self-critical. But to publish articles and reports which run counter to the spirit of the people, which has suffered from war, which abhors war, to publish articles which are at variance with the feelings of other peoples, which also call for a peaceful outer space, for a freeze, for a moratorium -- demands shared by the American people and by all the peoples of the earth -- that is something the Soviet press will not do.

I apologise, Mr. President, for having had to dwell on this question. It is one often raised in this Conference. As you know, the Soviet delegation endeavours not to involve in the Conference's work issues which are not concerned with disarmament. I believe, however, that my colleagues will understand me. From time to time unjustified and gratuitous reproaches have been addressed to the Soviet people and its press at this Conference. I considered it my duty to reply to them.

(Mr. Sy, Senegal)

My delegation wishes to join its voice to those which have expressed concern at the tendency to extend the arms race to outer space.

Until quite recently, space had been relatively spared by the arms race. There had been reason to be optimistic in that regard, since a set of agreements and treaties, both multilateral and bilateral, had made it possible to curb its militarization or the introduction of weapons of mass destruction. For example, the Outer Space Treaty, the partial nuclear-test ban treaty and the 1979 Treaty relating to the Moon are the most prominent examples in that regard. Similarly, the agreements concluded by the United States and the Soviet Union within the framework of the limitation of strategic weapons and the prevention of a nuclear war have played a positive and stabilizing role in that sphere.

Those agreements augur well for the possibility of space activities for the good and in the interest of all countries, whatever their stage of economic and social development.

Unfortunately, those positive factors are now threatened by certain advances in military space technology, particularly by the development and deployment of anti-satellite weapons and particle-beam weapons.

Outer space is thus becoming an area of military preparations with every passing day. Plans and programmes and considerable resources are being devoted to the development and deployment of weapons systems in outer space and from space against the Earth.

The immediate effect of anti-satellite weapons and other particle-beam weapons is to spur on the arms race, to increase international tension and to threaten the security of all countries in the world. As if land and sea were not sufficiently encumbered by dangerous weapons, the threat from outer space is now to be held over the heads of the peoples of the Earth.

They can only watch, in impotent anxiety, the ineluctable process of the deployment of anti-satellite and anti-missile weapons, soon followed by anti-anti-satellites and anti-anti-missile weapons, until the day when this dangerous escalation escapes the control of its creators and ends in the dreaded catastrophe.

The new space weapons are undermining the policy of deterrence of the Superpowers, since by making possible the destruction of their advanced warning systems, they thereby make possible a first strike. Who can say what temptations can arise in such a situation.

(Mr. Sy, Senegal)

However, the new weapons are not confined to undermining the system of mutual deterrence so carefully developed by the Superpowers. Those weapons circumvent some weapons control agreements, in particular the 1972 anti-Ballistic-Missile Treaty.

Once again the dynamics of the quantitative arms race and technical progress has overcome policies aimed at the limitation of weapons. It is because these developments promise nothing positive that many delegations both at the Conference on Disarmament and in the General Assembly have expressed their concern and requested that measures should be taken to halt this danger.

In this regard, it must be noted that the General Assembly adopted by a very large majority a resolution whereby it expressed its conviction of the need to take further measures to prevent an arms race in outer space. It therefore requested the Committee on Disarmament to set up an ad hoc working group on the question at the beginning of its 1984 session with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space.

Such a recommendation, which my delegation entirely endorses, should be implemented as rapidly as possible by the Conference on Disarmament.

Unfortunately, it seems that in spite of the proposals submitted with a view to undertaking negotiations on the prevention of the arms race in outer space, the Conference has not yet reached a satisfactory solution. Nevertheless, in view of the urgency of the question, prompt action is necessary.

As the history of the talks on nuclear weapons limitation has shown, it is easier to prevent the introduction of new weapons than to eliminate those already existing. Time is pressing, and my delegation hopes that the Conference will not let slip this opportunity, an opportunity which might not recur.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): Thank you, Mr. President. My delegation is pleased to see you guiding our deliberations. As I said last month in the Group of 21, where you were acting as co-ordinator, you demonstrated truly extraordinary skill and exemplary equanimity and objectivity.

My congratulations are also addressed to Ambassador Datcu, who preceded you as President of our Conference and did his utmost to advance our work during the month of March.

I did not intend to take the floor today. However, the statements which were made this morning, particularly two of them, showed that this session, even though it has dealt with many questions, will enter the annals of the Conference as a session devoted mainly to the question of the prevention of the arms race in outer space. This is a question to which my delegation attaches special importance. Moreover, time is passing inexorably and quite soon the Conference will, I believe, have to take a decision concerning the establishment and mandate of an ad hoc committee. At that time, Mr. President, as has already happened in the case of the proposal for an ad hoc committee on the prohibition of all nuclear weapons tests, it would be appropriate if, unfortunately, it was not possible to set up an ad hoc committee this year and to give it a suitable mandate, it would be appropriate, I repeat, for the records of the Conference to indicate clearly who bears the responsibility. It is for that reason that since I have to date referred to this matter on only one occasion, in the statement I made at the opening meeting this year on 7 February, and I did so then only in a small part of my statement since I had to deal with various subjects, I thought it appropriate to begin to correct this lack of relevant or pertinent information in formal plenary meetings. I say this because it is clear that in informal meetings consisting of four or five or even more participants my delegation has already taken the opportunity to state its position more fully. However, I repeat, I believe that, as I have frequently said, spoken words fly away and it is the written word that remains, according to an old Latin proverb. That is why, at today's meeting, I should like to stress what I said in passing at the opening meeting, namely, that we are not going to deal with this matter as if nothing had happened during the last Assembly. Something very significant occurred at the last Assembly: there was a resolution which obtained the greatest number of votes of all resolutions concerned with disarmament: 147 votes in favour and only 1 against. That resolution was not the result of improvization, as I also said at the opening meeting and I shall repeat now; it was the outcome of laborious and patient negotiations in which two delegations had to play a primary role: yours, Mr. President, and the delegation of Egypt. There were on that occasion three draft resolutions, one submitted by Mongolia, another by a group of Western European States, and the third was the draft of the Group of 21. Following those laborious negotiations, the co-sponsors of the first two draft resolutions did not press their texts and withdrew them. Then the Assembly adopted, by that truly extraordinary vote, the resolution bearing the number 38/70.

All those who are interested in the question will be able to consult the full text of this resolution in the document which the Secretary-General transmits to us every year and which contains, in an annex to his letter, all the texts of the resolutions adopted by the Assembly on disarmament matters. This document is CD/428. Nevertheless, in order that those who may not wish to take the trouble to consult this document can find in the record of today's meeting the main provisions of resolution 38/70, I shall take the liberty of reading them out now.

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

In the second preambular paragraph, the Assembly recognized "the common interest of all mankind in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes".

In the fourth preambular paragraph, it reaffirmed the will of all States "that the exploration and use of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, shall be exclusively for peaceful purposes".

In the sixth preambular paragraph, the Assembly reaffirmed, in particular, article IV of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, which stipulated that "States parties to the Treaty undertake not to place in orbit around the earth any objects carrying nuclear weapons or any other kinds of weapons of mass destruction, install such weapons on celestial bodies or station such weapons in outer space in any other manner".

In the following, seventh preambular paragraph, the General Assembly reaffirmed also paragraph 80 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly in which it is stated, as all will recall, that "in order to prevent an arms race in outer space, further measures should be taken and appropriate international negotiations held in accordance with the spirit of the Treaty" on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies.

A little later, in the twelfth preambular paragraph, and this should follow from the seventh, the Assembly expressed its conviction that "further measures are needed for the prevention of an arms race in outer space".

Further, in the sixteenth paragraph, the Assembly stated that it was "Aware of the various proposals submitted by Member States to the Committee on Disarmament, particularly concerning the establishment of a working group on outer space and its draft mandate which had been considered extensively by a contact group".

There is a foot-note here in which it is noted that from the date of commencement of the current session the working groups are to be known by another name. Of course, we know that we have already decided that they will be called ad hoc committees.

Lastly, the purpose of the eighteenth paragraph -- the last in the preamble -- is to express the Assembly's deep concern and disappointment that "although there was no objection, in principle, to the establishment without delay of such a working group, the Committee on Disarmament" -- now the Conference -- "has not thus far been enabled to reach agreement on an acceptable mandate for the working group during its 1983 session". The 10 operative paragraphs then follow. All of them are clearly important, but I shall confine myself at this point to quoting only four.

First of all, operative paragraph 2, in which the Assembly emphasized that "further effective measures to prevent an arms race in outer space should be adopted by the international community".

Operative paragraph 3 in which the Assembly called upon all States, in particular those with major space capabilities, to "contribute actively to the objective of the peaceful use of outer space and to take immediate measures to prevent an arms race in outer space".

(Mr. Garcia Robles, Mexico)

Paragraph 5, in which the Assembly "Requests the Conference on Disarmament to consider as a matter of priority the question of preventing an arms race in outer space".

Lastly, Mr. President, paragraph 7, which is perhaps the most pertinent for us, in which the Assembly, "Further requests the Conference on Disarmament to establish an ad hoc working group at the beginning of its session in 1984, with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space".

If what I have just recalled is examined and compared with the draft mandate which was submitted by the Group of 21 on 29 February 1984 and which is reproduced in document CD/329/Rev.1, it will be seen that this draft faithfully reflects that resolution, adopted, let us not forget, by 147 votes in favour, and not 10 years ago but on 15 December 1983.

I should like, in concluding this statement, and in order to facilitate the comparison to which I referred, to read out this draft in its entirety. It is very brief and says the following:

"Reaffirming the principle that outer space - the common heritage of mankind - should be preserved exclusively for peaceful purposes, and in order to prevent the extension of an arms race to outer space, and prohibit its use for hostile purposes; the Conference on Disarmament decides to establish an Ad Hoc [subsidiary body]" - there it said a subsidiary body, but we know now that it is to be an ad hoc committee - "with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement, or various agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space. The Ad Hoc Committee will take into account all existing proposals and future initiatives and report on the progress of its work to the Conference on Disarmament."

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(Mr. Cannock, Peru)

Furthermore, we also regret that in spite of the great efforts made in this Conference by many delegations, it has not yet been possible to achieve the consensus necessary to set up an ad hoc committee on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. This situation exists in spite of General Assembly resolution 38/70, adopted by an overwhelming majority of countries, with the sole exception of one country whose vote prevented a consensus.

My delegation attaches special importance to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, considering that it is a question of using as another area of militarization an environment which should serve peaceful purposes exclusively. It would, moreover, be simpler and preferable to prevent an arms race rather than to become involved later in a more arduous task of trying to disarm outer space, in which vast quantities of money are being invested for military purposes.

I do not wish to let slip this opportunity to congratulate very sincerely the delegations of Sweden and Argentina on their statements of 22 and 27 March last respectively for having drawn attention to important relevant elements in this field, which will undoubtedly help our future work in the Group of 21 and in the Conference itself.

(Mr. Tellalov, Bulgaria)

The question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space occupies an important place in our work. The growing attention devoted to this issue is fully understandable, since the point at issue is to nip in the bud a new and particularly dangerous round of the arms race, namely, its being carried into outer space, whose development and exploitation is one of mankind's greatest achievements in this century.

International agreements in force limit the use of outer space for military purposes only to a certain degree; they do not preclude the possibility of the deployment in outer space of types of weapons which do not fall within the definition of "means of mass destruction". There is need for a mechanism in international law reliable enough to thwart the designs of the proponents of an arms race in that sphere.

We share the concern of other delegations in connection with the elaboration in the United States of programmes for the development of space weapons to destroy objects in outer space, in the atmosphere and on the surface of the Earth and for the deployment in outer space of anti-ballistic missile systems based on the utilization of the latest scientific achievements in the field of laser and particle-beam technology. The implementation of these programmes would represent a gross violation of the Soviet-United States treaty on the limitation of anti-ballistic missile systems signed in 1972.

At the beginning of this year, the new ASAT anti-ballistic missile system launched from F-15 fighters was tested in the United States of America. The development of a weapon of this kind carries a direct threat to the use of early-warning satellites and increases the danger of nuclear war.

The United States' openly stated unwillingness to engage in negotiations on questions related to the prevention of an arms race in outer space is also significant.

Such actions by the United States Government are having an effect on the work of our Conference. Problems of outer space have appeared on our agenda for almost three years. However, through the fault of the United States of America, consideration of and consultations on this question have not yet led to the establishment of a subsidiary body which might, in a serious and responsible way, devote itself to the elaboration of a comprehensive international agreement or agreements on the prohibition of an arms race in outer space. I subscribe to the view expressed by the distinguished representative of Mexico, Ambassador Alfonso García Robles, that we cannot treat the issue as if nothing had happened. The vote on resolution 38/70 at the latest session of the United Nations General Assembly convincingly confirms the international community's steadily growing concern in connection with the danger of outer space being transformed into an arena of the arms race. At the Conference on Disarmament there are enough ideas and proposals on this urgent issue -- all that is needed is to create the necessary preconditions in order to embark on specific negotiations within the framework of an appropriate ad hoc committee, which should be given a mandate of full value.

(Mr. Imai, Japan)

Peaceful outer space is obviously a very important item, to which Japan attaches high priority. However, as far as we are concerned, except for a limited knowledge and experience regarding exploration of outer space for peaceful uses, we have to confess that our understanding and knowledge of the related space activities are not at all based on our own experience. It is very difficult, therefore, for us to engage in detailed discussions on space arms control on the basis of published and often popular information. We believe that the examination of the problem of outer space starting from an exploratory approach at the outset, with those in a position to know providing information, would be most appropriate and meaningful.

Mr. ROSE (German Democratic Republic): Mr. President, today, my delegation would like to dwell upon agenda item 5, "Prevention of an arms race in outer space".

In the efforts for achieving international security and disarmament, developments in outer space have increasingly entered the minds of the peoples during the past few years. These developments are playing an ever more important role in the policy of States. The time is now ripe to set a course in the interest of peace. Either we will be able to maintain and strengthen freedom for the peaceful exploration and use of outer space, to the benefit of all States, or outer space will be included in the arms race, with all its dangerous consequences.

The launching of the first artificial earth satellite by the Soviet Union almost 30 years ago opened up the age of practical exploration and use of outer space. Utopian ideas of former generations came true. In international treaties, States undertook to use outer space for peaceful purposes. People all over the world followed with great sympathy the sensational success of scientists and cosmonauts. New dimensions for co-operation between States having different social systems became apparent. In particular, the joint space venture of the USSR and the United States was regarded as a promising sign in this respect.

However, the United States is now doing an about-turn: it is undermining world-wide consensus on freedom and peace in outer space by including space in its adventurous policy. Relevant facts have already been outlined here, there is no need to repeat them. We share the view that such activities cannot be separated from the deployment of Pershing-2 and Cruise missiles as nuclear first-strike weapons in Europe. Our continent is regarded as a potential nuclear battlefield, whereas the United States should be shielded by a large-scale and space-based anti-ballistic missile system against a retaliatory strike. Those plans and actions are now as before dominated by the doctrine of a limited nuclear war proceeding from the assumption that such a war is wageable and winnable.

The extension of the arms race into outer space cannot be justified by any argument whatsoever. On Thursday last week, the delegation of the United States has reiterated pretexts, which it has put forward for years now, against the conclusion of international agreements.

