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(Mr. Vidas, Yugoslavia)

The Conference on Disarmament should act promptly and resolutely to prevent a new chapter of the arms race from being opened in outer space. We must not allow one more chance to be missed again. We should like to express our concern about the unforeseeable consequences if the development of space weapons technology is not checked in time, before it causes serious strategic and political disturbances in the world. We should not like to enter into discussion whether a fool-proof nuclear missile defence system is technically feasible, nor to question the motives to commence its intensive research. One thing is certain, however: this will accelerate the arms race. There already exist some concrete proposals for the Conference's work concerning outer space. On the basis of these and any other proposals which may be submitted as well as an agreed mandate and programme of work, the ad hoc committee should start its deliberations without delay.

(Mr. Vejvoda, Czechoslovakia)

One can say that practically all effective disarmament measures would contribute to the lessening of the danger of nuclear war. Be it the achievement of the NTB, greatly assisting the cessation of the qualitative refinement of nuclear weapons and the development of new models and types of such weapons; or prevention of further proliferation of nuclear weapons or the prevention of an arms race in other high-risk areas, e.g. outer space. All these measures would undoubtedly contribute to averting the threat of nuclear war. We are also ready to consider various confidence-building measures, such as the prevention of accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons, the avoidance of the possibility of surprise attacks etc. But we continue to maintain that all these confidence-building measures can contribute towards the diminishing of the nuclear threat only in conjunction with far-reaching political undertakings in that field.

Mr. Issraelyan (Union of Soviet  
Socialist Republics)

Today the Soviet delegation would like to advance some considerations regarding one of the priority issues on the agenda of this Conference, namely that of preventing an arms race in space.

It is well known that the age of peaceful space exploration began on 4 October 1957, the day when the Soviet Union launched the world's first artificial Earth satellite, presenting our planet with a tiny man-made "moon". More than a quarter of a century has since elapsed. During those years man's labour and creative genius have sent into orbit thousands of satellites, reached the Moon and sent unmanned research craft to distant planets. Over 140 envoys of mankind have voyaged in outer space. The first among them was our countryman Yuri Gagarin. His spaceflight on 12 April 1961 marked one of man's greatest victories over the forces of nature. Following Gagarin's trail went entire crews of space travellers, and then for the first time man dared to leave his spacecraft and walk in space.

At first spaceflights were conducted for the sole purpose of research, but later they became progressively oriented to serve more practical, "earthly" needs. Satellites, rocket probes, interplanetary unmanned research spacecraft, manned spacecraft and orbital stations enabled mankind to learn much about the Earth and its surroundings.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

Space technology has provided breakthroughs in communication and navigation, in geodesy and map-making, in long-term weather forecasting and monitoring of the environment, in studying natural resources and spotting the crews of ships and aircraft in distress. The COSPAS-SARSAT system for the search of vessels and aircraft in distress can be an example of successful international co-operation in the use of space for the benefit of mankind. The system, developed by the joint efforts of the USSR, the United States, Canada and France, has already helped to rescue over 350 people from different countries.

Space technology has helped astronomers to "see" the hidden side of the Moon and take pictures of Venus and Mars, to gather fascinating data about the Sun and to travel as far as Jupiter and Saturn.

Another example of fruitful co-operation among different States in the peaceful exploration of outer space is the space station aimed at Venus and Halley's Comet and launched from the Soviet Union in December 1984 in the presence of a number of foreign guests including representatives of the European Space Agency and the French minister of scientific research and technology. Participating in this daring project, known as "Vega", along with France and the Soviet Union, are Austria, Hungary, the German Democratic Republic, Poland, the Federal Republic of Germany and Czechoslovakia.

The prophetic words of our great countryman Konstantin Tsiolkovsky, who believed that space exploration would bring mankind "mountains of grain and oceans of power", are beginning to come true. That man of wisdom and foresight also formulated another precious thought: "Man is acquiring a universal sea, granted to him as if deliberately in order to bind all people together into a single entity, a single family ...".

