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PREVENTION OF AN ARMS RACE IN OUTER SPACE

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

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GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

[Original: English]

[6 April 1988]

1. The German Democratic Republic persistently favours the prevention of an arms race in outer space and advocates its termination on Earth, including effective steps of arms limitation and disarmament. It holds the view that outer space should be explored and used for exclusively peaceful purposes to benefit the economic and social development of nations.
2. Deploying weapons in outer space would prompt an escalation of the arms race world wide, in particular in qualitative terms, and add to the risk of a nuclear war. The present set of treaties and agreements on arms limitation and disarmament would be jeopardised and disarmament negotiations undercut. Huge material, intellectual and financial resources would be wasted, and serious harm be done to international co-operation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes.
3. In the nuclear and space age, security can no longer be achieved by means of military technology but only by political means, with due account taken of the legitimate security interests of all States. To renounce the threat of use or use of military force in international relations, to eliminate the material basis of warfare through effective measures of disarmament and to pursue dialogue and co-operation for the mutual benefit have today become an objective requirement for strengthening international security, safeguarding world peace and resolving the global problems facing mankind. Such a concept of security includes a qualitatively new level of international co-operation in the exploration and peaceful use of outer space.
4. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America, as the leading space nations and possessing the biggest nuclear capabilities, bear special responsibility for the arms race not to spread to outer space and for this sphere of human activity to be used for peaceful purposes only. The German Democratic Republic places great expectations in the outcome of the Soviet-American negotiations, the declared objective of which is to draw up effective agreements that will prevent an arms race in outer space and terminate it on Earth, cut nuclear armaments and reinforce strategic stability.
5. The understanding the USSR and the United States reached at the 1987 Washington summit to work out an agreement in which both sides pledge to observe the ABM Treaty, as signed in 1972, while conducting their research, development and testing as required, which are permitted by the Treaty, and not to withdraw from it for a specified period of time, is an important step to ward off the danger of the arms race spreading to outer space. The German Democratic Republic supports the proposals submitted by the USSR for maintaining and strengthening the ABM Treaty.
6. The present régime of international law relating to outer space encompasses important provisions for limiting the military activities of States in space.

However, further result-oriented negotiations, bilateral and multilateral, as well as effective and verifiable agreements, are needed to preclude an arms race in outer space permanently. Such agreements must completely ban the testing and deployment of space weapons and ensure the inviolability of space objects. An international agreement prohibiting the threat or use of force in outer space or from outer space against the Earth would be the direct means to this end.

7. It also appears possible to come to a comprehensive solution by partial steps. What is necessary is an internationally defined general and complete ban of ASAT weapons, space-based anti-missile systems and of any other space-based weapons aimed at targets in outer space, in the atmosphere, or on Earth. A ban on anti-satellite weapons could be the first step to be agreed. In 1987 the People's Republic of Mongolia and the German Democratic Republic submitted a document at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament entitled "Main provision of a Treaty on the Prohibition of Anti-Satellite Weapons and on Ways to Ensure the Immunity of Space Objects" (CD/777). The document proposes to prohibit the following space activities:

- (a) The threat of use or use of force against space objects;
- (b) The deliberate destruction or damaging of space objects;
- (c) Interference with the normal functioning of space objects or changing their trajectory;
- (d) The development, testing and deployment of weapons, in particular of ASAT weapons, designed for the above-mentioned purposes;
- (e) The use of manned spacecraft for such purposes;
- (f) The modification of space objects for ASAT purposes.

Moreover, such a treaty could stipulate that ASAT systems already existing should be eliminated under international verification. Additional agreement on "space traffic regulations" and on a "code of conduct for space activities of States" would further add to the security of objects in space.

8. The complex use of verification methods such as an expanded exchange of information; the use of national technical means of verification; a multilateral consultative mechanism; or an international system for inspections with extensive rights, including the right to on-site inspections, could ensure that such an agreement would be complied with. The German Democratic Republic also supports the proposal of the Six-Nation Initiative that a moratorium on testing ASAT weapons should be agreed as the initial step.

9. Implementation of the Soviet proposal for establishing an international inspection system to monitor the non-deployment of weapons in space would be of great importance for preventing an arms race in outer space. Moreover, the French proposals for setting up an international satellite-monitoring body as well as the

possibilities offered by the Canadian PACSAT concept could be taken into account in elaborating the verification methods.

10. Under the pertinent resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, the Geneva Conference on Disarmament, which is the sole multilateral negotiating body on global issues of disarmament, has a crucial role to play in achieving multilateral accords aimed at definitely closing all channels to a spread of the arms race to outer space.

11. Discussing the questions that are of relevance for the prevention of an arms race in outer space and analysing the present space régime under international law, the ad hoc committee of the Conference on agenda item 5 has been engaged in what is valuable work for the preparation of concrete negotiations on an agreement. The experience gained therefrom and the proposals on effective measures for the prevention of an arms race in space put forward so far form a solid basis for entering a new stage of preparing future negotiations in 1988, which should define the subject of the negotiations and consider the main elements of the agreement(s) to be concluded.