We have the following observations to make upon that statement. Firstly, it is remarkable that the representative of the United States confined his statement to the question of anti-satellite systems, i.e., he referred only to one aspect of his country's military activities concerning outer space. Once again, the attempt was made to allege an advantageous position of the Soviet Union in this field. Only the naïve can believe that, for instance, the Shuttle project has nothing to do with military activities including actions against satellites belonging to other States. We also recall that in 1979, the United States broke off negotiations with the Soviet Union on anti-satellite weapons. This is another proof of the endeavour

(Mr. Rose, German Democratic Republic)

to include outer space in the arms drive and war preparation. The rejection of all obligations likely to hinder this course is part and parcel of such a policy. The refusal to join the moratorium declared by the Soviet Union gives strong evidence of that conclusion.

Secondly, the delegation of the United States avoided any reference to the comprehensive plans known as the "Star Wars" concept which was proclaimed in March last year at the highest level, accompanied by a large propaganda campaign, and which became only recently, by Directive 119, a binding guideline of that country's policy. It stands to reason that in considering measures against an arms race in outer space, such dangerous plans deserve our special attention.

The following facts cannot be refuted. The creation of a space-based anti-ballistic missile system would upset the relationship between the limitation of strategic defensive and strategic offensive weapons and would thus inevitably increase the danger of nuclear war. This concern even became the subject of international agreements. The preamble of the Treaty between the United States and the USSR on the limitation of anti-ballistic missile systems of 26 May 1972 stresses that effective measures to limit anti-ballistic missile systems would lead to a decrease in the risk of outbreak of war involving nuclear weapons. That means, as a matter of logical thinking, that the envisaged anti-ballistic missile systems will render more probable a nuclear war. They are a firm part of a strategy of a nuclear first strike. This is in contradiction with international law. Article V, paragraph 1, of the aforementioned Treaty stipulates the fundamental obligation that "Each Party undertakes not to develop, test, or deploy anti-ballistic missile systems or components which are sea-based, air-based, space-based -- I repeat space-based -- or mobile land-based." To our understanding, this is the basic norm of the Treaty, which has also to be the guideline for all the other concrete stipulations.

It cannot be contested that the Outer Space Treaty of 27 January 1967 stipulates the peaceful exploration and use of outer space. Moreover, it assures each individual State the concrete right to take part in these activities without any discrimination. The militarization of outer space as strived for by the United States will inevitably result in this right being restrained or even abolished. Therefore, we associate ourselves with all those delegations which regard the planned activities as incompatible with the Outer Space Treaty.

It should be possible to prevent an arms race in outer space since almost all States in supporting resolution 38/70 of the latest General Assembly favoured negotiations on the issue. It is our hope that in the United States too comprehension that the militarization of outer space will not bring the desired military and political advantages will gain the upper hand. The only feasible way towards strengthening national and international security is the cessation of the arms race and gradual disarmament by means of international agreements.

At this Conference, different approaches to the question became evident. The great majority of delegations request the establishment of a Committee with a negotiating mandate, as already provided for in resolution 38/70, which was also supported by my country. There is no "false bottom" to our policy. We, therefore, advocate the consistent implementation of that resolution. This applies, above all, to operative paragraph 7.

We may ask, what are the elements still to be identified or examined in non-committal discussions concerning the prevention of an arms race in outer space as suggested by the delegation of the United States. We have at our disposal the text

(Mr. Rose, German Democratic Republic)

of a draft treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from outer space against the Earth, submitted by the Soviet Union. This treaty not only identifies all relevant problems but also offers concrete solutions. It fully corresponds to the complexity of the subject. The draft clearly and unambiguously provides that no weapon of any kind whatsoever shall be put into outer space. The main question is not whether to work out one or several agreements. What we need is a comprehensive solution. The draft treaty submitted, which takes into account constructive considerations of other States, offers the Conference a good basis for negotiations, and in this negotiating process, it is up to everybody to propose amendments or supplements. To speak in clear terms: My delegation does not at all want to come to a situation similar to that which has been created by the opponents of a comprehensive test ban.

It only can serve a useful purpose to clearly spell out how things are going. Official statements of the United States Administration reveal its great efforts and the immense material means it is investing in the development, testing and production of different types of space weapons. In contrast, considerations of preventing an extension of the arms race to outer space and concluding international agreements are evidently for appearances' sake only. In substance those agreements and negotiations are rejected. Consequently, this Conference should invite the United States to reconsider its position and take into account what the great majority of States demand in the interests of international security and disarmament.

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

The latest United Nations General Assembly assigned to us the task, as a matter of priority, to address the question of the prevention of the arms race in outer space. The rapid technological development gives a particular sense of urgency to our work on this issue in the Conference on Disarmament. Our efforts to halt the arms race in outer space must not wait. Our task will be infinitely more difficult tomorrow if we fail to set our work in train today, at a time when enormous financial and scientific resources are already being used to fuel a threatening, destabilizing and expensive arms race in outer space.

This race touches upon fundamental aspects of international security. The major military Powers seem haunted by the temptation to seek security through an illusory invulnerability achieved by supremacy in space warfare. The consequence will however not be increased security. Instead the result will be increased insecurity.

Both the Soviet Union and the United States have carried out tests of antisatellite systems. There is a close link between development of ASAT weapons and ABM systems. The construction of dual-capacity weapons, which can be used against both satellites and ballistic missiles, is indeed feasible. Development and testing of ASAT weapons could also be used for the circumvention of the ABM Treaty.

The Conference on Disarmament should now respond to the task entrusted upon it by the General Assembly. We should prepare for urgent negotiations on an international treaty banning all space weapons, including weapons directed against targets in space. An ad hoc committee on the prevention of an arms race in outer space should urgently be set up. Time is pressing.

Mr. QIAN JIADONG (China):

In the past few weeks, a number of delegations have made statements on agenda item 5, "Prevention of an arms race in outer space", which is an issue of real importance. Although the spring session is now drawing to its conclusion, the Chinese delegation still wishes to offer some of its views on this issue.

The importance of the issue of outer space is twofold: on the one hand, it is opening up an entirely new and bright prospect for mankind; and on the other hand, it may bring about to the mankind a horrible disaster with unimaginable consequences.

Over the centuries, in ancient mythology and legends, outer space has been described as a beautiful and harmonious paradise. With the development of science and technology, man has eventually freed himself from the bondage of gravitation, broken through the atmosphere and entered this mysterious world. In the 1950s, the first man-made earth satellite was successfully launched. Later, man set foot on the moon and space exploration extended almost to the edges of the solar system. Man is even now able to stroll in outer space as leisurely as in a courtyard. It is a remarkable achievement that man's ability to conquer and utilize the universe has been enhanced so rapidly in the short span of 30 years. Space technology has already been broadly and effectively applied to many aspects of human life, including communication, broadcasting, weather forecasting and earth resources surveys, etc. Yet, its great potential for the promotion of social progress is just starting to manifest itself. With such a bright future in perspective, how can one help feeling exulted and encouraged?

Unfortunately, however, the tranquillity of outer space is not exempt from the impact of the current turbulent and tense international situation; and it is overshadowed by the arms race too. Guided by the doctrine of "He who controls outer space dominates the earth", military activities in outer space are intensifying, with contending development of various kinds of space weapons. One system of space weapons has already become operational, another has entered the testing stage, and programmes for even more sophisticated weapon systems are being planned. If this trend is left unchecked, outer space, following land, sea and air, will before long very likely become the fourth fratricidal battlefield of mankind. Should this scenario come true, the paradise of our imaginations would then be turned into a hell, a fact about which people cannot but be concerned.

(Mr. Qian Jiadong, China)

I think I would not be exaggerating in saying that we are at a crossroads with regard to outer space: either measures must be taken immediately to stop an arms race in outer space so that it may serve exclusively peaceful purposes for the benefit of mankind, or no measures will be taken at all, and outer space will turn into an arena for the arms race threatening mankind with an unprecedented holocaust. A false step here may lead to major failure. We can by no means take lightly an issue so vitally important to the future of mankind.

This is the third time that the issue of the prevention of an arms race in outer space has been included in the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. Since as early as the 1960s, the principles and purposes of "non-militarization of outer space" and "the use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes" have already been widely accepted by States and enshrined in more than one international legal instrument. Yet, to date, the tendency of expanding the arms race into outer space has not only been unchecked but even increasingly exacerbated. If this issue was not yet crucially urgent a few years ago, now we must say that it has become so urgent that it brooks no delay. It was not by accident that the First Committee of the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session succeeded in combining three draft resolutions and adopted almost by consensus a single resolution requesting the Conference on Disarmament to consider as a priority item the issue of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. This indicates the great importance States have attached to this issue.

The Chinese delegation shares the view underlined by many delegates and by you, Mr. President, that once a weapon comes into being, it will be very difficult to eliminate it from arsenals, and that it is much easier to prevent militarization than to demilitarize. In his statement of 18 April, the distinguished representative of Australia said: "An opportunity lost, or not recognized in time, can be an opportunity lost forever". In China we have a similar saying: "Do not let slip an opportunity, for it may never come again". Ambassador Butler was referring to the elaboration of a convention on a comprehensive ban on chemical weapons. But I feel his words are also relevant to the issue of preventing an arms race in outer space. The question has indeed come to a critical juncture. If we are unable to do anything now, it will be even more difficult for us to do anything in the future. And although the use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes has almost become a platitude, we still have to defend it vigorously. We must seize the opportunity before it is too late to make correct decisions, so as to save this common heritage of mankind -- outer space.

In this area, as in many other areas of disarmament, we cannot but emphasize the role of the super-Powers. No one can deny that these two countries, especially their scientists, engineers and technicians have made indelible contributions to the exploration and utilization of outer space. But it is equally undeniable that the same two countries are embarking on a dangerous path in outer space. They are the only two space Powers of today. It is fully justified to ask them to use the scientific achievement which embodies human wisdom and labour only for the benefit of mankind and not to abuse it for military purposes. They bear an unshirkable and special responsibility for preventing an arms race in outer space. In the common interest of mankind, including their own, they should not merely utter words of peace, but fulfil their responsibility by concrete deeds.

(Mr. Qian Jiadong, China)

While emphasizing the importance and urgency of the prevention of an arms race in outer space, we do not in the least underestimate the complexity of the question. The systematic analysis of various existing space weapon systems, as well as those in the development stage, made by the distinguished Swedish Ambassador, Mr. Ekéus, in his statement of 22 March, and by Ambassador Theorin in her statement today, can be termed exemplary. The complexity of the question should serve all the more as a reason for us to start negotiations as early as possible and not a pretext for procrastination.

In our view, the primary task at present should be the prohibition of all space weapons, including anti-satellite weapons, which impair the stability of outer space. This should include a ban on the development, testing, production, deployment and use of such weapons and the destruction of existing space weapon systems. Admittedly, this can be achieved only through many concrete measures. In this connection, the series of measures which should and can be taken, as proposed by Ambassador Ekéus, merits our serious study and exploration.

We are aware that it is difficult to carry on a comprehensive discussion of the relevant issues all at once. However, we can at least begin with the most fundamental and least controversial ones. In our view, the definition of space weapons is one such fundamental question. A breakthrough on this question will give impetus to the whole process of negotiations on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

The definition of space weapons is not a new subject. Proposals have been put forward by some delegations in the past. The Chinese delegation would also like to make an attempt here, and tentatively proposed the following:

Space weapons are devices or installations, either space-, land-, sea-, or atmosphere-based, which are specially designed to attack or destroy spacecraft in outer space or damage and disturb their normal functioning or change their flight trajectory, and devices or installations based in space (including on the moon and other celestial bodies) specially designed to attack, damage or disturb the normal functioning of objects in the atmosphere as well as on land and sea.

We do not regard this definition as perfect. Further thought and reflection may be needed for it to denote the characteristics of space weapons in concise and precise terms. Our aim is to draw attention to the matter and to facilitate joint exploration.

The prevention of an arms race in outer space is indeed a difficult task. However, we must not lose sight of a more favourable aspect. Not a few delegations have enumerated and analysed the existing treaties, agreements and other international legal documents concerning or relevant to outer space. In spite of the shortcomings and loopholes, those documents have on the whole affirmed the fundamental principle that outer space should be used for peaceful purposes. The Treaty on Principles Governing State Activities in the Exploration and Utilization of Outer Space Including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies of 1967 provides further that the activities of States in outer space should be carried out in accordance with international law and the United Nations Charter. These are achievements resulting from the endeavours of countries for many years. With such a basis, it should be possible to elaborate through negotiations an international legal instrument on the comprehensive prohibition of space weapons.

(Mr. Qian Jiadong, China)

In the course of this month, under your leadership, further consultations on the establishment of a subsidiary body on this subject have been held; but regrettably, agreement still eludes us so far. As the spring part of our session is drawing to its conclusion, the Chinese delegation sincerely hopes that all delegations will, in the same spirit in which the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly adopted at its thirty-eighth session the resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, seek common ground while reserving minor differences, so as to reach an agreement on the establishment of the said subsidiary body as early as possible during the summer part of the session, if not at the last moment of the present part of the session. The people of the world have entrusted this Conference with the important task of preventing an arms race in outer space. We must not let them down.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

Allow me, Mr. President, to dwell for a moment on the question of establishing a subsidiary working body on agenda item 5.

During the 1982 and 1983 sessions, the socialist countries consistently adhered to their position of principle, namely, that the Committee on Disarmament, as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating body, should, in fulfilment of its responsibility, immediately begin negotiations and should for that purpose create a subsidiary body with an appropriate mandate. In keeping with that position, and with a view to carrying out a number of General Assembly recommendations, the socialist countries took further action, on the one hand, by putting forward proposals and specific drafts and, on the other, supporting the proposals and texts of other countries, in particular the non-aligned and neutral countries.

At the beginning of the 1984 session, a group of socialist countries proposed the following draft mandate, contained in document CD/434:

"The Conference on Disarmament decides to establish, for the duration of the 1984 session, an ad hoc subsidiary body with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space, taking into account all relevant proposals, including consideration of the proposal for a treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from space against the Earth. The ad hoc subsidiary body will report to the Conference on Disarmament on the progress of its work at the end of the second part of its 1984 session."

This draft mandate is in full accord with resolution 38/70, the only relevant resolution of the thirty-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly, adopted as a result of intensive and persevering efforts by interested States and as a result of the withdrawal of two other draft resolutions. The record of the voting shows that resolution 38/70 was adopted by the overwhelming majority of 147 votes. The United States voted against, while the United Kingdom abstained.

At the current session of the Conference on Disarmament, various consultations were held under the guidance of its Presidents for March and April with a view to reaching consensus on drafting the mandate of the ad hoc committee on agenda item 5. During those consultations we again, as happened last year, encountered the obstruction of the group of Western countries, or more precisely, of one or two members of that group, who seek by every means and insist as before on limitation of the mandate of the future ad hoc committee by including the words "to identify, through substantive examination, issues relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space".

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

The mandate proposed by the Western group, as we have repeatedly stated earlier, in particular on 30 August 1983 at the 238th plenary meeting, "does not take account of the interests and position of the group of socialist countries, since it makes no mention of the need for negotiations directed at the conclusion of an agreement or agreements aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space" (CD/PV.238).

The socialist countries continue to support the draft mandate contained in document CD/434.

Nevertheless, the socialist countries demonstrated flexibility during the consultations and expressed their readiness to take into account some of the views of representatives of Western countries. That is what happened when the Mongolian delegation was prepared to consider the draft of the Western countries with the amendment proposed on 20 March by the Group of 21 which contained the following provision: "With a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space".