Exploration of space, penetration into its depths and utilization of its unique properties, and the development of space technology itself, constitute an entirely new and highly specific area of human activity. On the one hand, enormous opportunities for progress are offered to mankind, but on the other hand, activities in this area can bring the world infinite woe. It all depends on how we use these technologies, since there is no basic difference between rockets designed for peaceful space research and those used for military purposes.

Regrettably, space is associated not only with the names of Gagarin and Armstrong, or with joint international research projects and television linkups between peoples of various continents. Space can also be the source of mortal danger for the whole of mankind, if turned into an arena of enmity and confrontation.

To be sure, the international community has not just arrived at this conclusion. It was precisely in recognition of the potential dangers of space militarization that a number of treaties now in force were drafted to include provisions foreclosing certain possible avenues for an arms race in space. Those agreements have established some prerequisites for continuing the efforts to ensure a peaceful regime of outer space. However, the subsequent course of events has proved them far from sufficient. But why is it precisely now that it becomes more urgent than ever to take radical steps to ensure that mankind could live without fearing that the outer space it has yearned to reach for millenia will be the source of its destruction? Why do the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, in particular at its latest session, call for immediate action towards that end? What has happened? The answer to this question is close at hand. It was the adoption by the United States of its vast space militarization programme that made the entire world realize that all the horrors which hitherto belonged to the realm of theoretical speculation or pessimistic science fiction now clearly threaten to become a present-day reality.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

The "Star Wars" programme announced by the President of the United States in his March 1983 address envisages the development of a large-scale ABM system with space-based elements, as well as the creation of antisatellite weapons. It is on these two goals, along with the planned military use of the Shuttle spacecraft, that the United States Administration's efforts to spread the arms race into outer space are concentrated.

The programme envisages the deployment of a multilayered ABM defence system composed of several tiers and designed to "shield" United States territory. It is planned to develop a system capable of destroying the other side's missiles in the boost phase, at the very beginning of their launch into space towards their targets, or later as they fly through space, as well as during the final stage of their trajectory at re-entry into the atmosphere. According to the system's advocates, it will allow the United States effectively to defend itself against a massive nuclear strike and thus render nuclear weapons themselves "impotent and obsolete". They even go as far as to portray the deployment of combat systems in outer space as something of a panacea, as virtually the only way to achieve nuclear disarmament and to ensure universal peace, stability and prosperity. Let us now, however, look and see if this is indeed the case and if the global prospects offered by those programmes are indeed so bright.

The first question to be raised is that of stability and international security. The Soviet Union has consistently favoured the limitation and reduction of nuclear arms and eventual nuclear disarmament, but it remains a fact of life today that stability in the presence of nuclear weapons is assured by the over-all military and strategic balance. To maintain strategic stability is, in particular, the purpose of the 1972 ABM Treaty concluded between the Soviet Union and the United States, which is, as is well known, of unlimited duration. The deployment by either side of a new large-scale ABM system with space-based elements would actually mean seeking to create a "shield" for protection against the retaliatory strike after a first strike has been delivered. Expert analysis demonstrates that any such calculations are totally groundless and that a nuclear aggression can achieve nothing but a global nuclear conflagration which will incinerate everyone including the aggressor. Yet for all the delusiveness of such hopes, the very temptation of committing an aggression with impunity would be a psychological poison which would erode stability.

The Soviet Union is resolutely opposed to competition in the buildup of any armaments, including space weapons. It is all too obvious, however, that in the face of a threat from space it will be forced to take actions reliably to guarantee its security. The choice is not ours, but we shall have to act to redress the strategic balance. The equilibrium will be redressed, but at a higher level of armaments. Will the security of all nations, including the United States itself, be enhanced once it rests on still greater piles of weaponry? We believe that this question too has an obvious answer.

In this connection we cannot disagree with the opinion expressed by such authoritative United States statesmen as McGeorge Bundy, George Kennan, Robert McNamara and Gerard Smith. In their view, one definitely cannot avoid the conclusion that "Star Wars" would not mean increased security but rather an indisputable and considerable buildup of offensive and defensive systems on both sides. They are convinced that this is not a recipe for eliminating or limiting the threat posed by nuclear weapons, but one for an infinitely expensive, long and dangerous competition.

