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UN/SA COLLECTION

REPORT OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON PREVENTION
OF AN ARMS RACE IN OUTER SPACE

1. Introduction

1. At its 304th plenary meeting on 29 March 1985, the Conference on Disarmament adopted the following decision:

In the exercise of its responsibilities as the 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 Conference on Disarmament decides to establish an Ad Hoc Committee under item 5 of its agenda entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space".

The Conference requests the Ad Hoc Committee, in discharging that responsibility, to examine, as a first step at this stage, through substantive and general consideration, issues relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

The Ad Hoc Committee will take into account all existing agreements, existing proposals and future initiatives and report on the progress of its work to the Conference on Disarmament before the end of its 1985 session.

II. Organization of work and documents

2. At its 314th plenary meeting on 20 June 1985, the Conference on Disarmament appointed Ambassador Saad Alfarargi (Egypt) as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee. Miss Aida Luisa Levin, United Nations Department of Disarmament Affairs, served as the Committee's Secretary.

3. The Ad Hoc Committee held 20 meetings between 24 June and 26 August 1985.

4. At their request, the Conference on Disarmament decided to invite the representatives of the following States not members of the Conference to participate in the meetings of the Ad Hoc Committee: Austria, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Ireland, New Zealand, Norway and Spain.

5. The Ad Hoc Committee had before it the following documents relating to the agenda item submitted to the Conference on Disarmament during the 1985 session:

- CD/579 China's Basic Position on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space;
- CD/584 Decision on the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee on Item 5 of the Agenda entitled: "Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space";
- CD/606 Letter dated 2 July 1985 from the Permanent Representative of Canada transmitting a two volume compendium of CD Verbatim Records and Working Papers submitted to the Conference on the subject of the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space;
- CD/607 "Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space", Working Paper of a group of socialist countries (also issued as CD/OS/WP.3);
- CD/611 Letter dated 9 July 1985 addressed to the President of the Conference on Disarmament from the Representative of the USSR transmitting the text of the reply of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev, to the Union of Concerned Scientists, published on 6 July 1985;
- CD/618 "Survey of International Law Relevant to Arms Control and Outer Space", submitted by Canada (also issued as CD/OS/WP.6);
- CD/637 "Principal international agreements which apply or otherwise relate directly or indirectly to outer space", working paper submitted by the United Kingdom (also issued as CD/OS/WP.7);
- CD/639 Letter dated 21 August 1985 addressed to the President of the Conference on Disarmament by the Representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics transmitting the texts of Documents connected with the USSR proposal "The basic directions and principles of international co-operation in peaceful exploration of outer space under conditions of its non militarization".

In addition, the Committee had before it the following working papers:

- CD/OS/WP.1 List of documents of the Conference on Disarmament relating to agenda item 5: "Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space";
- CD/OS/WP.2 List of General Assembly resolutions relating to agenda item 5 transmitted by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the Conference on Disarmament;
- CD/OS/WP.3 Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, Working Paper of a group of socialist countries (also issued as CD/607);
- CD/OS/WP.4 Programme of work for the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, proposed by a group of socialist countries;
- CD/OS/WP.5 1985 Programme of Work;
- CD/OS/WP.6 "Survey of International Law Relevant to Arms Control and Outer Space", submitted by Canada (also issued as CD/618);
- CD/OS/WP.7 "Principal international agreements which apply or otherwise relate directly or indirectly to outer space", working paper submitted by the United Kingdom (also issued as CD/637);
- CD/OS/WP.8 Proposals of Sweden relating to prevention of an arms race in outer space;
- CD/OS/WP.9 Conclusions drawn by a group of socialist countries from the consideration by the Ad Hoc Committee of the issues included in its programme of work.

III. Substantive work during the 1985 Session

6. Following an initial exchange of views, the Ad Hoc Committee, at its sixth meeting, adopted a programme of work for the 1985 session (CD/OS/WP.5) containing the following points:

(a) Consideration of issues relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space;

(b) existing agreements relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space;

(c) proposals and future initiatives on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

In order to give equal treatment to those subjects, the Committee further decided to allocate three meetings to each.