Continuing its efforts to arrive at an agreed solution, the Mongolian delegation proposed an amendment to the first paragraph of the proposed mandate, so that it would read as follows: "The Conference on Disarmament decides to establish an ad hoc committee with a view to undertaking negotiations on agenda item 5, entitled 'Prevention of an arms race in outer space'".

To our deep regret, however, our proposal was not accepted by the group of Western countries. It should be added that the delegations of the Group of 21 wer agreeable to the adoption of that amendment.

The Mongolian delegation considers that the draft mandate proposed by the Western countries is limited in that it fails to mention the principal objective, namely, negotiations with a view to preparing an appropriate agreement or agreements for preventing an arms race in outer space. That draft mandate which is inherently bogus, can in no way contribute to achieving the principal task of proceeding to negotiations on the substance of the matter.

In this connection I should like to return to what I said at the 251st plenary meeting on 20 March:

> "The negative experience of the work in this forum, when its subsidiary body was set up with a deliberately restricted and narrow mandate, must not be repeated. If some delegations of the Western countries again insist on their obstructionist position, such an approach can only be seen as a pretext to avoid a businesslike solution of the problems facing the Conference."

CD/PV.262
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Mr. ISSRAELYAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translated from Russian):

- The Soviet delegation submitted a whole set of proposals on another priority issue of our time — the prevention of an arms race in outer space. These took the form of a draft treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from outer space against the Earth, which is on the negotiating table. The Soviet draft caused considerable interest and was broadly commented upon by the delegations.

CD/PV.262
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(Mr. Middleton, United Kingdom)

Similar considerations apply to the procedural debate on outer space, where although we have agreed in principle to form an ad hoc committee we are still caught up in arguments over its precise terms of reference. Once again it is the word "negotiation" which causes the difficulty: once again it is the attempt to enter into negotiations before we know what we are going to negotiate on and the attempt to resolve fundamental differences of approach within the terms of a mandate which prevents us dealing with the substance of the question. We believe that the proposals put forward by western States form a sound basis on which work might begin.

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(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

The biggest disappointment for us has been the lack of success of the consultations relating to the mandate of a subsidiary body on the item of our agenda entitled "prevention of an arms race in outer space". The delegation of France attaches the greatest importance to this question and its consideration by our Conference. Although we still have an open-minded attitude towards the mandate in question, we are of the opinion that the formula worked out by the contact group would, together, if necessary, with an explanatory statement by the President, make it possible to do the necessary exploratory work in such a complex area; such work would, moreover, probably have taken up all the time set aside for an ad hoc committee at the current session. We deeply regret the fact that a group of delegations objected to an arrangement which would have made it possible for the work to begin.

In the first statement it made in plenary, the delegation of France said that it would be wiser at once to devote to essentially preparatory work the time we risk losing in a possibly fruitless discussion in an effort to attain a more ambitious mandate. We are sorry that we were right, but we still hope that a solution may be found during the summer session.

Mr. DUBEY (India):

I intend today to speak on agenda item 5, Prevention of an arms race in outer space. The perils of the extension of the arms race into outer space were clearly seen at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. The Final Document that emerged from that session called for appropriate international negotiations in order to prevent such an arms race. It took four years after that to get an item on this subject included on the agenda of the then Committee on Disarmament. And during the last two years that this item has been on the agenda, in spite of the overwhelming desire of the international community, reflected in various General Assembly resolutions, to commence negotiations on this subject with a view to reaching an agreement or agreements, this body has not been able to commence any work at all on this crucial issue. During this period, the situation on the ground with regard to the arms race in outer space, has undergone a rapid and alarming transformation. Developments of catastrophic implications for the fate of mankind are taking place in this field. And, yet, the Conference on Disarmament remains paralysed for want of a mandate for the ad hoc committee to be set up to discuss this subject.

Some two thousand years ago, there was a king in Italy who was fiddling while Rome was burning. Today, there are forty distinguished representatives of sovereign governments members of the Conference on Disarmament and entrusted with perhaps the gravest responsibility of modern times, quibbling over a mandate for their work on this subject while outer space is on its way to being militarized to the point of saturation. The difference, however, is that whereas in spite of the Roman king's fiddling, the city of Rome survived, the consequences of our quibbling might very well deny the human race the last chance of its survival.

(Mr. Dubey, India)

There is more than adequate evidence to show that the militarization of outer space has already begun in a big way, and that if unchecked, it is soon going to acquire unmanageable and uncontrollable proportions. While it is true that since its very inception in the 1950s, advance in space technology has contributed to enhancing the force, accuracy and sophistication of the weapon systems of the nuclear-weapon Powers, the last few years have seen the development of directly and clearly identifiable military activities born out of space technology. What is more is that this increasing military orientation of space technology has led to the development of the war machines of the super-Powers containing some of the most dangerous weapon systems, such as the thermo-nuclear warheads, the strategic and intermediate-range missiles and bombers and the space-based means to manipulate a total planetary war. The latest to enter in the field are the anti-satellite weapons and the space-based ABM system.

These latest weapons are no longer confined to science fiction; they are fast becoming a reality. Pronouncements have been made at the highest level indicating intentions to develop these weapons. Sizeable amounts of resources running into billions of dollars have been allocated for the purpose of research and development of these weapons. One of the ASAT systems is already in place, whereas tests have been carried out for the development of a more sophisticated one. The repeated attempt to find loopholes in the existing legal instruments in order to go ahead with the development of these weapons is yet another proof, if proof is needed. Moreover we find that already the language of rationalization so far associated with the nuclear-arms race based on the doctrine of parity or deterrence, has begun to be used in the context of the arms race in outer space also. A highly placed official of one of the super-Powers has recently stated that his Government has decided to develop its ASAT system because the other side is also engaged in the race, making it necessary for his country to catch up and deny the other side unilateral control of outer space.

Against this background it is naive to believe that the programme already launched will remain confined to the stage of research and development. Technological developments of military significance have a momentum of their own that creates a forward drive for the deployment of the weapons once they become technically feasible. The technological problems that remain to be solved also do not constitute an insurmountable hurdle because the past experience of the development of sophisticated weapon systems have shown that given the commitment of Governments, such problems can be overcome and also because it has been publicly stated that these weapon systems are worth developing even if it may not be possible to solve all the technological problems.

It is, therefore, not too soon to examine the serious implications of these new weapon systems and explain these implications to the people of the world. It is my intention to devote most of the remaining part of my statement to this purpose.

A relatively less serious, but more talked about, implication of the deployment of these systems is that it will render the doctrine of deterrence redundant, and would on the whole have a destabilizing effect on the international security system. Many of us here would not shed tears on account of this

(Mr. Dubey, India)

consequence because of our belief that nuclear deterrence provides no stability at all and that, on the other hand, much to the contrary, by virtue of being the principal justification of the nuclear-arms race, it has already created a situation of extreme instability. The use of the word "stability" in the current inherently unstable situation is a cruel joke. Can one really think of security or stability in the presence of the massive and ever-mounting accumulation of nuclear weapons?

There is also a concern about the development of these new weapon systems resulting in a decoupling of the security of the alliance partners and rendering impotent and obsolete the nuclear deterrence systems of the nuclear-weapon Powers among these nations. It is also feared that no ABM protection will be able to save Europe — either Eastern or Western countries — from the devastations of a nuclear war with low flying Cruise missiles, short-range missiles, tactical nuclear weapons dropped from aircraft or used as artillery munition. In response to these concerns, assurances have been given in recent weeks that the new weapons system will be so designed as to deal not only with intercontinental missiles, but also with tactical missiles and other nuclear or conventional missiles which might be used in the European theatre.

There are, however, more serious implications of the development of these weapons which are less talked about. If the present trend is not reversed and the development of these weapons is not banned, by far the gravest consequence will be "total armament", culminating in a "total" nuclear holocaust. There is no justification for the claim that the possession of ABM system by the two super-Powers will make nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete. These weapon systems will make the world more dangerous than any weapon has hitherto done.

For it is just not true that these weapons are merely defensive. The fact is that they can neither remain merely defensive nor fully defend. In this context, the use of the term "Star Wars" in relation to the development of beam weapons is dangerously misleading. This term erroneously underlines the exotic nature of these weapons and seeks to convey a sense of remoteness about the impact of these weapons. The fact is that what happens in outer space is intimately connected with our fate on Earth. The use of the new ABM weapon system would not trigger a Stellar War, light years away from our planet, but a war on this very good Earth. In fact, even with the present-day technology, it would be only a matter of hours before a war in outer space would turn into a holocaust on Earth.

These so-called defensive weapons will, at the same time, be offensive, or weapons of first strike. This is clear from the fact that laser and particle beams can not only intercept and destroy missiles in flight, but also have the potentiality of destroying them in their silos. There is absolutely no guarantee that these dual-purpose weapons will remain only defensive.

Moreover, these weapon systems will open the floodgates of unprecedented and potentially uncontrollable arms race both in the outer space and on Earth. The development and deployment of an ABM system by one super-Power would naturally be sought to be matched by the other super-Power. Even the other

(Mr. Dubey, India)

nuclear-weapon Powers, finding that their independent nuclear deterrence has been rendered obsolete, may, either singly or jointly, go in for their own ABM system, irrespective of the cost it may involve.

Moreover, in spite of the hundreds of billions of dollars to be spent on them, the new weapon systems will not provide full protection. And to quote the words of the Italian Nobel laureate, Eugenio Montale, in a somewhat different context, it is not only the small fishes that would escape from the net. As already pointed out, some categories of missiles, such as the ground-hugging Cruise missiles and Stealth bombers are unlikely to come within the targets of the new ABM weapon system. Taking into account even the lowest percentage of leakage, enough nuclear weapons will escape the ABM weapons to reach their targets and wreak havoc with human civilization. Moreover, the new system would be vulnerable to counter-measures which can acquire a variety of forms. In spite of these loopholes, it is sought to justify the development of these weapons on the cynical ground that it would destroy the first-strike capability of the other side to the maximum extent possible and impose on it an intolerable financial and material burden in the process of developing its own ABM system.

Moreover, there are strong reasons to believe that the development and acquisition of these new weapon systems will trigger nuclear war in the process. Taking the ASAT system first, the destruction of an adversary's satellite is not an event lost in the wilderness of outer space. It would be an attack on one of the most advanced components of the war machine of the other side which will most likely provoke retaliation.

As regards the new ABM system, a very dangerous situation will arise when one of the super-Powers is able to deploy its system and the other is still in the process of catching up — a situation which may prevail for a long time. One can visualise two scenarios in that event. In the first scenario, the former may decide that it can take out the missile force of the other side in a first strike and it can protect its own force from retaliation. The new ABM technology thus makes recourse to nuclear weapons relatively easier and safer for the Power enjoying superiority in this field. In the second scenario, the latter super-Power which has still not caught up, may be provoked into a panicky pre-emptive nuclear attack.

When both the super-Powers deploy their own space-based ABM systems, it will fundamentally change the entire international security situation and international power relations. The world will revert to the bi-polar era of the early 50s under conditions aggravated by the immense increase in the force and efficiency of the weapon systems. The reversal to the strategic bipolarity of the world will have such serious consequences as much strengthened technological, economic and political hegemony, reducing all other nations to security dependence, resorting to limited or protracted nuclear war in localized theatres far from any worry that such wars would engulf their own territories, and even encourgement to surrogate Powers to develop their own nuclear weapons to be used for the strategic purpose of the super-Powers. Disarmament will be the first casualty in such a situation.

(Mr. Dubey, India)

Finally, the basic motives which will lead the super-Powers or other technologically advanced nations to develop the new weapon systems and the attitude that the possession of these systems would foster, will be antithetical to the objective of the establishment of a new international economic or political order. The whole attitude behind such an arms race is that of gaining absolute power and dominance irrespective of the price that is to be paid for it. Such an attitude militates against the spirit of co-operation for equity, justice and fair play. This will change the very character of the North-South dialogue and other global negotiations.

Considering the colossal resource implications of these weapon systems, their competitive developments might very well shatter the very foundations of the world economy. No type of weapons and no field of their application will be as resources-consuming as the development and deployment of weapons in outer space. The estimates for the development of a complete new ABM system by one super-Power vary from 120 to 500 billion dollars. The current world economic problems will be greatly multiplied and aggravated if the massive resources required for the development of the new space weapon systems are to be mobilized. Moreover, the diversion of skilled manpower and material resources involved in the process would have a crippling effect on activities in the social and economic sectors. This may very well result in a setback for the recovery process, a continued stagnation of the economies of the advanced countries, or at best their just limping forward during the remaining part of this century. The impact of these developments on the already beleaguered economies of developing countries would indeed be devastating. Such a bleak economic prospect may frustrate the very purpose — gaining a position of absolute dominance and hegemony — for the attainment of which these weapons are being developed.

In an article in "Le Monde" of 27 March 1984, the French journalist Michel Tatu has quoted Mr. Keyworth, Scientific Adviser to the White House and a supporter of the new ABM system, as having said: "It is difficult to have stability under conditions of parity". From there to say that the programme for developing ABM system will permit the establishment of a superiority is but a small step. On the other hand, when an exhortation for developing the new weapons system was given at the highest level by the United States Government early last year, the response of the USSR, again at the highest level, was: "All attempts at achieving military superiority over the USSR are futile. The Soviet Union will never allow them to succeed". The net result is going to be, as in the case of the nuclear-arms race, neither superiority nor parity, but a new level of escalation of the arms race, both in outer space and on Earth, with all the grave implications which I have tried to outline.

A key question before this Conference is: Are these weapons verifiable, and if not, is it feasible to ban them? The expert opinion on whether the control or elimination of these weapon systems is verifiable or not is by no means unanimous. For example, the National Council of the Federation of American Scientists has stated in its November 1983 report that "further deployment and testing of USSR's ASAT system will be easily verifiable. If there is a verification problem, it is with the far more sophisticated United States system".

(Mr. Dubey, India)

On the other hand, some experts have stated that the more sophisticated United States system is easier to verify. Another expert view is that an absolute ban, including the development of ASAT systems, would certainly pose verification problems, but such a ban is not critical. The banning of testing and deployment could really be monitored and will achieve the key objectives of preventing the further development and proliferation of these weapons.

In any event, the way military technology, including that for space-weapon systems, is developing, most of the new weapon systems are likely to become unverifiable sooner or later. According to one expert opinion, the new arms will be based on a technology that has been miniaturized to an extent which will not make them amenable to verification. To develop weapon systems which could beat verification has now become a principal challenge of the nations engaged in the arms race in the mistaken notion of seeking security by this means.

What is going to happen in that event? Will there be no arms limitation or disarmament simply because such measures cannot be verified? In the opinion of my delegation, that will only demonstrate how mistaken this absolute emphasis on verification has been and how this has been used as a pretext for not engaging in serious and genuine negotiations for halting and reversing the nuclear-arms race and now the arms race in outer space.

When we take all the implications of the recent developments into account, the conclusion is obvious, and it is that the present is the moment to act. If we can succeed in urgently negotiating an agreement or agreements, we will have prohibited the newest round of build-up of futuristic weapons which will take us to a point of no return. We should not be misled by the argument that there is no urgency because the new weapon systems are still at the phase of development and research. It is precisely at this phase that it will be feasible for us to ban this new arms race. If we miss this opportunity, these weapons will already become another frightening reality of our life and may be so integrated with the weapon systems as a whole and with the security doctrines of the powers possessing these weapons that negotiations for controlling or banning them will become as intractable and frustrating as the negotiations on nuclear disarmament. In fact, in some respects, particularly in the case of the ASAT system, it already seems to have reached that hopeless stage.