This assessment is shared by the world-famous American scholars Hans Bethe, Richard Garwin, Kurt Gottfried and Henry Kendall, who have concluded, upon analysing the "Star Wars" programme, that "it is difficult to imagine a system more likely to induce catastrophe than one that requires critical decisions by the second, is itself untested and fragile and yet is threatening to the other side's retaliatory capability".

Later on we intend to make some further comment on the sincerity of statements describing the "Star Wars" programme as being aimed at nuclear disarmament, but for the present we wish to stress another point of considerable importance. It is perfectly clear that an arms race in space, along with increasing the risk of a global nuclear catastrophe, would also pose other additional threats to the security of all nations. For once systems designed for antisatellite and antimissile operations are deployed in space, their use for other purposes cannot be ruled out. With the advent of new generations of attack space systems they would be transformed into dangerous offensive arms hovering permanently over the planet and capable of instant action against any region or State, any aircraft or vessel.

Let us now address the question of how the "Star Wars" programme would affect the process of disarmament. For our part at least, it is becoming our strong conviction that the stationing of attack systems in space would have the most damaging consequences for that process. One of those would be in the sphere of verification which, incidentally, is so often invoked by the United States itself. It is quite obvious that compliance with a ban on a certain category of weapons can be much more easily verified before they are developed and tested.

Another consequence of the spread of the arms race to outer space would be the undermining, through an inevitable and unprecedented buildup of other types of weapons, primarily strategic offensive arms, of the over-all prospects of arms limitation and reduction.

And finally, one cannot fail to mention the international legal implications of the militarization of outer space. A comprehensive ABM system with space-based elements can be made operational only at the cost of abrogating the ABM Treaty. broad-scale research and development effort, or the testing of the system's individual components, will objectively undercut this vitally important Soviet-American agreement. This was actually recognized by General Abrahamson, head of the United States ABM programme, who stated on 17 December, 1984 that as soon as the comprehensive ABM system was at least partly developed and ready for operation, the United States would have to reach agreement with the USSR on the modification, in other words, changing of the ABM Treaty, since some of its provisions would enter into conflict with the tasks of the system.

For the sake of acquiring a comprehensive ABM system the United States is prepared to tear down a number of other international arms control and disarmament agreements as well. For instance, the deployment of X-ray lasers may jeopardize the 1963 Partial Test Ban Treaty which prohibits the testing of nuclear weapons in space, in the atmosphere and under water. X-ray lasers can be produced using nuclear explosions and would, of course, not be deployed without considerable testing.

The deployment of X-ray lasers would violate the 1967 Outer Space Treaty which prohibits the placing in orbit of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. In any case that Treaty would be violated in spirit since it provides that space must be used for peaceful purposes only. Orbiting an ABM system cannot be regarded as a peaceful activity since it can also be used for offensive purposes, that is, as an antisatellite weapon.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

In analysing the pernicious implications of the United States course at militarizing outer space one certainly cannot overlook the fact that it involves enormous waste of financial, material and human resources. From 1986 to 1989, the United States "Star Wars" research programme alone will absorb 26 billion dollars. As for the creation of a multilayered ABM system with space-based elements, its estimated cost amounts to 1.5 - 2 trillion dollars. Naturally, this cannot but considerably aggravate and multiply the world economic problems of today. Considering the economic difficulties encountered by many countries, and the developing countries in the first place, in solving acute global problems such as combating famine and disease, one can hardly regard the above-mentioned expenditures as justified or motivated by humanitarian concerns.

These are some of our considerations regarding the dangerous implications of the implementation of the "Star Wars" programme. A legitimate question arises, and I think we are not the only ones to ask it: do we all wish or need to pay that price for being saved from the nuclear threat? Especially since it turns out that the threat will not diminish as a result, but may instead be much increased.