7. In accordance with the programme of work, delegations exchanged views regarding issues relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

8. Some delegations stressed that outer space was the common heritage of mankind and that, consequently, the exploration and exploitation of outer space should be preserved for exclusively peaceful purposes to promote the scientific, economic and social development of all countries. Some of the above delegations noted that up to the present, outer space had been an area free of weapons but that there was a growing threat of the emergence of "active" space systems, mainly for anti-ballistic and anti-satellite warfare. In their view, such developments posed an imminent risk that the military competition between the two major nuclear-weapon States would extend into outer space. All the above delegations expressed concern at the extensive use of outer space for military purposes that was already taking place. They pointed out that the majority of space objects now in orbit, while not meant as weapons or as weapons platforms, served military functions and constituted integral parts of weapons systems on earth and of strategic doctrines associated with the use of nuclear weapons.

9. Some delegations emphasized that the development of new space weapon systems will lead to an acceleration of the arms race, both horizontally and vertically, at the cost of existing legislation relating to outer space, arms limitation agreements and the disarmament process as a whole; amplify prevailing military asymmetries between the two major space Powers and their allies, on the one hand, and the non-aligned and neutral States, on the other; and will lead to the

introduction of new weapon technologies into regions not directly concerned with either of the two major space Powers, further undermining their security.

10. There was also criticism by some delegations concerning the use of reconnaissance and surveillance satellites by space Powers to monitor strategically-vital information about countries that have no way of controlling or having access to such information. Furthermore, the attention of the Committee was drawn to the fact that there had been instances where satellites had been used in support of military operations against developing countries. In this view, that situation, which had important implications for the security of most countries, did not reflect recognition of the common interest of all mankind in the progress of the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes, as stated in the preamble of 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.

11. Delegations of the group of socialist countries fully shared the view that outer space is the common heritage of mankind and that, consequently, its exploration and use should be preserved for exclusively peaceful purposes in order to promote scientific, economic and social development of all countries. They noted that up to the present, outer space has been an area free of weapons and that urgent measures have to be taken in order to prevent the extension of the arms race to outer space.

12. The same delegations emphasized that there was increasing concern at the threat of the spread of the arms race to outer space. In their view, this threat stemmed from the programme known as the "Strategic Defence Initiative", which is not a research programme as it is stated but aimed at the development and deployment in space of a new class of armament - attack space weapons.

13. These delegations elaborated on the adverse political, military, economic and other consequences that, in their opinion, an arms race in space would have. These consequences included destabilization of the strategic situation; increased threat of the outbreak of nuclear war; acceleration of the arms race in all

directions and growth of nuclear arsenals; undermining of existing treaties and of the prospects for arms limitation and reduction, and increase of military tension; vast unproductive expenditures; damage to the peaceful use of space and obstacles to international co-operation in the peaceful use of space.

14. Some other delegations shared the view that outer space was the common heritage of mankind and that, consequently, the exploration and use of outer space should be preserved for exclusively peaceful purposes to promote the scientific, economic and social development of all countries. They also shared the genuine concerns expressed on the part of many countries on the subject of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. They noted, however, that outer space is presently not, in fact, an area free of weapons. They stressed that the first task of the Ad Hoc Committee was to clarify ambiguities surrounding the existing legal régimes in outer space in terms of what was permitted, what was prohibited, what grey areas might exist and what gaps required attention. They pointed out that there was no agreement on the meaning of such basic terms as "peaceful purposes" or "militarization". It was noted that many activities in space, while of a military character, served a variety of functions that contributed to stability and to monitoring the implementation of disarmament agreements. In that context, these delegations mentioned the problem of the protection of satellites and pointed out that there were differing views regarding the protection already afforded by the existing legal régime, whether that protection needed to be strengthened and, if so, what scope it should be given. In their view, the consideration of proposals for additional measures to prevent an arms race in outer space presupposes that the Committee reaches a prior common understanding of what is permitted and what is prohibited.

15. With respect to the question of whether there was a threat of an arms race in outer space, one delegation noted that it believed that outer space should only be used for peaceful purposes and to that end it was engaged in bilateral negotiations. It was ready in the Ad Hoc Committee to discuss issues relating to outer space in a manner consistent with, and complementary to, the bilateral negotiations. It stressed that the Strategic Defence Initiative was only a research programme that was consistent with all international obligations of

its country, including existing treaties. It pointed out that one country possessed currently operational capabilities in this area and, for many years, had been conducting research into advanced technologies for strategic defence.

16. One delegation answered that its country had not been conducting research into advanced technologies for strategic defence.