In such a situation how can we afford the luxury of a non-negotiating mandate for an ad hoc committee on this subject? How can any of us, in all honesty and sincerity, suggest that we should be content with merely identifying those space-weapon systems which could have a destabilizing effect, or the issues relevant to the prevention of an arms race in the outer space, or by analysing the lacunae in the existing international agreements having a bearing on the arms race in outer space, or adopt a progressive approach starting first with the question of the immunity of satellites and later on going to new weapon systems? The latter suggestion could have been acceptable when it was made in the early 1960s, but not now. As regards our making an analysis of the existing relevant international treaties as a point of departure, such an exercise could have been of some value a few years ago, but not today. We now know that in spite of these treaties, the new weapon systems are being developed and tested. Our first and foremost task is to reverse this trend.

(Mr. Dubey, India)

All the conditions for starting serious negotiations on this subject are present. There are first of all the grave implications of the recent developments staring at our face. These developments have taken place in spite of and by means of a transgression of the existing legal regimes. Nothing short of a new regime will do in these circumstances.

There is also a draft treaty submitted by the USSR on the subject. Practically every delegation which has commented on this draft treaty has drawn our attention to its positive features and the tremendous improvement that it represents over the proposals submitted by the USSR on the same subject in 1981. Its provisions for banning not only the deployment of space-based weapons but also their testing and development, banning new anti-satellite systems and the elimination of the existing ones, and for verification are its particularly welcome features. Some questions have been asked about the adequacy of its provisions on verification. We have, here, the assurance of the leader of the USSR delegation that these provisions are negotiable with a view to being elaborated and improved upon. Draft legal instruments are not supposed to be only generally commented upon in the plenary statements in this Conference; the whole purpose of submitting them is to take them up as a basis for serious negotiation.

Since the dawning of the space era, we have had occasions to exult in successive human achievements in the conquest of outer space. In this we have shared with the nationals of the countries concerned, their excitement at each successful mission of the United States Space Shuttles, the USSR's Salyut and Soyuz, and the European Space Agency's Ariane, as though these were our own achievements. Very recently, our whole nation became, through the television network, an active participant in the glory of the achievements in outer space of two Soviet cosmonauts and the first Indian cosmonaut, Rakesh Sharma.

We, therefore, shudder even to think about, let alone accept the fact of, these great adventures of the human spirit being turned to use for destructive purposes, having the potentiality of triggering a nuclear holocaust. We urge with all the force and conviction at our command that we must arrest this trend and prevent the development of these space weapons. We must without further delay commence negotiations for elaborating a new instrument, or instruments, the need for which is established beyond any shred of doubt. Space technology fortunately does not as yet carry the stigma of a Hiroshima, and the world still cherishes Yuri Gagarin's first space exploration and Neil Armstrong's great leap for mankind. By arresting the militarization of outer space and preventing the arms race there, not only will we be able to pull the human race at least a few inches away from the brink of disaster, but also we will contribute to disarmament and to Man's continued exploration of the peaceful potentialities of outer space.

(Mr. Beesley, Canada)

I must now address an issue whose importance and urgency can hardly be over-emphasized. I refer to the question of arms control and outer space.

We have viewed with considerable apprehension and regret the apparent inability of the Conference on Disarmament to come to grips with the very real and pressing problems of arms control and outer space, an issue with a potential for seriously destabilizing effects, not to mention the possible financial outlays of almost unimaginable dimensions. It would be unproductive, as we see it, to attempt to attribute responsibility for lack of movement in this issue. The fact is that no ad hoc working group was established last year and we have not yet been able to agree on the creation of a subsidiary body at the current session. Let me suggest that, as in the case of our goal of a nuclear test ban, we use the experience gained in other areas of negotiation to recognize the essentials required. We are facing an almost unique situation in that this Conference is being offered an opportunity -- and a challenge -- to tackle a new, substantive and vital issue. No matter what the scope of the mandate agreed to, initially, surely no one would deny that certain basic research is required. It is not unreasonable to assume that a survey of existing treaties and international law as it pertains to the subject is a necessary first step. It follows that the definitional aspects also constitute basic and essential elements which must be addressed at the outset.

I suggest therefore that we can and should agree immediately to the format of an ad hoc committee to take up these aspects and if possible other aspects of the outer space issue. If past experience is an example, there is more than enough work to occupy an ad hoc committee with such a mandate for the remainder of the summer part of the session. In any case, upon the successful and, we hope, speedy fulfilment of this initial mandate, the Conference could then move to other and more detailed consequential aspects of the issue.

In case there is any doubt as to where Canada stands on this matter, I would remind the Conference that Prime Minister Trudeau at the second special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in June 1982, urged the international community to undertake the negotiation of a treaty to ban weapons for use in outer space. This remains one of the most important Canadian arms control objectives. Indeed, Canada was one of the first delegations to table, in this Conference, a substantive working paper on the subject in 1982. That paper dealt with the stabilizing and destabilizing features of systems in space. Our message then was that in dealing with the outer space issue, it would be necessary to consider, with all due deliberation, the over-all net effects on a system-by-system basis. For example, the arms control aspects of reconnaissance satellites might well outweigh their targeting capabilities.

(Mr. Beesley, Canada)

Since then, however, the Prime Minister stated in the House of Commons on 9 February 1984 his intention to circulate in the Conference on Disarmament a proposal to ban high-altitude anti-satellite systems. The Canadian Government has now initiated a number of long-range studies on certain aspects of the outer space issue. It is our intention to contribute in an innovative manner to the deliberations of the proposed ad hoc committee, making use of the resultant research. We propose to deal with outer space as a whole as well as specific aspects related to low and high altitude. The distinction between low and high altitude is one which we believe merits particular attention, and is one which Prime Minister Trudeau drew attention to in a speech in Montreal last November in relation to ASATs. We intend, at an appropriate stage, to contribute a number of working papers which will provide a more detailed discussion of the approach, particularly as it pertains to high altitudes.

Mr. SUTOWARDOYO (Indonesia):

Several speakers have given us the benefit of their analysis of the situation or explained the philosophy behind disarmament negotiations, telling us if not who are to blame, then what not to expect or why we should not persist in this or that course or how we should proceed in order to be constructive. If you asked me, Mr. President, I should say that in my simple and still confused mind, I tend to agree with most if not all of them. I tend to agree because, I must confess, I have difficulty detecting any flaw in their reasoning. Their rationality is, so to say, unassailable.

(Mr. Sutowardoyo, Indonesia)

But then, if I act accordingly and take a position which leads to acceptance of, or resignation to, what would amount to inaction on most of what to my delegation and many other delegations, notably of the Group of 21, constitute high priority items on our agenda, I will have trouble with my conscience, because it would imply recognizing that the overwhelming majority of the world's population behind the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and the various General Assembly resolutions which guide our work had been wrong.

So here I feel I must sound a warning against "rationalism", or "excessive rationalism" if you like, by which I mean the attitude of taking what is rational -- or, more correctly stated, given man's limited faculty, what may appear to be rational at any given time, including the present, for instance -- as the ultimate truth and of dismissing anything else as being not worthy of further consideration.

Perhaps I can make myself clear by citing this piece of ancient wisdom from my country. One single thing, for instance, something that we do which may be disturbing to other people, may draw different reactions from different people even though the message they want to get across to us is actually the same. A man of instruction may come to us and tell us that what we are doing is wrong. He may even tell us the reason why it is wrong. A less educated man may just call on us to stop what we are doing. Another man of still less instruction will probably get angry and heap abuse on us.

The reactions of the three different people are different, but what all of them want of us is the same. It is up to us how to respond. A wise man, according to the ancient teaching, will not return the third man's anger, will not ignore the second, or fail to give heed to the first. Irrespective of how the case is presented to him, on the substance of the issue, he will respond in the same manner. He will do what is reasonably expected of him, that is, stop what he is doing.

So much for this piece of Oriental wisdom. The point I want to make is that lack of sufficient knowledge and or experience on the part of some of our members on some subject matters should not be a valid reason for some other members to hold up discussions or to prevent negotiations altogether on that particular subject.

In my delegation's view, contrary to what has been alluded to in this Chamber, the process of learning, if it ever comes to that, can take place at the same time as the process of discussion and negotiation. This view, of course, predicates a readiness to acquire the necessary knowledge in order to be able to take part in the processes if not intelligently then at least reasonably, and certainly with the best of intentions to be constructive. Another point, a corollary to what I have tried to explain, is that one should keep an open mind. One must always be ready to try to see other people's viewpoints, to recognize any merit one may find in their arguments and to change one's own point of view accordingly whenever subsequent events or a new development in human comprehension prove the other party's view to be the correct one.

An open mind, realism and idealism are necessary requisites for fruitful discussion. In the light of the present state of our deliberations, and disarmament negotiations in general, I should say that a heavy dose of idealism is what is particularly needed at present. I am still realistic enough not to expect that everybody could be induced to behave in consonance with the spirit of one other piece of Oriental wisdom which says that truth can be arrived at through the performance of deeds involving self-sacrifice.

However, in this connection, I cannot help being reminded of the slogan much employed by peace demonstrators for many years exhorting that "peace be given a chance",

(Mr. Sutowardoyo, Indonesia)

implying that some "sacrifice" should be made, in the form of what may appear as "less security", in order to ensure lasting peace. The same spirit, I would surmise, must have more or less inspired the then Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Harold MacMillan, who said, when commenting on the still uncompleted comprehensive test ban treaty in 1959, "We ought to take risks for so great a prize".

In the light of the present situation in which, as has been alluded to in this Chamber, the opportunity still existing at the moment to halt the inexorable slide of the world towards holocaust may be the last, and if not now seized may never come back again, and as there is no better alternative, would not such "risk-taking" prove to be realistic after all, and rational too?

On the items of our agenda, I will spare the Conference a restatement of my delegation's well-known position. Suffice it for me to say that on all those eight items the position of my delegation, as explained by my predecessor in last year's session, remains unchanged. Moreover, on such subjects as the comprehensive test ban, prevention of nuclear war and related matters, cessation of the nuclear-arms race and nuclear disarmament, and prevention of an arms race in outer space, other speakers of the Group of 21 have stated our common views with greater eloquence and clarity than I would ever dare hope to be able to do. My delegation fully supports the position of the Group of 21, on those and other items as elucidated by its spokesmen, including the demand for the establishment of the relevant ad hoc committees, which must be given adequate mandates.

(Mr. Abe, Japan)

Finally, I would like to touch briefly upon the question of prevention of an arms race in outer space. Outer space, which we may call the last remaining frontier for mankind, has infinite potentiality as a stage for our future activities. As a country promoting various projects for the peaceful use of outer space, Japan is keenly interested in the prevention of an arms race in it. I hope that in this field, too, a study in concrete terms will be made at the Conference on Disarmament. To that end, also, it is desirable that the United States and the Soviet Union both take a positive stance.

(Mr. Vidas, Yugoslavia)

The Yugoslav delegation has repeatedly pointed out that the prevention of an arms race in outer space has acquired particular urgency. Today we are even more confirmed in our conviction that urgent steps are needed to prevent the process of militarization of outer space from assuming irreversible proportions. The contribution that could be made by the Conference in the consideration of this question through an ad hoc committee, which should be set up as early as possible, is both timely and indispensable. The first task, however, should be to discontinue immediately any existing plans and programmes to militarize outer space. Instead of carrying on discussion on who might or might not be in possession of sophisticated weapons systems in outer space, it is indispensable for the respective Governments to announce publicly and as soon as possible their political decisions not to develop such systems and to assume, as a first step, the obligation not to use the existing ones, if any, under any conditions. A second urgent step immediately following the above decision would be the negotiation and adoption of a verifiable agreement between the Governments concerned on the dismantling or removal of such systems. No protracted negotiations are necessary to achieve the foregoing because what is at stake are the political decisions of Governments to put an immediate stop to the new arms race in outer space, with its unforeseeable consequences for humanity. After this indispensable initial step, the Conference, as an appropriate forum, could undertake the preparation of adequate instruments.

(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

Further tasks await us in the days ahead: the resumption of consultations concerning the establishment of subsidiary bodies in relation to other items on our agenda and the definition of their terms of reference. Among those items, there is one to which the French Government attaches major importance, namely, the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

The French delegation, acting on instructions from its Government, would like today to set out France's views on this matter. It has already referred on several occasions to the problems of the military use of space and last year devoted a working paper, CD/375, dated 14 April 1983, to the subject.

The French delegation has also taken note with the greatest interest of the positions and ideas expressed by other delegations. It remarks the importance and interest which the international community now attaches to this question.

I should now like to explain:

Why my Governments feels it necessary to set out today, on the occasion of the resumption of our session, its over-all position on these problems;

What are its concerns in connection both with the aspects relating to the deployment of anti-satellite systems and with the prospects of the development of anti-missile defense systems.

France is worried about the new turn, whether as regards anti-missile systems or as regards anti-satellite devices, that competition for the military use of space is likely to take. Anti-missile systems and anti-satellite devices alike eventually entail serious risks of destabilization because of the scope of the efforts that the USSR or the United States have undertaken or are preparing to undertake. Such a development would naturally have direct implications for France, for her security and for that of Europe. It would also affect the balance of East-West relations and international security. It is therefore of relevance to the entire international community, if only because of its impact upon the prospects for co-operation in developing the peaceful uses of outer space to which France remains deeply attached.

International opinion is justifiably disturbed at such developments, which seem to introduce a new and dangerous dimension into the arms race. It is important to assert that they do not constitute the only possible outcome in this respect and that there is an alternative in the form of negotiations with a view to specific and verifiable results.

If we have chosen to take a stand today in order to express as clearly as possible the conclusions we have reached, it is because there is a consensus that the Conference on Disarmament is the appropriate multilateral forum. Such an approach naturally does not preclude direct contacts between the United States and the USSR. t the recent ministerial session of the Atlantic Alliance, on 31 May last, France,

(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

like its allies — and I quote the communiqués — welcomed "the United States willingness to discuss with the Soviet Union programmes of research on strategic defence".

Whether it be with regard to the limitation of anti-satellite systems or to that of anti-missile systems, we consider that appropriate contacts between those two countries should be encouraged. The question is none the less of concern to all the countries in the world, and the Conference on Disarmament, which is representative of the entire international community, is therefore the appropriate body for its discussion.

I shall now turn to the second point: what are France's thoughts and proposals?

Firstly, the prospect of the development of new anti-ballistic missile technologies is disturbing in several respects.

Deterrence, which has played a vital role in the maintenance of peace in Europe, is based on the maintenance, in the face of an attack, of an assured strike-back capability. The various technological developments notwithstanding, it has so far been possible to maintain such a capacity.

But nowadays France, like the entire international community, is inevitably disturbed at the appearance of new technologies that might jeopardize the stability — and hence the peace — that has so far resulted from the very high degree of invulnerability of the means for nuclear second strikes and from the direct control of those means by the political authorities.

A situation in which each of the two main Powers sought to render its territory totally invulnerable, that is to evade all second strikes — without, incidentally, being at all sure of success in that respect — would be fraught with danger.

On the one hand, the mere announcement of an intention to press ahead with the development of such systems would itself constitute an incitement to the revival of the offensive arms race: each Power would seek to saturate the anti-ballistic missile systems planned by the other and to multiply its non-ballistic delivery vehicles (such as cruise missiles).

Hence, far from promoting the reduction of offensive systems, the prospect of the deployment of new defensive systems is likely to lead to contrary developments.

On the other hand, the devices in question, some of which would be automatic, might, for reasons having to do with the technologies involved, uncontrollably replace political decision-making.