Apparently, the matter is that the "Star Wars" programmes pursue quite different aims. There can be no doubt that the space militarization plans the United States is working on are of a clearly aggressive nature. This was underscored by A.A. Gromyko, First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, in a statement to his constituents on 19 February 1985: "Today our country is giving warning as loudly as it can about a new threat to humanity. This threat stems from a plan for militarizing outer space which has been put forward by Washington ... It dramatically heightens the threat of nuclear war. That is why we raise with such urgency the question of preventing the militarization of outer space. Any efforts to camouflage the substance of that plan, by labelling it as 'defensive', must not mislead anyone."

The calculation behind the fine-sounding term "Strategic Defence Initiative" is to put up a shield for protection against a retaliatory strike after having delivered a first strike. If this is not the case one might reasonably wonder about the purpose of the unprecedented buildup of the United States strategic nuclear arsenal parallel to the development of space-based systems. MX ICBMs are being produced, Pershing-II missiles deployed in Europe, B-1 bombers built, and approval has been obtained to develop and produce the new "Stealth" bombers, cruise missiles and Trident-2 SLBMs. And the United States Defence Secretary Caspar Weinberger does not even think it necessary to conceal the fact that all of those strategic armament programmes are designed to dramatically increase the United States nuclear first-strike capability.

The following legitimate question may also be asked: if the plan is to rely on defence, why then deploy first-strike nuclear systems at the borders of the Soviet Union and of its allies?

Proponents of the new ABM system dream of using various new types of weapons such as infrared, ultraviolet and X-ray lasers, high-energy particle accelerators, generators of ultra-high-frequency radiation and the like. Judging from the information made public in the West, those "space-age" weapons are already at various stages of development.

True, they are now trying to persuade us that the "Strategic Defence Initiative" is limited to research and development which, it is being claimed, do not yet present any serious danger of resulting in the deployment of a comprehensive ABM system.

(Mr. Issraelyan, USSR)

Such assertions are hard to believe since it is obviously not for the love of pure science or technological progress that billions of dollars are spent on research and development programmes. The testing of large-scale ABM defence components already conducted or envisaged by the Pentagon is directly aimed at reaching a stage where the only thing missing would be a decision to go ahead with the practical deployment of the systems in question. The Soviet Union would thus be faced with a certain United States capability to deploy on short notice a comprehensive ABM defence system. No references to "research" can change the substance of the matter.

It would be naive to expect that the programme, once started, would be confined to the research stage. Progress in the field of military technology unfortunately has an inherent momentum that triggers the deployment of weapon systems as soon as it becomes technically feasible. What, for example, would be the point in the November 1984 decision to establish a unified space command of the United States Armed Forces, if the acquisition of actual space weapons was not envisaged? Meanwhile, a military space operations centre is being set up and a special military Space Shuttle launch complex is under construction, the Shuttle programme having been actually placed under Pentagon supervision.

Another testimony to the fact that the research in question is by no means abstract or preliminary, or conducted "just in case", but rather a well-organized effort subject to, and even in advance of, a definite schedule, was provided by the United States Assistant Secretary of Defence F. Ikle, who recently stated before the Senate sub-committee on strategic and intermediate-range nuclear forces that the strategic defence initiative is not just a backstage option in United States defence activities, but has a central role.

An equal threat to international stability is posed by the United States drive to acquire antisatellite weapons, including an ASAT system. Those weapons are particularly dangerous since they can be eventually used as dual-purpose systems, that is, not against satellites only, but also to intercept and destroy nuclear-missile warheads.

Confidence between States is far from strengthened by statements like those made by Mr. Ikle whom I have just mentioned. He has also said quite openly that the use of antisatellite systems as a component of a first strike to destroy all or many of the enemy's "key" satellites should considerably impede a retaliatory strike. One could not be more explicit and straightforward.

The Soviet Union most emphatically points to the need for urgent measures to prevent the militarization of outer space.

However, we do not stop at warning of the threat which looms over the world; we are putting forward concrete proposals for a radical solution of the problem of preventing an arms race in space. The Soviet Union submitted relevant draft treaties for consideration by the world community in 1981 and 1983, and followed up on them in 1984 with a new initiative entitled "Use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes, for the benefit of mankind".