17. Some delegations stressed that the ambiguities surrounding the existing legal régime could only be resolved or clarified in the process of elaboration of new agreements, as none other than States Parties to existing treaties had the competence to interpret those legal instruments. Those delegations believed that as far as the international community was concerned, the calling into question of the meaning of the terms in international instruments by States Parties themselves, placed these instruments in jeopardy. Therefore, these delegations emphasized that reference to ambiguities in existing legal instruments would be devoid of meaning and even have the effect of diverting attention if made outside the framework of negotiations of further agreement or agreements to prevent an arms race in outer space. In this context they expressed the need to engage in the preliminary task of clarifying ambiguities surrounding weaponization of outer space and the "state of art" in space weapons within the context of negotiation. In particular, the need to reach agreement on the meaning of such basic terms as "peaceful purposes", "militarization", or "weapons of mass destruction", especially since recent developments in weapon technology have blurred the traditionally accepted interpretation of those terms among the space powers.

18. All delegations welcomed the initiation of bilateral negotiations on space and nuclear arms and recognized their importance. At the same time, they stressed the importance of, and need for, a multilateral approach to issues relating to the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

19. Many delegations considered that the two negotiating parties should bear constantly in mind that not only their national interests but also the vital interests of all the peoples of the world are at stake and, accordingly, should keep the General Assembly and the Conference on Disarmament duly informed of the progress of their negotiations, without prejudice to the progress of the negotiations. These delegations further believed that bilateral negotiations do not in any way diminish the urgent need to initiate multilateral negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

20. With respect to existing agreements, multilateral as well as bilateral, relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, the Group of Socialist delegations emphasized that there exists already an international legal régime which places certain limitations on various arms and military activities in outer space. In their view, however, all the agreements are not sufficient to put an effective barrier against the extension of the arms race into space, as they leave open certain channels, such as the development and deployment in outer space of weapons or systems of weapons not defined as weapons of mass destruction, or the deployment of certain weapons-systems to be used against objects in space, or used from space against objects on Earth. They have concluded, therefore that concrete measures are needed urgently to prevent such developments as they would entail dangerously destabilizing consequences.

21. Some delegations answered that there already exists a substantial body of law - both customary and treaty law - that is applicable to activities in space. Adherence to this body of law provides assurance that outer space will only be used for peaceful purposes.

22. With respect to the legal régime applicable to outer space, it was stressed that, as affirmed in the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, activities in the exploration and use of outer space should be carried out in accordance with international law, including the Charter of the United Nations. In this connection, some delegations noted the relevance of the provisions of Article 2 (4) of the United Nations Charter concerning the non-use of force.

23. Some delegations considered that those provisions constituted a central element of the legal régime in outer space. They noted that the prohibition of the use of force was subject to Article 51 of the Charter, which recognizes the inherent right of individual and collective self-defence in case of armed attack. They expressed the view that Article 2 (4) of the Charter already afforded protection to space objects and that, therefore, this should be taken into account when considering the need for additional measures for the protection of satellites against the use of force.

24. Other delegations, while recognizing the importance of the general principle on the non-use of force, as laid down in the United Nations Charter, noted that it did not preclude the militarization of outer space, as evidenced by the conclusion of international agreements specifically relating to outer space,

inter alia, the 1967 Outer Space Treaty. It was also noted that Article 2 (4) did not prohibit the development, testing and deployment of strike space weapons. Furthermore, in regard to the reference to Article 51 of the Charter, they reiterated that this Article could not be invoked to justify the use or threat of use of force from outer space.

25. In the consideration of existing agreements, delegations discussed a number of multilateral and bilateral instruments, inter alia, the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water (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 (1967), the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space (1975), the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques (1977), the Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and other Celestial Bodies (1979) and the Treaty Between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems (1972). In this connection, reference was made to documents CD/OS/WP.6 and CD/OS/WP.7.