The substantial research programmes in question have so far developed on each side without infringing the provisions of the existing international agreements, notably the United States-Soviet treaty on anti-ballastic missile systems that was concluded in 1972. They are nevertheless of such a kind as to create, henceforth, a momentum that would be contrary to the restoration of strategic balances at the lowest possible level.

That is why the French Government is concerned at the efforts undertaken both by the United States and by the USSR to hasten the development of these new anti-ballastic missile systems.

(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

Secondly, the French Government would like the new and future anti-ballistic technology to be the subject of serious negotiation with a view to reaching agreement on verifiable limits that would come into effect before irreversible developments have occurred.

All the countries of the world have a common interest in seeing the restoration and maintenance of the strategic balance, followed by the reduction of the level of armaments and, therefore, to see the successful conclusion of the bilateral negotiations initiated between the United States and the USSR.

That interest is, of course, shared by France, too. My country confirmed last September, before the United Nations General Assembly, the conditions under which it, in its turn, would be able to participate in the efforts to reduce nuclear weapons; it emphasized the vital importance of maintaining a limit on ABM systems.

To return to the past, France paid tribute to the effort and reciprocal limitation that characterized the bilateral United States-Soviet treaty of 1972 on anti-ballistic missile systems, even though that document permits the retention, in each country, of a not inconsiderable capacity for whose modernization it provides.

Further, France, as a party to the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, is very anxious that it should be observed. But, as the President of the Republic pointed out in his statement to the thirty-eighth United Nations General Assembly, that treaty provides only a partial response to the questions raised by the development of space technologies, since it does not prohibit the permanent stationing of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.

Thirdly, France proposes that all the countries concerned, and first and foremost the United States and the USSR, should engage in a genuine multilateral dialogue with a view to the duly monitored limitation of new anti-ballistic technologies.

In view of the interaction between anti-satellite systems and ABM systems, France believes that it is the resultant whole that should be the subject of thorough examination.

It is already unrealistic even now, and it would not necessarily be desirable, to fix as the objective the complete demilitarization of space. It is, however, desirable and possible to achieve undertakings that would have the following features:

They would be limited, having as their objective the forestalling of destabilizing military developments without affecting the military activities that contribute to strategic stability and those that can be of assistance in the monitoring of disarmament agreements, account being taken of the joint nature of certain civil and military uses of space;

They would be progressive, with a view to limiting as a matter of priority those developments that would be likely to create a state of affairs that would be irreversible because it would not lend itself to subsequent verification;

Finally, they would be verifiable; all States must feel confident of respect for the application of such limitations and none must find itself in a position to

(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

benefit from a violation or the evasion of the agreed limits. There is a need to this end for the rapid initiation of an effort at international consultation covering the following points:

(1) The very strict limitation of anti-satellite systems, including in particular the prohibition of all such systems capable of hitting satellites in high orbit, the preservation of which is the most important from the point of view of strategic balance;

(2) The prohibition, for a renewable period of five years, of the deployment on the ground, in the atmosphere or in space of beam-weapon systems capable of destroying ballistic missiles or satellites at great distances and, as the corollary to this, the banning of the corresponding tests;

(3) The strengthening of the present system of declaration as established by the Convention of 14 June 1975 on the registration of space objects, with each State or launching agency undertaking to provide more detailed information on the specifications and purposes of objects launched so as to improve the possibility of verification;

(4) A pledge by the United States and the USSR to extend to the satellites of third countries the provisions concerning the immunity of certain space objects on which they have reached bilateral agreement between themselves.

The action proposed by the French Government therefore aims to preserve the great prospects for progress held out to the international community by the peaceful use of outer space. It also seeks to preserve in the actual military sphere the observation, communication and monitoring tools that contribute to stability and, as a result, to security and peace.

We cannot resign ourselves to the introduction and proliferation in space of new weapons that would create serious risks of destabilization and would trigger a new and ruinous arms race.

ERRATUM TO CD/PV.263

On page 21 of the English version, paragraph 5 should read as follows:

Further, France, as a party to the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, is very anxious that it should be observed. But, as the President of the Republic pointed out in his statement to the thirty-eighth United Nations General Assembly, that treaty provides only a partial response to the questions raised by the development of space technologies, since it only prohibits the permanent stationing of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.

(Mr. Flores Olea, Mexico)

The negotiations to prevent the build-up of arsenals destined for outer space deserve special attention. We consider it essential and extremely urgent that preventive action should be taken by this Conference so as to avoid, from the outset, a climate of mounting uncertainty which could defeat all efforts to arrest the arms race in that region.

Resolution 38/70, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session, reiterated "that the Conference on Disarmament, as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, has a primary role in the negotiation of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, on the prevention of an arms race in all its aspects in outer space".

(Mr. Alessi, Italy)

Agreement on agenda item 5 is possible, as we all know. All that is needed is to want it. By comparison with last April, I see at least two new reasons which should induce us to try to reach a positive conclusion to our consultations and to establish an ad hoc committee on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. First, there is the session of the Committee on Peaceful Uses of Outer Space which is taking place in Vienna at this very time. Owing to a confusion as to competence that we consider deplorable, the question of what is termed the "militarization" of outer space appears as the first item on the agenda for that session. It must be admitted that the lack of any progress in the Conference on Disarmament, the appropriate forum for discussing matters of this kind, is obviously conducive to such regrettable dispersion of effort.

The second reason is the contents of the report to the United States Congress on United States space policy which was distributed to us on 12 April last. I am sure that all delegations found that document as instructive and interesting to read as did my own. It is a document of a global and detailed nature which tackles frankly the salient aspects of the military uses of outer space. It explains, inter alia, the factors which, in the view of the authorities in Washington, stand in the way of the identification of effective measures that could be negotiated at once. Differing opinions are, of course, possible, but they ought to be expressed with a comparable degree of precision. If a discussion of that kind took place within the framework of an ad hoc committee with a general mandate of an exploratory nature, we would be able to perform the important background work that is required. By doing so we would accomplish the first step which, at this stage, can only be the identification of the questions connected with the prevention of an arms race in outer space. A whole session would not suffice for an in-depth discussion of all the issues raised by the report I have mentioned.

The penultimate chapter of this report contains a preliminary evaluation of initiatives taken by the Soviet Union with regard to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. If, within the framework of an ad hoc committee, the Soviet delegation could reply to the comments made in the report, we could do the work which the distinguished representative of India eloquently requested on 26 April last.

Furthermore, some detailed views on the subject were put forward by our distinguished French colleague, Ambassador de La Gorce, on behalf of his Government at our last meeting. They deserve our full attention.

(Mr. Alessi, Italy)

In these circumstances, insistence on the insertion of one word rather than another in a mandate becomes incomprehensible. If it is desired to reach agreements, there is only one way of going about it: engaging in a dialogue. My delegation takes the liberty of appealing once more to the reason and moderation of all so that such a dialogue may commence in this crucial field.

(Mr. Rose, German Democratic Republic)

In view of the unrestrained territorial extension of the arms race by the United States Administration, the worries concerning the fate of outer space have been growing. My delegation dealt with that matter in the plenary during the spring session. Today we would just like to refer to the fact that the last session of the United Nations General Assembly, with only one vote against, adopted resolution 38/70 on the prevention of an arms race in outer space and demanded negotiations on a corresponding treaty with high priority. Time is pressing, much is at stake. The militarization of space would not only mean a quantitative increase of highly sophisticated weapon systems, but it would also undermine existing treaties and generally impede the verification of any future agreements on disarmament. In this way, the arms race would get completely out of control.

Our Conference should immediately set about the elaboration of an agreement. The draft treaty of the Soviet Union, to which the aforementioned resolution 38/70 refers, constitutes a solid basis. This draft does not only identify the relevant matters, but it also offers suggestions for their solution.

(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

The forthcoming weeks will witness once again fresh efforts to set in motion the machinery which will lead to negotiations on the three agenda items I singled out earlier, as well as a fourth which is closely linked with them: the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

We must bear in mind, however, that such exercises cannot be repeated indefinitely. If there are some who are not prepared to negotiate on anything, let them say so unequivocally so that everyone can know it. The rest of us should not deploy our efforts to seeking ways of disguising this situation, and we cannot accept formulas whose sole purpose is to keep us inoffensively entertained and to give the impression that we are doing something when in fact we are not doing anything.

The Conference on Disarmanent is an organ which was set up to negotiate. That is not the only thing it can do, but negotiation is its essential activity, and everything it undertakes should sooner or later be aimed towards negotiation, which must be the final objective of the entire process. The Conference on Disarmament is neither an academic nor a deliberative body, nor a wheel spinning in a vacuum and used up by its own movement.

This is a reality which underlies and is inseparable from all the so-called "procedural" activities, which take up the greater part of our time. The very word "procedural" is misleading. In any event, it is repeatedly mentioned in attempts — which my delegation cannot pass over in silence — to distract attention from the real state of affairs in the Conference. I shall refer to these attempts in the final part of my statement.

At the final plenary meetings in April, some delegations drew up a sort of balance sheet of the work of the Conference. They repeatedly expressed their now traditional lament — which we again heard on Thursday, 14 June — at the lack of progress and the consequent loss of time on matters they referred to as purely procedural, largely attributable to the obstinacy of some delegations, including the Group of 21, in insisting on the inclusion of a specific word in the mandates.

In the first place, as I said earlier, to describe the substance of the lengthy discussions in the various contact groups as "procedural" is misleading and has the connotation of minimizing the importance of the disagreements.

My delegation by no means shares this viewpoint. What has been, and will continue to be, under discussion, is basically whether the Conference on Disarmament is fully carrying out its responsibilities regarding fundamental present-day issues by setting up what is recognized as the appropriate machinery and assigning clear, concrete objectives to it, or whether it will embark on virtually academic analysis not specifically linked with the negotiating function of the Conference.

This is not a secondary or procedural alternative. The Group of 21 has given proof of great willingness to co-operate, and demonstrated extreme flexibility and understanding for certain difficulties which may be faced by some delegations. It is to be expected that specific governments will consider that some particular item is not really ripe for negotiation, or that in any event they are not prepared to negotiate on it for the time being. The Group of 21 has not always insisted on immediate negotiating mandates.

(Mr. Turbanski, Poland)

In another top-priority agenda item, prevention of an arms race in outer space, we join those speakers who have spoken this week, namely, the representatives of France and Italy, in urging that we embark on a serious, concrete dialogue in the framework of an appropriate working body. The General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Konstantin Chernenko, has pointed out recently that given a real interest in finding effective solutions, all issues of this highly complex and dangerous problem could be successfully resolved in the course of the talks proposed by the Soviet Union, both on anti-satellite weapons and on the prevention of the militarization of outer space in general. In view of the test carried out by the United States on 10 June last, this appeal and constructive proposal of the Soviet leader to freeze anti-satellite-weapon tests is unreservedly supported by Poland. For, to quote Konstantin Chernenko: "agreement on these questions must be sought without delay while space weapons have not yet been deployed and while a breakthrough in the race of space weapons, unpredictable in its consequences, has not yet been made. Tomorrow may be too late".

In view of what I have just said, it is urgent to come to negotiations, without deviating this Conference's activities to endless, artificial debates in seeking limited or vague mandates. Such an approach would mean open obstruction of the work of subsidiary bodies. In other words, let me emphasize it again, we are strongly for a sincere, straightforward approach. This refers not only to the prevention of nuclear war but equally to the activities with respect to the nuclear test ban and prevention of an arms race in outer space. Ad hoc committees with negotiating mandates should be established for these agenda items as soon as possible, in accordance with the proposals put forward by numerous delegations of the Group of 21 and socialist countries, including my own delegation. As a matter of fact, any progress in these items would constitute progress in preventing the threat of nuclear war, as all these problems are inseparable.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

For the third year now a vast majority of delegations in this chamber have been calling for specific negotiations on another priority issue of disarmament — that of preventing an arms race in outer space. The Soviet delegation approaches this issue in the belief that the task of preventing militarization of outer space brooks no delay. And it has to be dealt with in a most radical way, before the menacing process of militarizing outer space becomes irreversible. As Comrade K.U. Chernenko pointed out, "on this issue there should be no room for propagandist tricks or for attempts at ensuring some temporary advantages for oneself. To prevent outer space from being militarized is a problem which is of importance to the whole of mankind".

On the basis of this understanding of the importance and urgency of the problem, our country has put forth a whole range of proposals, initiatives and draft documents aimed at preventing the arms race from spreading into outer space.

In particular, the Conference on Disarmament has before it an initiative of the Soviet Union aimed at prohibiting the use of force in outer space and from outer space against the Earth. A Soviet draft treaty on this issue has been referred to the Conference by a decision of the United Nations General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session. The draft provides for a ban on the testing and deployment in outer space of any space-based weapons to be used against targets located on the Earth's surface, in the atmosphere and in outer space as well as for a radical solution of the anti-satellite weapons issue, and contains a number of other important provisions.

A treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in or from outer space would establish the non-use of force in outer space and from outer space as a political and legal regime, while at the same time providing reliable material guarantees for such non-use of force.

In the past three years those opposed to negotiations on preventing the militarization of space have used all kinds of pretexts to block the very possibility of progress towards that goal. But what we heard most often were statements about

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

the "paramount importance" of the anti-satellite systems limitation issue. So what? The provisions contained in the Soviet draft treaty on banning the tests of any anti-satellite systems, on banning the development of new such systems and eliminating those already in existence offer a complete and radical solution to the problem of anti-satellite weapons.

Finally, to facilitate an agreement the Soviet Union already last year declared a unilateral moratorium on the launching of anti-satellite weapons into outer space. In other words, the USSR has taken a unilateral obligation to refrain from launching any kind of anti-satellite weapons into outer space as long as other States, including the United States, also refrain from similar actions. It goes without saying that this obligation extends to test launches of anti-satellite weapons as well.

Veterans of disarmament present in this chamber will agree with me when I say that hardly ever before has the tactical camouflage of a negotiating position been so blatantly disavowed as was the case with the assertion regarding the Soviet Union's "unwillingness" to conduct negotiations on the limitation of anti-satellite systems. As you know, the United States House of Representatives has recently passed an amendment prohibiting the allocation of funds for the testing of United States anti-satellite weapons provided that the Soviet Union and other countries refrain from conducting such tests.

In this connection, the delegation of the Soviet Union would like to use the high rostrum of this Conference to reaffirm the effectiveness of the moratorium declared earlier by the Soviet Union on the stationing in outer space of anti-satellite weapons of any kind. At the same time we regard this moratorium, for all its usefulness, only as a first step towards the complete prohibition of anti-satellite weapons, including the elimination of the systems already in existence. That is why, while continuing to insist on the beginning of a practical discussion at the Conference on Disarmament on the issue of preventing the militarization of outer space, we would like to recall that the USSR is ready immediately to start formal negotiations with the United States to achieve an agreement with regard to anti-satellite systems. This readiness was expressed by Comrade K.U. Chernenko in his answers to questions from the United States journalist J. Kingsbury-Smith, published on 12 June this year. The text of the answers is being distributed today at the request of the Soviet delegation as official document CD/510.

Given a genuine interest in finding effective solutions, any relevant issues, including those of verifying compliance with future agreements limiting the arms race in space, could be successfully resolved to the benefit of all.

(Mr. Boutros Boutros Ghali, Egypt)

The extension of the arms race to outer space represents a new source of anxiety for all mankind. If the world has welcomed the peaceful conquest of space, there is no doubt that today it is profoundly alarmed at the increasing trend — especially on the part of the countries which possess the largest technological capabilities — towards an arms race in outer space and the development of new weapons systems. Whereas stars and planets were sources of poetic inspiration in the past, today they have become a theatre for military rivalry and are about to fall hostage to evil and destructive drives.