In particular, the Soviet Union proposes that no attack weapons of any kind -- conventional, nuclear, laser, particle beam or any other-- should be placed and deployed in outer space, whether on manned or unmanned systems. Space weapons, however based, should not be developed, tested or deployed either for anti-ballistic-missile defence or as antisatellite systems or for use against targets on Earth or in the air. Any such systems already in existence must be destroyed.

(Mr. Issraclyan, USSR)

The use of force in outer space and from space against the Earth, as well as from Earth against objects in space, should be prohibited for all time. The USSR proposes that agreement be reached on a radical solution of the question of preventing the militarization of space -- on banning and eliminating the whole class of space attack weapons, including anti-satellite and anti-missile space-based systems, as well as any land-based, sea-based or air-based systems designed to destroy objects in space.

Agreement on banning and eliminating the whole class of space attack systems clearly lends itself to reliable and effective verification of compliance by both sides with their obligations. Verification is made easier if only because of the fact that our proposal calls for a complete ban on developing such systems and the elimination of the few that have already been developed.

These are briefly some of the Soviet Union's ideas regarding the possible ways of preventing arms race in space. As to where this problem should be addressed, we are in favour of negotiating appropriate adequately verifiable accords as early as possible and are therefore prepared to deal with it on both a bilateral and a multilateral basis.

We hope that the Soviet-United States negotiations beginning next week will produce effective agreements aimed at preventing an arms race in space and halting it on Earth, at limiting and reducing nuclear arms and strengthening strategic stability. What is most important, however, is that both sides in the negotiations should display goodwill in working towards an agreed aim and prove willing to accept reasonable compromise while strictly observing the principle of equality and equal security. K.U. Chernenko, General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and President of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet, stated in this connection that "we intend to conduct (the negotiations) in a businesslike and constructive manner. Let us hope that the United States too will assume an honest and responsible attitude".

The Soviet delegation intends to take the same kind of constructive position at the negotiations in the ad hoc committee of our Conference which, as we hope, will be established according to the mandate recommended by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

(Mr. Bayart, Mongolia)

I should like to devote my address today to one of the most important matters on the agenda for the Conference, namely, the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The importance of this question was re-emphasized at the last session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, which adopted resolution 39/59 requesting the Conference on Disarmament to expedite its consideration. The Assembly recommended the establishment at the beginning of the present session of the Conference on Disarmament of an ad hoc committee with a view to undertaking negotiations for the conclusion of an agreement or agreements to prevent an arms race in space. It also urged the USSR and the United States of America to initiate immediately and in a constructive spirit negotiations aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space.

This important decision of the Assembly was taken by an absolute majority of Member States of the United Nations as a result of their consideration of the Soviet Union initiative on the utilization of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes and for the benefit of mankind. It confirmed that the world community considers prevention of the militarization of near space as an extremely pressing problem urgently requiring solution.

On the basis of the Soviet initiative, agreement was reached in November 1984 between the USSR and the United States of America to undertake new negotiations with a view to achieving mutually acceptable agreements on the complex of questions concerning nuclear and space weapons. As we know, in the course of the meeting that took place here in Geneva on 7 and 8 January 1985 between Mr. A.A. Gromyko, member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, on the one hand and Mr. J. Shultz, United States Secretary of State, on the other, an important agreement was reached concerning the subject and objectives of the Soviet-American negotiations on the problems of space and nuclear weapons, which are to be considered and resolved in their interrelationship.

The goal of the negotiations, as agreed by the two parties, will be to work out effective agreements aimed at preventing an arms race in space and terminating it on Earth, at limiting and reducing nuclear arms, and at strengthening strategic stability.

(Mr. Bayart, Mongolia)

This new, integrated approach to the problems of non-militarization of space and nuclear disarmament is dictated by life itself, by the situation that has actually arisen. It is quite evident that progress in arms limitation and reduction is incompatible with the existence of an arms race in space, plans for which, in the form of large-scale missile defenses, are being hatched in Washington. The implementation of these plans would not merely lead to nothing, but would negate what it has been possible to achieve on Earth. Hence the net result for the world as a whole would be negative.

