

Zimbabwe

**INTERVENTION BY H.E. B.G. CHIDYAUSIKU AT THE OCCASION
OF THE PRESENTATION OF A JOINT WORKING PAPER BY CHINA
AND RUSSIA DURING CD PLENARY ON 27TH JUNE 2002**

Mr. President, at the outset, allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. My delegation wishes to express its disposition to work with you. My delegation also wishes to pay tribute to your predecessors for the very constructive efforts they undertook in order to move forward the work of the CD.

Mr. President, my delegation as a co-sponsor, fully supports the Joint Working Paper on 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 we speak, Mr. President, the entire human race is threatened with the real possibility of nuclear extinction and my delegation welcomes any initiative that minimizes that risk. Indeed Mr. President, outer space is a common heritage for mankind whose exploration and use should be confined to purely peaceful purposes.

We wish to emphasise the urgency of elaborating a comprehensive legal regime to deal with the issue of deployment of weapons in outer space as envisaged in paragraph 80 of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly.

In this respect, we strongly condemn unilateralism and any resort to unilaterally imposed prescriptions. We consider the CD as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body which has the mandate to negotiate multilateral agreement (s) including the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects.

Mr. President, my delegation is extremely concerned that the CD has failed to agree on a Programme of Work in the past 3 years or so. We think the impasse is not only irresponsible but unacceptable and undermines the credibility of this august forum. We remain committed to the Amorin proposals as contained in Document CD 1624. We view these proposals as forming a good basis to advance the work of the CD.

In conclusion, Mr. President, my delegation wishes to restate its full sponsorship and support for the Joint Working Paper as a step in the right direction in outlawing the deployment of nuclear weapons in outer space. We call for urgent elaboration of an international treaty obligating Nuclear States not to extend the arms race to outer space.

Thank you,