Egypt, which has for long done its utmost to draw attention to the necessity of securing outer space against non-peaceful uses, hopes that you will expeditiously initiate negotiations with a view to conclude an agreement or agreements -- as appropriate — to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space.

(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

I cannot conclude this statement without saying a few words about events which occurred in recent days and brought the possibility of negotiations on the military use of outer space closer to hand.

Although the final outcome of this initiative is as yet unknown, my delegation cannot but welcome it, as it would welcome any step which might lead us to a less dangerous and more stable world.

However, my delegation must also raise some questions relating to the process already under way on this subject at the multilateral level. It must be asked what the impact of this attempt to take the issue to the bilateral level will be on the multilateral effort, and even to what extent they are compatible. The prevention of an arms race in outer space is a matter of particular concern to the United Nations, as is reflected in the many resolutions adopted on the subject by the General Assembly, which it is unnecessary to recall. Furthermore, the United Nations has "a central role and primary responsibility in the sphere of disarmament", as stated in the Final Document (paragraph 114).

The single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, the Conference on Disarmament, included a specific item relating to this issue in its agenda in 1982. It has repeatedly been argued -- and recently, with particular emphasis, at the last meeting of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space -- that the sole competent forum for dealing with the prevention of an arms race in space is the Conference on Disarmament.

Over the last two years, intensive efforts have been made to set in motion within the Conference suitable machinery for undertaking the substantive consideration of this problem, with the results which we all know. At the same time, many countries have repeatedly expressed their interest in this issue which affects all States to a greater or lesser extent. On 12 June 1984, the representative of France clearly summed up the situation when he said that the recent developments in this field "have direct implications for France, for her security and for that of Europe. It would also affect the balance of East-West relations and international security. It is therefore of relevance to the entire international community, if only because of its impact upon the prospects for co-operation and developing the peaceful uses of outer space".

(Mr. Carasales, Argentina)

This collective interest explains the frustration felt by many at the uselessness of our efforts to set up an ad hoc committee, efforts brought to a standstill by the difficulties raised by the word "negotiations" in whatever context it is sought to introduce it. The frequent mention of that word and what it implies in the recent bilateral exchanges is something which must be greeted with surprise but at the same time welcomed.

Nobody questions the possibility, and in some cases even the desirability, of direct contacts between the two leading Powers in the field of the use of space, but these should never be to the detriment of the multilateral approach to disarmament, a conquest — if it can be called that — which all claim to support, and which therefore should be preserved and promoted.

It should not be forgotten that the procedures of the Conference on Disarmament are flexible, despite which its possibilities have by no means been fully utilized. At a given stage in the negotiations, specific items and issues may need to be considered temporarily in groups of limited membership. This is feasible within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament, and in our opinion would be compatible with the multilateral approach which was achieved with great effort and which we should maintain and strengthen, as security is indivisible and no problem in this field is exclusively bilateral or can fail to affect the others. It is to be hoped that with regard to this issue as well as others the broad possibilities offered by the Conference on Disarmament will be taken into account and duly utilized by all concerned, and in particular in the field of space, if the current attempts to explore other avenues are not fruitful.

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(Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar, Secretary-General of the United Nations)

We find ourselves in a special situation which is at once a threat and a challenge. The threat arises from the extension of the arms race into the new dimension of outer space and from the emergence of new weapon systems which are difficult to verify. This trend will destabilize still further an already precarious situation, which has its origin in the atmosphere of mutual suspicion prevailing between the two leading nuclear Powers.

The problem of preventing the arms race in outer space has been before this Conference since 1982. With regard to the establishment of a subsidiary body to make a thorough study of the question and undertake negotiations, there are obviously serious differences of approach, which I hope can be overcome. Any effort — bilateral or multilateral — which might lead to the final objective of preventing an arms race in outer space must be encouraged. The General Assembly has assigned an important role to the process of multilateral negotiation in this Conference, and that role should be fulfilled.

Mr. VEJVODA (Czechoslovakia)

Since we are now well into the summer part of our session for this year it would, unfortunately, seem safe to conclude that, apparently, we have again failed to establish subsidiary bodies on such priority items as prevention of nuclear war, nuclear test ban, nuclear disarmament and prevention of an arms race in outer space. Obviously it is not from negligence or lack of attention, since the Conference spent many weeks in consultations and in various contact groups trying to come to an agreement on the wording of mandates for the proposed subsidiary bodies. Unfortunately, this effort was from the beginning doomed to failure since a couple of delegations confronted us with an impossible task to solve -- to provide subsidiary bodies with nice mandates, while at the same time not committing themselves to negotiating on specific measures of disarmament. My delegation fully shares what has been said to this effect by Ambassador Carasales of Argentina in his statement of 19 June. In fact, these seemingly technical and procedural matters are often very good indicators of a Government's approach to a given problem. If there is a readiness on all sides to solve a problem and negotiate on it, terms of reference usually emerge quite naturally and without any difficulty. Experience of past disarmament negotiations fully confirms that. On the other hand, serious problems in establishing mandates undoubtedly indicate, and this is the case in our Conference now, that some countries represented here would like to believe they are not interested in solving the problems we are addressing. I have deliberately said "would like to believe", since it is our firm opinion that if any country is afraid that it would lose something by agreeing on measures to prevent nuclear war, to stop nuclear testing or undertaking gradual nuclear disarmament, then the leaders of that country must be the victims of illusions that are extremely dangerous for the whole international community.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

Perhaps one of the best illustrations in this respect could, in not so distant a future, come to us from beyond the limits of our planet. The arms race has not only intensified recently on the Earth but is threatening finally to penetrate into outer space. This development would have far-reaching consequences which we cannot even foresee now. But it is now already quite clear that, as was stated in the declaration of the Soviet Government of 29 June, "it would substantially raise the risk of the catastrophe of war and undermine the prospects for limitation and reduction of armaments in general".

The rapid development of space technology in recent years has confronted us with a situation which can be compared without exaggeration to a crossroads offering two diametrically opposite directions to follow. We should not have to think too much about which way to choose. It is enough to look at General Assembly resolution 38/70 or to listen carefully to statements pronounced in this room by the delegations from all regional groups. A responsible and realistic approach should prevail over shortsighted considerations of military planners tempted by new technological achievements. It is with deep concern that we notice that the latter approach still plays a decisive role in the formulation of United States policy with respect to outer space. The illusion of the development of an effective strategic defence system based in space is still nourished. The United States public is being generously fed with this illusion, while almost nothing is being said on the possible dangerous destabilizing effects of this programme, the "effectiveness" of which would be first apparent in undermining the existing agreements on the limitation of ABM systems.

This approach goes not only against the vital interests of other States, including the allies of the United States, but is clearly contrary to the interest of the United States itself. Obviously, United States legislators realize that, as was confirmed by the recent vote of the House of Representatives of the United States Congress for an amendment prohibiting appropriations for the tests of the United States anti-satellite weapons in space if the USSR and other countries abstain from carrying out such tests. We see this vote as closely connected with the assumption by the Soviet Union last year of a unilateral commitment not to put anti-satellite weapons in space as long as other States, including the United States, refrain from placing anti-satellite weapons of any type in space, which also covers test-launchings of these weapons. We also welcome the statement by the General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Konstantin Chernenko, of 11 June, that the moratorium announced by the Soviet Union remains in force and that it is regarded only as a first step toward the total prohibition of anti-satellite weapons, including the elimination of such systems already in existence. It was also proposed to the United States to start negotiations with a view to achieving an agreement to this effect.

My delegation would like to stress that the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic supports fully the undertaking of bilateral Soviet-United States negotiations on this question and an early achievement of concrete results of those negotiations. We believe that these negotiations should be started as soon as possible, and their launching should not be complicated by raising other disarmament problems which, for the time being, cannot be solved for well known reasons.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

At today's plenary meeting, the Conference embarks upon the consideration of agenda item 5, prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Today as never before, the question of what must be done in order to eliminate the danger of nuclear catastrophe arises with exceptional acuteness.

The supreme representatives of the States Members of CMEA, meeting recently in Moscow, having expressed their firm conviction that no world problems, including the historic argument between socialism and capitalism, can be solved by military means, resolutely announced that there is no more important task today than the safeguarding of world peace and averting nuclear catastrophe. Priority is attached to ending the arms race, moving to arms reduction and maintaining the military-strategic equilibrium at progressively lower levels.

In this context the leaders of the socialist States also expressed the conviction that, with strict respect of the principle of equality and equal security, the nuclear arms race can be halted and States can embark upon the implementation of genuine nuclear disarmament measures. This requires political will and an honest, equal and constructive dialogue taking account of the security interests of all countries.

The participants in the Moscow meeting reiterated the extremely topical significance of such proposals of the socialist countries as that on the reaching of agreement on a general and complete nuclear test ban; on the prohibition of the militarization of outer space and the use of force in outer space and from outer space against the earth; and on the world-wide prohibition and elimination of chemical weapons. Other exceptionally important proposals include the proposal to conclude a treaty on mutual non-use of armed force and maintenance of peaceful relations between the States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty and the States members of NATO, as well as the Soviet Union's appeal to other nuclear-weapon Powers which have not yet done so to renounce the first use of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

The Mongolian People's Republic, as a peace-loving Asian State, together with the majority of countries of that vast region has consistently advocated and still advocates the preservation of peace and stability, the application of confidence-building measures and the maintenance of good-neighbourly relations among the States of the region. At the same time it is seriously concerned at the aggravation of the situation on the Asian continent owing to aggressive actions of the forces of international imperialism and reaction, which are trying to achieve military superiority by forming a new military and political alliance and by building up militarization and, from a position of strength, attempting to dictate their will to sovereign States.

The Joint Declaration by the Heads of State or Government of six countries — Argentina, Greece, India, Mexico, Sweden and Tanzania — addressed to all nuclear-weapon Powers received broad support in the Mongolian People's Republic. The recent Statement of the Soviet Government on the Joint Declaration was received with satisfaction in our country. Reaffirming the principles upon which its peace-loving foreign policy is founded, the Soviet Union stated that:

Prevention of war must become the main goal, a compulsory standard for the conduct of all nuclear Powers irrespective of the size of their nuclear arsenals;

The nuclear Powers must under no circumstances use nuclear weapons against those States that have no such weapons on their territories;

It is important not to permit any further spread of nuclear weapons to those parts of the world where they do not exist and not to carry the nuclear arms race into new spheres, including outer space.

The question of prevention of the militarization of outer space has become increasingly topical of late. And that is perfectly right and proper.

Under modern conditions, when the latest scientific and technical developments are being widely used in all fields of human activity, the task of maintaining a peaceful outer space and of forestalling the threat of the spread of the arms race to outer space is assuming ever greater significance. There exists a real threat that the near future may see the development and deployment of space weapons which, on the one hand, may create in certain quarters the illusion of obtaining advantage through a first nuclear strike, and, on the other hand, would essentially undermine the possibility of taking immediate steps to prevent an arms race in outer space through international legal instruments, having appropriate verification machinery. To be faced with such developments would be exceptionally dangerous.

We ask ourselves is there a possibility of preventing such dangerous developments? In our view, a real possibility of doing so exists. The important point in this matter is the timely adoption without delay of effective measures to avert the militarization of outer space.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

Proceeding from this premise, the socialist countries consistently strive for the adoption of effective and practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the creation, to that end, of additional barriers in international law. This approach of principle forms the basis of the highly important proposals by the Soviet Union, which in 1981 and 1983 submitted two draft documents, namely, a treaty on the prohibition of stationing weapons of any kind in outer space and a treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from outer space against the earth.

Of exceptional importance to the preservation of universal peace and the peaceful utilization of outer space is the Soviet Union's new constructive proposal to start bilateral negotiations with the United States of America on the prevention of the militarization of outer space and to establish, on a mutual basis, starting from the date of the opening of negotiations, a moratorium on the testing and deployment of space weapons. As is known, as far back as last year the Soviet Union unilaterally assumed the obligation not to place anti-satellite weapons in outer space as long as other States, including the United States of America, refrain from placing in space anti-satellite weapons of any kind.

The new Soviet proposal, in our view, represents a logical continuation of the Soviet Union's principled policy on the prevention of the militarization of outer space. In the declaration by the Soviet Government it is stated: "... weapons of any kind -- conventional, nuclear, laser, particle beam or other -- whether on piloted or non-piloted systems, must not be placed in outer space and stationed there. Space weapons, wherever they may be based, must not be developed, tested or deployed either for anti-missile defence, nor as anti-satellite weapons, nor for use against targets on earth or in the air". The declaration of the Soviet Government states further: "An approach whereby a whole categroy of weapons -- space strike weapons, including anti-satellite and anti-missile space-based systems, as well as all earth-, air-, or sea-based means intended to attack objects in outer space -- would be prohibited and eliminated, would make it possible to ensure reliable verification of the fulfilment of the parties' obligations".

It seems to us that the Soviet Union's new proposal to start negotiations with the United States of America is exceptionally timely under present conditions, when the threat of development of space weapons and of their potential use has sharply increased. We believe that the policy and actions of the present United States Administration in this field are directly connected with this threat. It is in the United States of America that official plans of the development and use of weapon systems have been announced, plans fraught with the danger of the emergence of a new area of the arms race -- outer space -- which is no less dangerous than the nuclear one. After all, the development of weapons intended to strike not only at targets in outer space but also at land, sea and air targets has been proclaimed as one of the main objectives of United States military policy.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

In this connection, the Mongolian delegation notes with concern that the United States Administration has adopted a negative stand on the Soviet Union's proposal, setting preliminary conditions essentially aimed at linking the negotiations on outer space with the consideration of questions of strategic weapons and medium-range nuclear weapons in Europe.

Such an approach can only be viewed as torpedoing the start of important bilateral negotiations on outer space, not to mention the obstructionist line of certain western countries in the matter of organizing multilateral negotiations within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament.

The question of prevention of an arms race in outer space is relatively new in terms of its consideration at the Conference on Disarmament. That does not mean, however, that the holding of specific negotiations on this priority issue can be relegated to the background without any serious grounds for doing so.

That being so, the Mongolian delegation cannot but express its concern at the fact that the start of negotiations and the setting up of an ad hoc committee on agenda item 5 continues to be blocked in this multilateral negotiating body.

Our delegation takes a resolute stand against any attempt, under any pretext whatsoever, to impede the start of practical negotiations at the Conference with a view to the conclusion of an agreement or, respectively, agreements on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. If particular delegations have their own specific ideas or constructive proposals on the substance of the issues as a whole, or on specific separate questions -- for example, the applicability of existing international treaties and agreements in this field -- or, say, if they have certain doubts concerning particular approaches by other delegations, such issues can be considered precisely in the course of negotiations within the framework of the future ad hoc committee on the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Mr. ALESSI (Italy):

In the domain of arms control in outer space, encouraging news reaches us from outside. I refer to reports of the United States acceptance without preconditions of a Soviet call for talks on preventing an arms race in outer space to be held in Vienna. We consider this development a very positive one and hope that a final agreement can be worked out as soon as possible.

Bilateral talks between the two major space Powers seem indispensable in order to advance the task of preventing an arms race in outer space. It is also legitimate to hope that such talks may facilitate parallel progress on other issues of fundamental concern, in particular nuclear disarmament. The Italian Government made known its position in this regard on 3 July, wishing that the Vienna talks "may mark a more constructive phase of international relations leading to a gradual resumption of a dialogue on issues relating to arms control and disarmament".