An indication of the United States aspiration to further utilization of space for military purposes is provided by the updated combat instructions of the American Air Force, reissued in 1984 as a basic "acrospace doctrine". According to the Washington Post for 15 January 1985 this document was signed by Air Force Chief of Staff, C. Gabriel and represents a development of the "military space doctrine" of 1982, which emphasizes the need to develop space-based weapons and train "space forces".

One cannot but be struck by the fact that already in the 1982 doctrine it was stated that the Air Force would maintain the technical superiority of the United States in the acrospace field and ensure its potential for conducting protracted military operations in the space environment.

Judging by the updated text of the doctrine, the United States military leadership now intends to go farther along the road to militarizing space. In the instructions it is emphasized that a space-based weapons system is designed for hitting targets on Earth and in space, for gaining control of space and ensuring superiority in space. As is apparent from the text of the instructions, in the opinion of the United States Air Force arms control must not be allowed to stand in the way of military preparations. Thus it is bluntly stated that the space environment offers unlimited potential and opportunity for military operations, of which the Air Force must take advantage.

On the basis of a Presidential Directive of 1982, the United States of America intends to deploy in space anti-missile devices and various kinds of antisatellite system and to place in orbit ultra-new types of weapon, including lasers and death rays, designed to hit targets on the ground, in the air and at sea.

The United States policy on the militarization of space was taken further, as we know, in the President's speech of 23 March 1982 announcing the so-called "Star Wars" programme.

(Mr. Bayart, Mongolia)

In November-1984 the decision was taken to establish a unified space command for the United States armed forces. A space centre is being constructed for directing military activities in space, and a military launching site is being built for reusable vehicles of the Shuttle type, the programme for whose utilization is virtually under the command of the Pentagon.

Space weapons, as seen by those who have not renounced their schemes for achieving military superiority, are designed to play the role of key element for a nuclear-first-strike capability.

That is precisely the aim of the "Star Wars" programme, designed for the attainment of military superiority throughout space. This plan spells death for mankind, for its aim is the practical development and deployment over United States territory of an extensive anti-missile defence system. The calculation behind such a system is obviously to be able to strike the first blow and escape or effectively neutralize retaliation. It is difficult to believe in the assertion of the advocates of the militarization of space that this is a question of defence. A reduction in the vulnerability of one's strategic weapons, with the aim of destroying one's adversary's launching installations, is tantamount in practice to disruption of the existing balance and establishment of a new first-strike capability. This is precisely what the ABM Treaty, which is designed to avert nuclear aggression, is directed against.

This deduction is also confirmed by the fact that the American plans for deployment of anti-missile systems are accompanied by a build-up of their offensive strategic forces. Besides, the system of missile interception devices is planned not for defence against a first strike, but precisely as a means of reducing the effect of a retaliatory strike, whose strength would be diminished as a result of the destruction of part of the other side's missiles while still in their silos during the so-called preventive attack.

As we know, the Treaty on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems, concluded in 1972 between the USSR and the United States of America, prohibits the establishment of anti-missile systems on the territory of either of the two countries. This decision is of enormous and fundamental importance from the viewpoint of containing the nuclear arms race in all sectors, consolidating strategic stability and reducing the risk of war.

It is precisely this fundamental provision of the ABM Treaty that is being undermined today, and an open and undisguised policy of torpedoing the Treaty has been adopted.

It is not, then, a question of defence against nuclear devices but of a new weapon for backing nuclear aggression.

Emphasis must be laid on the danger that the establishment of a comprehensive ABM system will also undermine a number of important multilateral agreements. Among them is the 1963 treaty banning nuclear tests in three environments, the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, and the 1977 Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques.

In the United States of America there is no end to the calls, some of them at the governmental level, for the implementation of plans to extend the arms race to space, for the establishment of a large-scale ABM system, and for

(Mr. Bayart, Mongolia)

utilization of the forthcoming Soviet-American negotiations to legalize such plans. Noteworthy in that respect is the special brochure entitled "The President's Strategic Defence Initiative" distributed by the White House in January of this year. In it the militarization of space by the end of the present century is raised to the rank of official United States policy.