26. Considerable attention focused on the 1967 Outer Space Treaty and the significance of the Treaty was generally underlined. At the same time, various delegations stated that the Treaty contained terms that lent themselves to different interpretations. In addition, a number of delegations believed that, because of its limited scope, the Treaty was not sufficient to prevent an arms race in outer space. They pointed out that, while the Treaty, together with the Moon Treaty, provided for the complete demilitarization of the moon and other celestial bodies, as well as for their orbits and trajectories, as far as the orbit around the Earth was concerned, it only prohibited the placement there of any object carrying nuclear weapons or any other kind of weapons of mass destruction, or the stationing of such weapons in outer space in any other manner. In their view, therefore, there was a risk that the Treaty could be considered by some to leave open a number of options for the military use of outer space. This, however, in the judgement of these delegations, would run counter to the spirit of the Treaty, since its Preamble sets down that outer space should be used for peaceful purposes. Two delegations held that the arms control régime

applicable to outer space was far more comprehensive than the arms control régime on Earth. In this view, the Outer Space Treaty, together with the Partial Test Ban Treaty which, inter alia, prohibited nuclear explosions in outer space, had the effect of making outer space a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

27. Various delegations referred to the 1975 Registration Convention requiring States of registry to furnish to the Secretary-General of the United Nations information concerning space objects, including their general function. Those delegations felt that this Convention, if adequately implemented, could serve as a valuable confidence-building measure in that it would give greater transparency to outer space activities.

28. Some delegations held that the examination of the existing legal régime undertaken by the Ad Hoc Committee had confirmed the need to clarify ambiguities and arrive at consensus interpretations of what was permitted and what was prohibited. Many delegations held that the work of the Committee would be most successful if it proceeded by undertaking a complete examination of the present legal régime aimed at a common understanding of that régime. Other delegations believed that the discussion had shown that the existing body of international law applicable to outer space contained many loopholes to prevent effectively an arms race in outer space. Therefore, they believed that it was imperative to commence negotiations immediately with a view to arriving at agreement or agreements that will prevent such an arms race in outer space. Many other delegations pointed out that the Committee should instead direct its work towards practical measures preventing an arms race in outer space in all its aspects as recommended by United Nations General Assembly resolution 39/59.

29. A number of views and proposals were brought to the attention of the Committee (CD/274, CD/476, A/39/243, CD/607; CD/357, CD/PV.263, CD/540, para. 109; CD/540, para. 110; CD/579; CD/PV.252, CD/PV.301, CD/OS/WP.8; CD/PV.279; CD/PV.318; CD/PV.325).

30. Stressing the need to block all channels for the extension of the arms race into outer space, delegations of the group of socialist countries drew attention to the draft treaties on the prohibition of the stationing of weapons of any kind in outer space, submitted in 1981, contained in document CD/274, and on the prohibition of the use of force in outer space and from space against the Earth, submitted in 1983, contained in document CD/476, and to the proposal on the use

of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes for the benefit of all mankind, submitted in 1984. They also referred to their proposal, which called for an agreement on the prohibition and elimination of an entire class of weapons, namely, attack space systems of any kind - conventional, nuclear, laser, particle-beam or any other form - whether manned or unmanned. Such space systems should not be developed, tested or deployed, either for anti-missile defence or as anti-satellite systems, or for use against targets on Earth or in the air and systems that had already been developed should be destroyed. In their view, all these proposals provided a constructive basis for working out an agreement or agreements for the prevention of an arms race in outer space. In their opinion, which was shared by other delegations, a first step in that direction would be for other States to join in the unilateral moratorium already declared by one State on the launching of anti-satellite weapons in outer space, which would be in force as long as other States acted in the same way. These delegations were of the view that the 1983 draft treaty submitted to the Conference in document CD/476 was a good basis for conducting negotiations on the problem under consideration.

31. In connection with the latter proposal, some delegations observed that the text concerned had serious deficiencies, inter alia, because of its unequal approach, the imprecision of its definitions, and its lack of effective verification proposals.

32. Some other delegations rejected those assertions and pointed out that, if such preliminary observations had any ground at all, they could be considered in the course of the negotiations with a view to elaborating a generally agreed comprehensive agreement to prevent an arms race in outer space.

33. Various delegations referred to suggestions or proposals concerning the prohibition of anti-satellite systems and the protection of satellites. The view was expressed that the main task 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 should include the destruction of existing ASAT systems. Furthermore, in this view, 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 Telecommunications Convention.

34. Some delegations noted that there were a number of questions that would have to be addressed in the consideration of a ban on ASAT systems, inter alia, the definition of anti-satellite weapons, the problem of dual-purpose space craft and the problems posed by the fact that ABM and ASAT technologies shared common elements. It was suggested that, taking into account the need to assure the verifiability of eventual treaty commitments, the first objective should be to prohibit untested anti-satellite systems, i.e., systems capable of hitting satellites in high orbit. The desirability of a ban on such systems was stressed on the grounds that high altitude satellites performed a number of stabilizing functions. The view was expressed that an agreement banning the development, testing and deployment of high-altitude ASAT systems should be regarded as a first step towards more comprehensive agreements to prevent an arms race in outer space.