(Mr. Alessi, Italy)

The prospects of bilateral talks on space issues should reverberate positively on the Conference on Disarmament. In the contrary case, a continuing deadlock on item 5 of our agenda would constitute an ever more striking and unjustifiable contrast.

In addressing this Conference on 10 July, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, stated: "I regard the bilateral process aimed at achieving disarmament as complementary to the main process at the multilateral level. It is therefore important that the efforts of this Conference should be maintained and increased".

We share this view: bilateral and multilateral consideration of these issues should complement each other.

It is reasonable and indeed necessary that the United States and the Soviet Union discuss bilaterally weaponry that only they possess. This obviously should not obscure the magnitude of the interest that all States have in the solution of these problems. Space technology is within the reach of a growing number of countries; an even larger number of countries will benefit, for their own progress, from the peaceful exploration and use of outer space. The international community is anxious and watchful. We have no alternative but to intensify our efforts.

I do not wish to raise today matters of procedure. I am confident that with your recognized ability and experience, Mr. President, you will bring to a positive conclusion the two years of discussions on the creation of a subsidiary body on item 5. The Conference cannot afford to fail again.

I would like to use this plenary session to continue our discussion on substance: in March 1982, my delegation put forward a number of considerations on issues relating to a ban on ASAT systems; we tried to develop such considerations on 21 July 1983; on 27 March 1984 we aired further thoughts against the background of existing international legal instruments and the need to review and assess their implications. The main thrust of those statements was to focus attention on the question of ensuring the immunity of satellites, by prohibiting attacks or activities directed against them.

Those statements provide the necessary terms of reference for today's statement which is devoted to some collateral measures. On the basis of our previous discussions I would venture to say that four main threats in and from outer space could be identified:

(a) physical attack with conventional or nuclear explosives;

(b) collision or physical tampering with manoeuvred spacecraft; hypervelocity projectiles;

(c) directed-energy weapons, in particular lasers;

(d) interference with electromagnetic communication systems in space.

There are in addition technologies and systems designed for purposes other than ASAT, which can give rise to capabilities inherently useful for ASAT purposes.

Discriminating among such systems and technologies, identifying which ones can be constrained or prohibited, and working out reliable procedures for verification, constitute formidable tasks.

(Mr. Alessi, Italy)

We see, therefore, wisdom in considering the adoption, prior to or parallel with more incisive measures of arms control, of collateral steps that would be aimed at increasing confidence, at avoiding provocative or ambiguous actions in space and at helping to ease the way for disarmament negotiations proper.

One such step has been evoked many a time in the past, lately by the distinguished representative of France on 12 June: it would consist in the strengthening and expansion of the 1974 United Nations Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space.

I would like to be more specific on this point: damage to spacecraft by co-orbital approach with a manoeuvred object at orbital velocity (about 8 Km/sec or less) which uses techniques which bear a general resemblance to the rendezvous and docking operations; these latter operations are routinely conducted by some nations and are likely to become more and more important in the peaceful exploitation of outer space. The two kinds of operations can perhaps be distinguished by noting that rendezvous requires a very long time (several orbits) and a very small relative velocity (e.g. a few cm/sec); therefore in the final phase the orbital elements of the two objects would have to be almost equal. The instrumental techniques required in the two cases, however, (infrared sensors, radars or lasers) would be similar and some ambiguity may arise.

On the other hand, collision between spacecraft, especially in the geosynchronous orbit, are a possibility and there is a safety problem for civilian operations as well.

Steps can be taken to make space more secure by agreeing on minimum separation distances for satellites in orbit or in transit to orbit (including those belonging to the same owner). An official statement would be required, beforehand, whenever such a regulation would have to be suspended for justified reasons.

Another positive step would be the prompt communication to an international authority of the full orbital elements of every object launched into space and a more detailed description of its mission on the basis of a standardized reporting instrument. This would involve a modification of the 1974 United Nations Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space. At present, parties to that Convention are free to provide whatever kind of information they wish on their launches, and in the format they wish. The result is that such information is too sketchy and difficult to compare.

Co-operative measures to permit ready verification of orbit and general function could also be envisaged on the basis of article IX of the Outer Space Treaty, which calls for prior consultations on activities that would "cause potentially harmful interference with the activities of other States Parties".

The 1974 Registration Convention provides also, at least in part, a basis for the identification of interest in a space object. The elaboration of a detailed set of principles or circumstances which would identify a space object as one covered by a future arms control agreement would also be of primary importance.

The question of ownership, control, or other elements of interest in and responsibility for a space object is a delicate question to be solved with priority in the appropriate forum, in particular at a time when joint space ventures, including commercial ventures, are becoming more and more numerous.

I have tried today to put forward some ideas that we consider relevant for a better understanding of the complexity of the subject-matter.

The establishment of a subsidiary body remains of the utmost importance and urgency in order to deal with the identification of those aspects which are related to arms control and disarmament and provide a possibility of concrete negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament.

(Mr. Van Schaik, Netherlands)

Mr. President, allow me also to make some observations with regard to the highly important question of preventing an arms race in outer space. This subject could well dominate the debate on our security in the next few decades.

It is therefore proper, indeed imperative, that the international community should give increasing attention to current developments which might not only add a new and costly dimension to the arms race but, even more important, could in addition have far-reaching implications for global stability.

The major space Powers bear a special responsibility and we welcome their recent efforts to reach agreement on a suitable basis for bilateral talks on this subject. Yet, my delegation holds the view that the Conference on Disarmament is the appropriate forum where the international community should discuss this vital question. For this reason we deplore the fact that it has not yet been possible to reach agreement on the text of a mandate of an ad hoc committee on outer space.

A good starting-point for a structured discussion in the Committee would in our view be an analysis of existing international law in order to ascertain to what extent international law already restricts the military use of outer space.

Such an approach allows us, against the background of the ongoing development of military space technologies, to identify loopholes or deficiencies in the existing legal system with respect to outer space. In this connection I wish to recall the statement made by Ambassador Ekéus on 22 March 1984, which rightly draws our attention to a series of questions concerning the interpretation and application of existing agreements. Such an analysis would also be useful for the evaluation of various proposals tabled on the subject.

Although this approach would contribute greatly to a better and clearer understanding of the complex questions, we should not, of course, restrict ourselves to the legal aspects of the issue alone. The clear objective of our discussions remains the adoption of concrete measures to prevent an arms race in outer space.

As part of the consideration of such concrete measures, the Conference on Disarmament should on a priority basis focus attention on the issues raised

(Mr. Van Schaik, Netherlands)

by the development of anti-satellite weapon systems (ASAT), in particular on a prohibition of the testing, deployment and use of specific anti-satellite weapon systems.

We do not underestimate the technical complexities of ASAT arms control and its adequate verification. These factors indeed complicate things. They should not however discourage us from vigorously seeking practical and prgamatic solutions. An agreement which comprehensively bans all means of anti-satellite warfare appears to be impossible. Residual ASAT capacities of certain space systems are amongst the main obstacles. We have to look for a combination of verifiable and co-operative elements in a future agreement, which would prevent anti-satellite warfare from any longer being an effective military option. In the view of the Netherlands, negotiated constraints on ASAT would be greatly preferable to a totally unrestrained ASAT competition.

Discussion on ASAT arms control in the Conference on Disarmament does not preclude bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union as the major space Powers. On the contrary, it may even require such negotiations. Our work in the Conference would greatly benefit from bilateral arrangements. As I said, we hope that it will be possible for the United States and the Soviet Union soon to start outer space negotiations.

Anti-satellite weapons are only one aspect of the burgeoning arms race in outer space.

Intensive research efforts are taking place in the field of ballistic missile defence, including space-based systems. The process could, if carried beyond the present stage of feasibility research, have far-reaching implications for arms control and stability. We therefore very much hope that the United States and the Soviet Union will reach agreement to hold further talks on that subject too.

To summarize, with respect to outer space too, maintenance of peace and stability at much lower levels of armaments, as well as the prevention of developments of a destabilizing nature, remain our basic objectives.

The other day one of our colleagues, Ambassador Beesley, quoted from a recently discovered 17th Century treatise by Grotius, saying that what people had in common was much more important than what divided them. Having had a look at the text in the meantime, I now know that Grotius in fact echoed the words of an Egyptian scholar called Meletius. This early representative of the Group of 21 added that people prefer fighting about words and doctrines instead of acting rightly, because for acting rightly we had to conduct a battle with ourselves. Let us not get submerged in quarrels about words and doctrines, in the "theology of arms control". But let us conduct the battle with ourselves, let us find the right way to act.

(Mr. Birbaum, Austria)

The need to prevent the spreading of the arms competition to outer space is another priority concern which we share with many delegations here. Exploration and use of outer space have been reserved for the benefit and interests of all countries by the Outer Space Treaty. Its peaceful use is already yielding significant results. Satellites used for reconnaissance purposes can contribute to stability and achieve confidence-building effects by verifying compliance with arms-control agreements or diminishing the chances of military surprise moves, thus playing an essential role in the existing arms control set-up.

These gains must be preserved. Building upon them, international co-operation in the peaceful use of space will undoubtedly intensify, in the interest of all countries. In order to protect these common interests, the network of treaties concerning space needs to be strengthened and complemented with a view to preventing the introduction of weapons into space. We hope that the repeated efforts, within this Conference, to tackle this problem will be successful in the near future. The proposals introduced, in this field, by the French delegation on 12 June of this year, commend serious study, as the subject matter calls essentially for multilateral negotiations, even though the solution of some questions in bilateral negotiations would be a welcome achievement.

Mr. ALESSI (Italy) (translated from French): Mr. President, document CD/527, dated 30 July 1984, which has just been circulated, contains a draft mandate for an ad hoc committee on item 5 of our agenda, entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space".

This document is co-sponsored by the delegations of Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States, as well as by my own delegation.

It is on behalf of those delegations that I would like to introduce it briefly today. The draft mandate it contains reflects, rather than the positions of the sponsors, the result of the consultations undertaken throughout this session on

(Mr. Alessi, Italy)

agenda item 5. You will recall that last March the then President of the Conference established different contact groups to discuss the setting up of a number of subsidiary bodies and their mandate. With regard to item 5, the question of a mandate acceptable to all has been explored and discussed down to the last detail. A possibility of reaching a consensus emerged around a "non-paper" prepared in the course of consultations.

Many delegations considered this "non-paper" as an attempt worthy of consideration, as it might reconcile the various requirements. Bearing in mind the importance of the subject and the urgent need to consider the substance of the issue, the Western countries have wished to demonstrate their flexibility and, after serious reflection, accept the text of the "non-paper".

We have reproduced it in document CD/527, so that the results of our collective efforts should not be lost. We remain convinced that this text contains all the necessary elements to enable an ad hoc committee on agenda item 5 to undertake significant, even essential, work. The prospect of future negotiations is linked to the very role of the Conference, emphasized in the text of the first paragraph and reaffirmed in the reminder contained in the second paragraph. The exploratory work is a necessary first stage during which the ad hoc Committee will have to focus on the identification of issues relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, taking into account, as stated in the third paragraph, all existing agreements, existing proposals and future initiatives.

I should also like to recall that during the consultations the possibility was raised of accompanying the adoption of the draft mandate, if necessary, by an interpretative statement by the President of the Conference. The countries on behalf of which I have taken the floor also declared their willingness to give favourable consideration to such a possibility.

I am sure that we are joined by a common objective. We are seeking together the best way of attaining it. The distinguished representative of Algeria, when introducing document CD/329/Rev.2, stated at our last meeting that the establishment of an ad hoc committee with a suitable mandate was the best means available to the Conference to discharge its responsibilities with regard to this agenda item. We share that viewpoint. We have little time left to us before the end of the session. We should be realistic and use it at least to set up the structural framework for our work. I therefore venture on behalf of the co-sponsors to recommend that all delegations give favourable consideration to the proposal contained in document CD/527.

The PRESIDENT (translated from Russian):

These are the fundamental reasons which prevent the start of practical negotiations on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. It is not a question of any lack of a persevering and constructive approach on the part of the President of the Conference or of individual delegations. All their efforts come to grief against the blank wall of the vast programmes for turning outer space into a new area of military confrontation, the plans for unleashing "star wars".

Looking the facts in the face, it would evidently be rash to hope that without any change in these fundamental reasons for the impasse the Conference could achieve any practical progress in its work.

Mr. ERDEMBILEG (Mongolia) (translated from Russian): Mr. President, first of all may I extend to you a warm welcome on assuming the functions of President of the Conference on Disarmament during the month of August and wish you all success in your responsible task at this exceptionally responsible period of our work during the current session.

I should like also to express my sincere gratitude to the delegation of the USSR and to the head of the delegation, Victor Issraelyan, personally for the exceptionally important contribution which he has made to the work of the Conference on Disarmament during the past month.

I should like to submit on behalf of a group of socialist countries a draft mandate for an ad hoc committee on agenda item 5 of the Conference on Disarmament.

As you know, at the beginning of the 1984 session of the Conference a group of socialist States officially submitted a Memorandum contained in document CD/434 of 17 February 1984. This document included the following paragraphs:

"Emphasizing the character of the Conference on Disarmament as a negotiating forum, the group of socialist States expresses concern at the fact that this negotiating body is, in substance, failing to perform its designated function and tending to turn into yet another deliberative body in the disarmament field. The main cause of this abnormal situation, in the socialist countries' view, are attempts to convert the Conference into a forum for academic discussions and to put up a series of preliminary conditions for the holding of negotiations. Such an approach, in the socialist countries' view, runs counter both to the terms of reference provided for the Conference in the Final Document and to its own rules of procedure.

"The group of socialist countries proceeds from the fact that the subsidiary bodies of the Conference on Disarmament, a negotiating forum, must have the possibility to conduct the appropriate negotiations. Only technical groups or groups of governmental experts, mentioned in rule 23 of the rules of procedure, may form an exception.

"The question of the establishment of subsidiary bodies must be solved in a manner organically linked with the elaboration of an appropriate negotiating mandate. An artificial division between solving the question of the establishment of subsidiary bodies and reaching agreement on their mandate merely creates loopholes to conceal the unwillingness of certain States to conduct negotiations."

That is our firm position on the basis of which the socialist countries are submitting the draft terms of reference for the ad hoc committee on agenda item 5, entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space". Document CD/529 has now been distributed to participants in the Conference. It is virtually identical with the draft terms of reference contained in document CD/434.

It is therefore reasonable to suppose that the essential sense and content of this document are well known to participants in the Conference. The socialist countries again appeal to all concerned during the remaining period of the session to set up the Ad Hoc Committee on agenda item 5, in order to conduct negotiations on the conclusion of an agreement or agreements, as appropriate, to prevent an

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

arms race in outer space in all its aspects, taking account of all relevant proposals, including examination of the proposal concerning a treaty on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from space against the Earth. The Ad Hoc Committee will submit its report to the Conference on Disarmament on the results of its work.

Mr. President, I would ask you to take the necessary steps to ensure that the Conference can take a decision on document CD/529 as soon as possible.

In this connection I would like to state once again that the socialist countries support the draft terms of reference of the Group of 21 contained in document CD/329/Rev.2.