The Conference on Disarmament must not let itself be lulled by arguments about how the new space ABM system is at the research and development stage in the United States.

Sober-minded scientists in the United States of America itself are rightly pointing out that the work already proceeding on the implementation of this programme constitutes in itself a provocative, destabilizing move irrespective of its final outcome.

Nor can the question of a ban on antisatellite weapons be left out of account. The deployment of such weapons would lead to abrupt destabilization of the situation, increase the threat of surprise attack, and undermine efforts to promote trust among nuclear States.

The destruction of one party's satellites that perform important observation and communications functions would allow the attacking side to think in terms of "blinding" the adversary, catching him unawares, and weakening his possibility of reprisal in case of nuclear aggression. Thus an attack on a satellite would be an aggressive act: an act that could very well be considered as a preparation for a nuclear first strike.

The United States Administration, as we know, has refused to resume the Soviet-American negotiations on anti-missile systems conducted earlier. At present, under the ASAT programme, work is proceeding on the development of a special antisatellite missile launched from a high-altitude F-15 fighter aircraft. The first tests have already taken place on this system.

Urgent measures must be taken to ban the militarization of space before the process becomes irreversible. The point is not only that it is considerably more difficult to remove weapons from arsenals once they have become a reality than to prevent their creation. It has to be borne in mind that the extension of the arms race will raise it to an unprecedented pitch of intensity in other sectors too, particularly that of strategic offensive weapons. The spread of the arms race to space would undermine prospects of limiting and reducing armaments in general.

The militarization of space, unless it is stopped in time, will swallow up enormous material and spiritual resources and will bring in its wake an unprecedented growth in military expenditure, severely limiting the possibility of allotting resources for the social and economic needs of States. An arms race in space will pose considerable obstacles to international co-operation in the peaceful exploitation of outer space and the turning to account for peaceful purposes of the results of scientific and technical progress in this area.

With regard to peaceful co-operation among States in the exploitation of space and peaceful space programmes in general, there stand as obstacles in their path not only shortage of means and resources but also the suspicion, fear, enmity and secretiveness that inevitably accompany military preparations.

(Mr. Bayart, Mongolia)

Only assured prevention of the militarization of space will make possible its exploitation for purposes of creation, not destruction. It would also open up the way to pooling of countries' efforts in this area. There can be no doubt that in space effective co-operation for peaceful purposes is possible between countries with different social structures and different levels of economic development and culture. It has been repeatedly demonstrated that such co-operation is conducive to an improved climate in relations between States.

The Socialist countries are proposing that the road to space be barred to weapons, that this problem be solved rationally, that no loophole be left for the militarization of space.

Concrete measures to that end were reflected in the proposals which they put forward last year in the United Nations and which obtained wide support from the overwhelming majority of States. One of these proposals is the draft treaty prohibiting the use of force in space or from space against the Earth, submitted by the Soviet Union in 1983.

This measure would also imply, in particular, a complete ban on antisatellite weapons, including destruction of any existing such systems. In an endeavour to facilitate arrival at agreement, the USSR has unilaterally proclaimed a moratorium on the deployment in space of antisatellite weapons until such time as other countries take similar action.

The business of outlawing the militarization of space will brook no procrastination. It is essential at all costs to start making some headway with it. The Conference on Disarmament must, we are convinced, use all its authority for that so as to insure that the exclusion of space from the sphere of the arms race becomes a strict norm in the policy of States, a generally recognized international responsibility, and that all the roads to the militarization of space, without exception, are safely closed.

It should be noted that in the Final Document of the tenth special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to disarmament, emphasis was laid on the need for further measures to be taken and appropriate international negotiations conducted with a view to preventing an arms race in space.

In the Final Document of the second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Utilization of Space for Peaceful Purposes, held in Vienna in August 1983, it is stated, in particular, that extension of the arms race to space is a threat to all mankind and must therefore be prevented.