35. Various delegations noted that bilateral agreements, such as the 1972 ABM Treaty and the two SALT agreements, provided protection for satellites of the parties that served as national technical means of verification and suggested the desirability of multilateralizing that immunity to cover the satellites of third countries.

36. On this question, the view was also expressed that the Conference on Disarmament should, in its exploration of issues relevant to arms control in outer space, consider the possibility of the protection from attack of all satellites which contributed to the preservation of strategic stability and which were instrumental in monitoring arms control and disarmament agreements. Furthermore, this same protection should be extended to the ground stations essential for the operation of those satellites.

37. One delegation, recalling that nuclear-weapon States had used military satellites in support of military actions against developing countries, held that this was a major consideration to be taken into account in connection with the question of the protection of satellites. It further stated that international peace and security could not be allowed to depend on such concepts as strategic stability for they lay at the heart of the action/reaction process that perpetuated the nuclear arms race and with it the danger of the annihilation of mankind.

38. In connection with the statement in the paragraph above, some delegations pointed out that strategic stability is an objectively important factor in maintaining and strengthening peace and international security, and that they continued to strive to maintain military balance at the lowest possible level.

39. Other delegations added that the concept of strategic stability and the means of its implementation employed by their countries were fully consistent with the obligations of all States to settle international disputes by peaceful means and to refrain from the use or threat of use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State.

40. Some delegations were of the opinion that all aspects of the arms race in outer space should be dealt with in order to achieve a comprehensive régime to prevent an arms race in outer space. In their view, the principles of demilitarization should be extended to encompass outer space as a whole.

41. Various delegations held that verifiability was a fundamental criterion that should be applied in the consideration of proposals relating to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. They pointed out that, as discussed in document CD/OS/WP.7, in the case of most existing agreements, for example, the ENMOD Convention and the Outer Space Treaty, verification provisions were limited. They suggested that, at the present stage of technical development, some sort of international direct inspection should be applied, including on-site inspection, whenever feasible. Some delegations believed that consideration should be given to the establishment of an international agency to verify compliance so that all Parties may have access to the results of verification. In that connection, a number of delegations referred to the proposal for the establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency. Many delegations supporting the proposal for the establishment of an international satellite monitoring agency, pointed out that it would, inter alia, overcome the credibility gap that besets the existing national technical means of verification. They, however, held that an imposition of verifiability as a fundamental criterion would have the effect of creating an insurmountable obstacle to all attempts at negotiating agreements to prevent an arms race in outer space. They alluded in this context to the relevant paragraphs of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Other delegations noted in the same

context that one relevant paragraph of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations devoted to disarmament (paragraph 31) states that "Disarmament and arms limitation agreements should provide for adequate measures of verification satisfactory to all parties concerned in order to create the necessary confidence and ensure that they are being observed by all parties. The form and modalities of the verification to be provided for in any specific agreement depend upon and should be determined by the purposes, scope and nature of the agreement. Agreements should provide for the participation of parties directly or through the United Nations system in the verification process. Where appropriate, a combination of several methods of verification as well as other compliance procedures should be employed".

42. Some delegations, noting the inadequacy of the information furnished to the Secretary-General of the United Nations under the 1975 Convention on the Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space, suggested the need to consider ways and means of improving the implementation and, as appropriate, augmenting the provisions of the Convention so that the international community may have detailed information on the nature and purposes of space activities. They believed that this would be a valuable confidence-building measure and would facilitate verification.

43. Some delegations also mentioned suggestions concerning the possibility of developing, as a confidence-building measure, "rules of the road" for space objects.

44. Some delegations believed that, in view of the advanced technology involved in the exploration and use of outer space, and the fact that only a few States were in a position to benefit therefrom, it was necessary in the consideration of proposals to contemplate ways and means of strengthening international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space, so that all States would have access to all areas of space technology without discrimination to promote their economic and social development according to their needs, interests and priorities. It was also suggested that surveillance and reconnaissance activities by satellite should be entrusted to an international body that could set up data banks from which any country would be able to obtain information relevant to its needs. Such a body could also be used to provide advance information on crisis situations, so as to enhance the crisis management role of the United Nations.