(Mr. Hayden, Australia)

The arms-control agreements being observed by the United States and the Soviet Union rely on the national technical means of those two Powers, especially on information-gathering satellites. More than ever, information-gathering satellites make an essential contribution to the stability of the strategic balance between East and West and they do this by providing a basis for confidence in the observance of arms-control agreements which can lead to significant arms reductions. The preservation of that capability is vital to all. It is in fact a necessary prerequisite to arms reduction and disarmament. In this context I note, in particular, the section of the recent French initiative on outer space arms control which calls in part for "prevention of destabilizing military developments without affecting military activities (in space) that contribute to strategic stability, and those which may be instrumental in controlling disarmament agreements".

In similar spirit I would suggest today as an urgent item for the Conference on Disarmament, in its exploration of the issues relevant to arms control in outer space, consideration of the possibility of measures to protect from attack all satellites (early warning, communications and the like) which contribute to the preservation of strategic stability and which can be instrumental in monitoring disarmament agreements. I would also suggest that the same protection be extended to the ground stations which are essential to the operation of these satellites. For the present, I hope that the idea will commend itself to the Conference as a potentially important confidence-building measure. It directly supports the implementation of present arms-control agreements and future disarmament agreements, and above all, it will contribute to the maintenance of stability, until the required disarmament agreements are made and put into effect.

Mr. ERDEMBILEG (Mongolia) (translated from Russian): Mr. President, as you know, at the plenary meeting on 2 August the Mongolian delegation, on behalf of a group of socialist countries, formally submitted document CD/529 which contains a draft mandate for an ad hoc committee on item 5 of the Conference's agenda, entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space".

I requested you then, Mr. President, to have a decision taken as rapidly as possible on the draft mandate. We intended to request you to have a decision taken on it at today's plenary meeting.

This morning, however, I understood from a short conversation with you that you intend to hold consultations on this matter with the Co-ordinators of the groups. The Mongolian delegation is prepared, on behalf of the group of socialist countries, to take part in these consultations. But in the event of the failure of the consultations, the Mongolian delegation requests that the Conference should take the corresponding decision on document CD/529 at the next plenary meeting on 9 August 1984.

Finally, I should like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the secretariat for reissuing the English-language version of document CD/529 for technical reasons.

The PRESIDENT: In view of the statements that we have heard I have to note that there is no consensus at present on the proposal contained in paragraph 7 of document CD/526.

We have concluded our consideration of the proposals made for draft mandates under item 2 on the agenda. I suggest that we now take up those proposals submitted under item 5 entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space". The first proposal before the Conference is contained in document CD/329/Rev.2, submitted by the Group of 21. Is there any objection to this proposal?

I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Italy, Ambassador Alessi.

Mr. ALESSI (Italy) (translated from French): Mr. President, the Group of Western Countries has considered the draft mandate contained in document CD/329/Rev.2 with all the attention it deserves. I regret to have to state that the Group is not in a position to join in a consensus on the document for the reasons which were advanced during the consultations which you and your predecessors have held on this subject as well as in the plenary meetings of the Conference.

Mr. ERDEMBILEG (Mongolia) (translated from Russian): I should like to state on behalf of a group of socialist countries that our Group endorses the ideas contained in document CD/329/Rev.2, submitted by the Group of 21.

Mr. QIAN JIADONG (China) (translated from Chinese): Mr. President, since the commencement of the spring part of this session, the parties concerned have been engaged in prolonged and frequent consultations on the question of establishing a subsidiary body on the prevention of arms race in outer space. The Group of 21 presented, at the outset, its draft mandate, which the Chinese delegation has consistently considered could serve as a basis for reaching agreement. However, because of broad differences of view, it has not been able to break through the deadlock so far, although various solutions have been proposed by some delegations.

(Mr. Qian Jiadong, China)

We are disappointed at this. It is indeed quite ironic, especially considering that the Soviet Union and the United States are talking bombastically about holding bilateral talks in Vienna on the question of outer space, while we here in this forum are unable to establish a subsidiary body on the subject which has been on our agenda for so many years.

As is well known, thanks to the accommodation and the co-operative efforts of the parties, the United Nations General Assembly, in its consideration of this subject last year, succeeded eventually in combining the three proposals into one and adopted resolution 38/70 by an overwhelming majority. This was a great success. We look forward to the development of this co-operative spirit here in this Conference too, so that the Conference may establish the relevant subsidiary bodies soon after the beginning of next year's session in order to start substantive work.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished representative of China for his statement.

If there are no other speakers wishing to take the floor at this point, may I now turn to document CD/529, also submitted under agenda item 5, which contains a proposal made by a group of scoialist States?

Is there any objection to this proposal?

I give the floor to the distinguished representative of Italy.

Mr. ALESSI (Italy) (translated from French): The group of western countries on behalf of which I am taking the floor has examined document CD/529 and does not consider that it provides a basis for an agreement. Therefore, it cannot join in a consensus on this document.

Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): My delegation regrets what has occurred at this session of the Conference on Disarmament, which proves the truth of what the General Assembly stated in the penultimate paragraph of its resolution 38/62 of 15 December 1983. As you will recall, in that resolution the General Assembly deplored the fact that "due to the persistent obstruction of a very small number of its members", the then Committee and now Conference on Disarmament has been unable to initiate the negotiations on items of the utmost urgency and importance which are among the tasks which the General Assembly had in view when it established the Committee on Disarmament in 1978.

Today we have had two further examples: the case of agenda item 5, perhaps the most pressing item at the moment, the prevention of an arms race in outer space, and that of item 2, perhaps the most important item in the long term, cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament. Earlier, there were two others: the case of agenda item 1, nuclear test ban, and that of item 3, prevention of nuclear war. This strengthens my delegation's belief that at the beginning of next year this Conference should give all due attention to the proposal submitted by the Group of 21 on 13 September 1982 in document CD/330, which is drafted in the following very brief manner: "The rule of consensus shall not be used either in such a way as to prevent the establishment of subsidiary bodies for the effective functioning of the Committee in accordance with the priorities established in the Final Document and in conformity with the provisions of rule 23."

Mr. CARASALES (Argentina) (translated from Spanish): I shall be very brief. The Conference has just taken a decision, or is about to conclude doing so, on various drafts relating to the establishment of an ad hoc committee of this Conference on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, with their respective mandates. Unfortunately, the outcome is negative.

In this connection, we are all aware, through the press, and I emphasize through the press, that there is a kind of bilateral dialogue going on between the two space Powers. The coexistence of bilateral and multilateral efforts in disarmament may be accepted, but it is undeniable that such efforts are complementary and not contradictory or utterly separated one from the other. It is essential that there should be some type of link between the two. My delegation has therefore considered, and continues to consider, that the Conference has the right to expect that the two Powers concerned should provide it as rapidly as possible with some information on the progress of the dialogue between them, especially taking into account that this is a question specifically included in the agenda of the Conference, on which very intense efforts have been made for some time to reach agreement on a suitable manner in which to undertake the substantive consideration of the issue.

This multilateral approach cannot reasonably be agreed upon in an appropriate manner in utter ignorance of what is or is not happening on the same topic in the bilateral sphere.

Mr. FIELDS (United States of America):

As to the question of outer space, the one of our immediate concern: the Soviet Union invited the United States to negotiations to begin 18 September 1984 in Vienna. We shall be there! My question is, will the Soviet Union have a delegation there, or will that also go into the ledger book of days which shall be remembered forever as another lost opportunity for disarmament.

Mr. ALESSI (Italy) (translated from French): It is with great regret that we must note the absence of any agreement on the subject of the prevention of an arms race in outer space, a matter of undisputed importance, and thus an agreement which during the intersessional period appeared within reach is escaping us. The best has once again been the enemy of the good, and the desire to obtain a more ambitious mandate has played against the possibility of beginning our work immediately on a realistic and perhaps acceptable basis.

We now note the lack of consensus on the draft mandates contained in document CD/329/Rev.2 and CD/529. A third draft mandate submitted by 10 countries of the Western Group is contained in CD/527. As I had occasion to say when introducing it, this draft reflects, rather than the view of its co-sponsors, a stage, I would now say the last stage, in our long consultations. We would have wished that it could have received a better welcome, for it represents a serious and constructive effort. The co-sponsors consider that it should remain available to the Conference in the hope that it may be a useful basis for pursuing our work on this subject. That is why they are not asking for a decision to be taken on the draft mandate at this stage in our work. My delegation, as well as all the delegations on behalf of which I am speaking, remain ready to resume work on this subject as rapidly as possible, in a consultative spirit, until we can achieve the agreement which we all desire.

(Mr. Erdembileg, Mongolia)

At its plenary meeting on 14 August the Conference on Disarmament accordingly took a decision on the mandate of an ad hoc committee to consider and negotiate on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The drafts of the mandate are contained in document CD/329/Rev.2, submitted by the Group of 21, and in document CD/529, submitted by the group of socialist countries. The Conference found that there was no consensus on them, owing to the negative attitude adopted by the western countries. The socialist countries expressed their deep regret in that connection. They reaffirmed their readiness to continue to make constructive efforts, together with interested delegations, for the purpose of finding a successful solution to this problem concerning the organization of work.

As is generally known, the group of western countries did not insist that a decision should be taken on its own draft mandate contained in document CD/527. In our opinion, this in no way means that the question will continue to be considered here on the basis of that draft mandate. I should like to state definitely that the draft mandate proposed by the group of western countries, in its present form, is considered unacceptable to the socialist States. In view of the great urgency of the problem of preventing an arms race in outer space, the group of socialist countries continues to advocate that practical negotiations should be initiated without delay and that for this purpose an ad hoc committee with a clearly defined mandate should be established at the very beginning of the session which the Conference on Disarmament is due to hold in 1985.

(Mr. Field, United States)

I had the sense that on our agenda item dealing with outer space we were very close this year to reaching agreement on the establishment of an ad hoc committee to undertake an in-depth review of all aspects of this broad and sensitive subject. It is on this issue, perhaps more than any other, that I have a personal feeling of regret that our Conference was not able to reach a consensus. I had looked forward with anticipation to joining in an investigation of the issues affecting the endless frontier of outer space, particularly the implications of existing international law. Let us hope that next year it will finally get under way.

(Mr. Wegener, Federal Republic of Germany)

My delegation has one common complaint vis-à-vis the two separate agenda items of nuclear testing and outer space: that important opportunities have been missed. I am speaking against the background of the well-known views of my delegation: we would like to see an appropriate negotiation process launched on both the conclusion of a comprehensive-test-ban treaty, and on those aspects of the prevention of an arms race in outer space susceptible to multilateral solution. Especially under these auspices it is to be regretted that an all-or-nothing mentality on the part of some has prevented us from taking in hand at least those important aspects on which all delegations could have agreed. In the field of nuclear testing we could have provided a major input into the future negotiations on a comprehensive test ban in the fields of scope, verification, and institutional issues; in the area of outer space we could have made our entry into this vital subject of the future with a well-structured process of taking stock of the existing legal and factual situation, identifying and assessing future negotiating needs. A small minority of delegations have prevented us from embarking on such useful accomplishments. They now have to face the responsibility that no work at all is done in fields which they themselves have proclaimed to be of great concern to them.

(Mr. Fields, United States)

On 17 July, we agreed with the Soviet Union to expand and improve the operation of the direct communications link -- the "hot line" -- between the respective capitals to reduce further any risk of war arising from uncertainty or miscalculation. As President Reagan stated on that date, the agreement is a "good example of how we can, working together, find approaches which can move us towards a reduction in the risks of war". And we are prepared to accept without preconditions the invitation of the Soviet Union to meet in Vienna in September to negotiate and conclude agreements concerning the militarization of outer space, including anti-satellite systems and other aspects of this issue.

(Mr. Turbanski, Poland)

The group of socialist States expresses its concern over the lack of progress, for yet another consecutive session, on one of the priority agenda items, namely the prevention of an arms race in outer space. In the light of the programmes of the United States military circles to deploy entirely new types of weapons systems in outer space, negotiations on preventing the militarization of outer space should start in the framework of this Conference at the earliest. The socialist countries draw attention in this context to the grave implications the development and deployment of new space weapons systems may have for the whole humanity and urge the delegations of the Western Group to take concrete steps in this respect before it is too late. They also emphasize the dangers involved in the United States plans to develop a space-based ABM defence system. Such a system cannot but further spur on the arms race in offensive weapons, make the strategic situation by far less stable and the first strike more probable. Therefore the socialist countries advocate an early start of negotiations on preventing the arms race in outer space in the framework of the Conference on Disarmament. They are firmly and invariably in favour of setting up an ad hoc committee on the subject with a clear negotiating mandate.

(Mr. Kazemi Kamyab, Islamic Republic of Iran)

I would like to touch on the subject of the extension of the arms race into outer space which has become a matter of serious concern. At the present time there is evidence of the early stages of militarization of outer space and the super-Powers are already engaged in production and development of sophisticated war machinery for a "star wars" scenario.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is of the view that serious measures should be taken in regard to negotiation, preparation and adoption of a treaty banning the use of outer space for military purposes. The negotiations for elaborating this new instrument should be started as soon as possible. The trend of militarization of outer space should be halted and the arms race in this common heritage of mankind be prevented. Taking speedy and serious measures in this regard would be of immense service to humanity.

(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

The French Government attaches fundamental importance to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, the subject of agenda item 5. We have several times

(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

made known our views on this issue in this very forum and, on 12 June, the French delegation set them out in a more comprehensive manner, specifying the points on which, in its view, a concerted international effort should be made.

I repeat the four points which the proposals addressed:

(1) The very strict limitation of anti-satellite systems, including in particular the prohibition of all such systems capable of hitting satellites in high orbit, the preservation of which is the most important from the point of view of strategic balance;

(2) The prohibition, for a renewable period of five years, of the deployment on the ground, in the atmosphere or in space of beam-weapon systems capable of destroying ballistic missiles or satellites at great distances and, as the corollary to this, the banning of the corresponding tests;

(3) The strengthening of the present system of declaration as established by the Convention of 14 June 1975 on the registration of space objects, with each State or launching agency undertaking to provide more detailed information on the specifications and purposes of objects launched so as to improve the possibility of verification; and, in conclusion,

(4) A pledge by the United States and the USSR to extend to the satellites of third countries the provisions concerning the immunity of certain space objects on which they have reached bilateral agreement between themselves.

The reasons which led the French Government to introduce these four proposals in particular and to regard it necessary to embark on a multilateral dialogue on the subject of limiting the military uses of space have lost nothing of their topicality; quite the contrary.

The public exchanges which have taken place since the early summer on the proposed United States-Soviet meeting in Vienna in September have naturally caught our delegations' attention.

The French Government has, indeed, constantly stressed the importance of bilateral contacts in this field. It mentioned this again on 12 June, even before any meeting had been proposed. Such a meeting does not preclude multilateral discussion, on the contrary. I note that Ambassador Alessi made the same point in his statement on 19 July.

The French Government therefore regrets that at this stage the possibility of a meeting in Vienna still seems so uncertain. It hopes that the difficulties raised will be overcome and that prior conditions, if such exist, will be waived so that the meeting, which was agreed to at the outset by both parties, will in fact take place.

The persistance of the difficulties in the way of direct bilateral negotiations would not make it any less important to keep open the possibility of wider

(Mr. de la Gorce, France)

conversations on a problem which, as the French delegation stressed on 12 June, is for varying reasons of interest to the entire international community. The purpose of such conversations should be to organize the requisite discussions with a view to facilitating such negotiations as would appear useful.

We therefore hope that an important role will be assigned to the Conference on Disarmament and we cannot but regret all the more the failure to agree on setting up an ad hoc committee. Even with a mandate limited to exploring and identifying the issues involved, such a body would have performed an essential task. It is the French delegation's firm hope that next year the Conference will give itself the working tool that its responsibilities require.