

German Delegation

30.06.05

CD Plenary Meeting on the „Prevention of an arms race in outer space“

- 1 - The rapid technological development and the political changes of the past years have made the outer space an important area of preventive arms control. The importance of the civil and commercial use of outer space as well as the dependence of highly industrialized societies on systems based in outer space, especially in the spheres of communication, navigation, environmental protection, weather forecast and monitoring is growing. At the same time, military use of outer space plays a growing role, too.

In view of these developments, framework regulations for the reliable civil as well as legitimate military use of the outer space have become necessary in order to avoid outer space becoming an unsecure area. Arms control and disarmament are not ends in themselves, they are tools to enhance security. The existing legal framework, only prohibiting the deployment of weapons of mass destruction, military bases and nuclear test explosions in outer space, seems insufficient and requires amendments.

Germany has clearly declared itself together with the overwhelming majority of the UN member states, against deploying any kind of weapon in outer space and is in favour of starting discussions and possibly negotiations on the conclusion of a international "Agreement on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space" at the Conference on Disarmament as soon as possible.

As reiterated in Res. 59/65, the CD, as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, has the primary role in the negotiation of such a multilateral agreement and is invited to complete the examination and updating of the mandate contained in its decision (CD 1125) of 13 February 1992 and to establish an Ad Hoc Committee.

Against this background, Germany reiterates its support for the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee to deal with the prevention of an arms race in outer space as contained in para. 4 of the revised A5 proposal (CD/1693/Rev. 1).

Furthermore, Germany welcomes any effort in this regard, as e.g. the Russian-Chinese working paper (CD/1679) entitled "Possible elements for a future international legal agreement on the prevention of the deployment of weapons in outer space, the threat or use of force against outer space objects" as well as the different non-papers on aspects relevant to a possible future agreement which could be used as a basis for further substantive discussion on this subject.