45. Some delegations, outlining their general approach to the consideration of proposals relating to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, stated that, in their view, a proposal should meet three criteria. First, the proposal should apply equally to all parties. Second, it should be verifiable. Third, there was the question whether the proposal, even if it applied equally and was verifiable, would, if implemented, enhance stability and security. These delegations were of the opinion that all of the proposals on this subject must meet those criteria.

46. Some delegations questioned the validity of the notion of stability put forward by nuclear-weapon States and their allies as a criterion to assess the need for and desirability of measures to prevent an arms race in outer space. In their view, it was an integral element of strategic concepts and doctrines that reflected the narrow security perceptions of the two alliances vis-à-vis each other. These delegations believed that questions relating to the prevention of an arms race in outer space should be considered in a much broader perspective taking full account of the concerns and interests of non-aligned and neutral countries.

47. In connection with this statement, some delegations recalled that their position concerning the prevention of an arms race in outer space takes fully into account the interests of all countries and peoples and had nothing to do with the "narrow security perceptions" mentioned above.

48. Other delegations reiterated that the criteria used by them in implementing their efforts for the prevention of an arms race in outer space were as follows:

- that outer space is the common heritage of all mankind;
- that the exploration and use of outer space should be preserved for exclusively peaceful purposes in order to promote the scientific, economic and social development of all countries.

Furthermore, in their view, none of their strategic concepts or doctrines were at variance with these criteria.

49. In the opinion of many delegations, the consideration of the proposals put forward before the Ad Hoc Committee had shown that there were areas of agreement on a number of major aspects of the problem and that, consequently, there was a good basis for pursuing the elaboration of an agreement or agreements to prevent an arms race in outer space. Many other delegations were of the view that the discussion, while useful, had been general and preliminary in nature. Some pointed out that for future discussions proposals should be elaborated and refined.

50. A number of delegations emphasized the need for the space powers to demonstrate the necessary political will, not only to avoid further militarization of outer space, but also to recognize that the pursuit of their interests in this sphere cannot take precedence over the interests of the international community.

51. Various delegations believed that, in view of the complexity and technical nature of the subject, the work of the Ad Hoc Committee would benefit greatly from the participation of experts. Accordingly, they suggested that at an early stage during the next session consideration should be given to ways and means of organizing that participation.

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52. Many delegations stressed that they had accepted the mandate because it expressly indicated that there would be a first exploratory stage and that "as a first step at this stage", it would be necessary to examine, "through substantive and general consideration, issues relevant to the prevention of an arms race in outer space". In their view, it was clear from the explicit reference in the last line in the mandate, that the stage referred to must end at the same time as the 1985 session of the Ad Hoc Committee and that next year negotiations should begin with a view to the "conclusion of an agreement or agreements", as appropriate, to prevent an arms race in outer space, as specifically stated in resolution 39/59 approved by 150 votes in favour and none against.

53. Other delegations stressed that in their view, the accepted mandate was a relevant and realistic one that permitted a considerable amount of concrete work which would not interfere, undercut or in any way prejudge the bilateral negotiations under way between the United States of America and the USSR on this issue. Furthermore, those delegations made clear their hope that the mandate would not expire at the end of the 1985 session should the Committee not have completed the kind of exploratory work envisaged by those delegations in the mandate.

54. Delegations of the socialist countries, fully sharing the opinion expressed in paragraph 52 above, upheld the view that the Conference on Disarmament should re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee at the beginning of its 1986 session with an appropriate mandate enabling it to start negotiations on concrete

practical measures urgently needed to prevent an arms race in all its aspects in outer space, as recommended by the relevant resolution of the United Nations General Assembly. Furthermore, the group of socialist countries proposed that Ambassador L. Bayart (Mongolia) be appointed as Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space for its 1986 session.

55. Other delegations, taking note of the above-mentioned proposal of the socialist countries, stated that further consultations would be necessary in order to examine this matter.

IV. Conclusion

56. The Ad Hoc Committee had a wide-ranging discussion that contributed to clarifying the complexity of a number of problems and to a better understanding of positions. The importance and urgency of preventing an arms race in outer space was recognized by the Committee and, consequently, all efforts should be made to assure that substantive work on the agenda item entitled "Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space" will continue at the next session of the Conference.