12. In order to support the work of the ad hoc committee it may be advisable to form a group of experts whose task would be to provide the committee with well-founded and harmonized recommendations on scientific and technological aspects of what should be covered by the ban, and on monitoring compliance with the agreement(s) to be concluded.

13. The German Democratic Republic attaches paramount importance to the exploration and peaceful use of outer space for the benefit of mankind. Generous support and assistance from the USSR and the use of that country's highly sophisticated space flight technology has made it possible for the German Democratic Republic to participate in space exploration with its own research work and indigenous instruments and gadgets. The experience gained in this field world wide so far shows that this important scientific branch can contribute increasingly to the economic and social development of nations and to the solution of pressing global problems facing mankind. At the same time it has become obvious that this requires international co-operation at a qualitatively higher level where States jointly develop and apply new space technologies and carry out large-scale projects.

14. For this reason the German Democratic Republic backs the proposal for a phased approach to the setting up of an international space organization in the framework of the United Nations system. Its role could consist in promoting international co-operation in the exploration and peaceful uses of space, in enabling all States to have access to scientific and technological achievements in this field, and in collaborating in the practical application of space research findings with a view to accelerating economic and social development. At the same time, tasks relating to monitoring compliance with agreements on the prevention of an arms race in outer space could be entrusted to such an organization.

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

[Original: Russian]

[22 September 1988]

1. The Soviet Union feels that preventing the extension of the arms race into outer space is essential to ensure progress on disarmament and the success of efforts to make the world safe. The deployment of space weapons would not only undermine strategic stability, but also make most countries dependent upon the will of a limited number of space Powers.

2. An important factor in preventing an arms race in outer space is the strict observance of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Limitation of Anti-Ballistic Missile Systems, which is an important and integral part of international law. Maintenance of the Treaty is also an essential condition for progress in reducing the strategic offensive weapons of the USSR and the United States. Accordingly, in bilateral negotiations with the United States, the Soviet Union has consistently pursued a policy of achieving an agreement on the observance of the ABM Treaty as signed in 1972 and not departing from it during the agreed period. As a result of the consideration of this question during the Soviet-American high-level talks in Moscow, the delegations of the two countries were commissioned to prepare a joint draft text of a separate agreement to that effect.

3. Accepting the need for a global solution to the problem of preventing an arms race in outer space, the Soviet Union favours multilateral talks on this issue and intensification of the work of the Conference on Disarmament for that purpose. Guided by the goal of establishing a strict universal ban on the deployment of any weapons in space, the USSR, at the 1987 session of the Conference on Disarmament, proposed that the international community, without waiting for the conclusion of the respective outer space agreement, should proceed to establish a system of international verification with a view to preventing the deployment in outer space of weapons of any kind, with an international inspectorate occupying a key role.

4. This USSR proposal found concrete expression in the Soviet document entitled "Establishment of an international system of verification of the non-deployment of weapons of any kind in outer space" (CD/817) submitted for consideration to the Conference on Disarmament in March 1988. The document provides for the establishment of an international space inspectorate, whose main task would be to implement measures to verify that objects launched into and stationed by States parties in outer space are not weapons and are not equipped with weapons of any kind. To help the inspectorate perform its functions, States parties would grant its representatives access to objects to be launched into outer space, would provide them with the necessary technical assistance, and would inform the inspectorate in detail of every forthcoming space launching. The Soviet proposal also has provisions for the permanent presence of international teams of inspectors, at all test sites of the States parties intended for the launching of space objects, for inspections at agreed depots, industrial enterprises, laboratories and test centres, and for emergency inspections, without the right of refusal, where an undeclared launching of a space object is suspected.

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5. The Soviet Union feels that the problem of preventing the arms race in outer space is closely linked to the problems of developing international co-operation in the peaceful conquest of outer space. The establishment of a World Space Organization, performing both co-ordinating functions regarding the peaceful conquest of space and verification functions to ensure that weapons are not launched into space would be an effective and comprehensive solution guaranteeing the peaceful use of outer space.

6. With these considerations in mind, the Soviet Union, in June 1988, submitted to the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space the working paper entitled "Basic provisions of the Charter of a World Space Organization" (A/AC.105/L.171), which could serve as a focal point for broad international co-operation for the exploration and use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes. The document also defines the following purposes of such an organization: to co-ordinate efforts undertaken by States and international organizations in the context of peaceful space activities; to facilitate for all States access to and participation in space activities and the benefits derived therefrom; and to verify compliance with international agreements to prevent the extension of the arms race into outer space. The document analyses in detail questions related to the structure, principles of operation and financing of the organization, as well as its relationship to the United Nations and other international organizations.

7. The Soviet Union, which supports action to prevent the extension of the arms race into outer space and to develop international co-operation for the peaceful conquest of outer space, is prepared to consider, in a constructive spirit, any proposals to that end.