I should also like to draw the attention of the Conference to the authoritative statement of the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar, at the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly, in which he made, in particular, an earnest appeal for the non-militarization of space, emphasizing that it was crucial "that a ban on weapons in the new theatre, outer space, be concluded at the earliest possible time, before it is once again too late".

Mr. ROSE (German Democratic Republic): Mr. President, allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of the Presidency of the Conference on Disarmament for the month of March. I am confident that your diplomatic skills and experience, which you have proved as the representative of Venezuela, will be of great value in our quest for tackling the important and difficult problems before us. I wish you every success in the discharge of your responsibilities and pledge my delegation's full support and co-operation. I wish also to thank Ambassador Lowitz for his consistent efforts and able work as President of the Conference during the month of February. Mr. President, the participation of the representatives of the Conference on "Women and Peace" this morning demonstrates the profound concern of peoples over the increased danger of a nuclear war and the keen interest of the world-wide peace movement in the subjects of our agenda. It reminds us that all the delegations at this Conference have the responsibility to seek concrete and urgent measures for the prevention of a nuclear holocaust. The measures we are talking about are the freeze of nuclear arsenals, legally binding commitments by all nuclear-weapon States not to be the first to use nuclear weapons and the prevention of an arms race in outer space. To achieve such measures, people are calling, everywhere on this planet, for the cessation of all nuclear weapon tests, about which my delegation wants to say the following.

It is very appropriate that the nuclear test ban issue should stand at the top of the Conference agenda. It is the topic with the longest history of diplomatic efforts and public and scientific discussion. Its direct bearing on the most important challenges of our time is obvious: a ban on all nuclear-weapon testing would clearly signal an end to the nuclear arms race, especially the qualitative aspect of that race, and facilitate the beginning of nuclear disarmament.

The subject matter of the treaty has been thoroughly prepared. From a technical point of view, it is not as complicated as other arms limitation and disarmament issues. The world is well aware of the importance of such a ban and has been demanding the immediate halt of all testing everywhere for several decades. In fact, it is with good reason that this matter has been given highest priority in the recent Delhi Declaration.

The conclusion of a treaty on the complete cessation of nuclear-weapon tests would be fully in line in our opinion with the purposes of the Joint United States-Soviet Statement of 8 January 1985, according to which all armaments limitation and reduction efforts should lead to the complete and general destruction of nuclear weapons.

(Mr. Tonwe, Nigeria)

What is more, new concepts are now being freely propounded, especially in the West, that nuclear weapons are here to stay; and that what should now be of concern is overseeing the orderly shift of the dangerous super-Power rivalry from nuclear arms on Earth to new defence systems in outer space! To buttress this concept, it is suggested that the principal Powers, far from engaging in an uncontrolled arms race, were, in fact, managing their rivalry with such sophistication that the world need hardly worry about a possible nuclear war.

48

(Mr. Tonwe, Nigeria)

In making a case for urgent practical steps towards a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty, my delegation hopes that such a treaty might help prevent the introduction of nuclear weapons into outer space. The world community through a number of resolutions, including the United Nations Declaration of 13 December 1963, have determined that outer space be reserved exclusively for peaceful purposes. The principal nuclear-weapon States are Parties to the Outer Space Treaty of 1967, which quite explicitly required States to use outer space for peaceful purposes only. My delegation does not therefore see how a "defence system" operating, from outer space to neutralize the other side's Earth-based deterrent could be regarded as lawful. Treaty obligation or not, my delegation believes those experts who argue that any superiority gained by one side from military research in outer space would be as illusive and ephemeral as similar advantages have been in other areas in the past.

My delegation agrees that scientific research must continue in outer space, but it is also convinced that that research need not be undertaken for a military purpose. In our view, a policy which seeks to do that will only destabilize the very concept of deterrence, which the policy makers themselves claim is essential for their security. The Nigerian delegation therefore enjoins all States to respect their international obligations and international public opinion, and keep outer space free of all types of weapons and other facilities designed for military purposes. An ad hoc committee with a negotiating mandate should now be set up for the purpose.