

ПОСТОЯННОЕ ПРЕДСТАВИТЕЛЬСТВО
РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ
ПРИ КОНФЕРЕНЦИИ ПО РАЗОРУЖЕНИЮ
В ЖЕНЕВЕ



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DE LA CONFERENCE DU DESARMEMENT
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STATEMENT

BY

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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
RUSSIAN FEDERATION
AT THE PLENARY MEETING OF THE
CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

Geneva, 9 June 2005

Mr. President,

To our regret, the Conference on Disarmament has not yet been able to reach a consensus on the Program of Work and re-establish an Ad Hoc Committee on prevention of an arms race in outer space. Meanwhile, this is a major issue of international security. Unfortunately, the news, arriving during last weeks, make this issue even more urgent. The CD can and should make its real and tangible contribution to the solution of this problem.

Russia has been consistently advocating the commencement of negotiations at the CD on a legally binding international instrument on prevention of placement of weapons in outer space. Nonetheless, in order to facilitate a search for consensus, we expressed our readiness to agree with the "to deal with" mandate of an Ad Hoc Committee on PAROS as proposed by the A5. We expect a reciprocal flexibility which at last will open the way for adoption of a balanced program of work of the CD and resumption of its substantive activities.

Mr. President,

In June 2002 the delegations of the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China together with a group of co-sponsoring states submitted their joint 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". We were quite satisfied with our partners' response to this document. The majority of delegations took active part in its discussion in the focused open-ended meetings held by the co-sponsors and in the course of fruitful bilateral contacts. The fact, that the Russian-Chinese initiative on non-placement of weapons in outer space stimulated intensive discussions, demonstrated that the issues raised in it were topical. It also indicated readiness of the majority of the CD member-states to re-launch substantive work of the Conference on this issue. The detailed and competent exchange of views revealed a growing concern of the international community of the real danger of an arms race proliferation into outer space, as well as a support of an idea of keeping outer space free from weapons of any kind and of launching negotiations aimed at conclusion of a relevant international legally binding instrument. In this context, states expressed, *inter alia*, their support of efforts by Russia, China and other nations directed at the practical implementation of the UNGA resolution "Prevention of an arms race in outer space".

A series of discussions resulted in a number of interesting ideas and proposals, put together by the co-sponsors in an informal paper titled "Compilation of Comments and Suggestions to the CD Working Paper CD/1679", which was distributed at the Conference on Disarmament on July 31, 2003. All substantive ideas, proposals and comments which could be used by the co-sponsors in their further work on CD/1679 were registered there. Thus, we took the way of accumulating ideas in a parallel "Compilation", rather than improving the document itself. It was done this way so that the co-sponsors could prepare on this basis a draft text of a legal instrument to be discussed in the Ad Hoc Committee on PAROS – after reestablishment of this Committee – and not a new version of the Working Paper. At the same time, preparation of the "Compilation" has contributed to clarification of a number of aspects of the Russian-Chinese initiative, and was conducive to in-depth development of the theme.

A variety of constructive and important views on PAROS were expressed during the CD informal plenary on May 27, 2004, as well as the CD formal plenary on August 26, 2004. We also note with gratitude the attention paid to the Russian-Chinese initiative at international conferences and workshops. In this regard, we would like to mention, among the others, the successful and thoughtful international workshop held in Geneva on March 25-26, 2004 by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade of Canada, UNIDIR and a group of widely-known NGOs from Canada and the United States. Organized by China, Russia, UNIDIR and the Simons Foundation from Canada, an authoritative international conference "Safeguarding Space Security: Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space", which was held in this Chamber on March 21-22, 2005, has made its positive contribution to elaboration of this issue.

While developing further their initiative, delegations of Russia and China jointly prepared and distributed in August 2004 in the CD two thematic non-papers titled "Existing International Legal Instruments and Prevention of the Weaponisation of Outer Space" and "Verification Aspects of PAROS". Addressing two specific aspects of CD/1679, they respond to some questions raised during previous discussions and provide potential guidelines for future work. Along with the other above-mentioned documents, they could lay the foundation for the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on PAROS after it is re-established.

The Russian and the Chinese delegations to the CD continue to elaborate on their initiative on the prevention of placement of weapons in outer space. As we promised earlier, today we are glad to present another thematic joint non-paper prepared by our two delegations (it is distributed together with the text of our statement). The new non-paper is titled "Definition Issues Regarding Legal Instruments on the Prevention of the Weaponisation of Outer Space".

As you may remember, in the course of discussions of the Russian-Chinese initiative some countries drew our attention to the fact that CD/1679 did not contain a special section on "terms and definitions". This, in their view, leaves the room for arbitrary interpretation of some key obligations of an international legal instrument that Russia and China propose. But there also exist an opposite viewpoint: following the example of international treaties now in force and relevant to outer space, the future instrument should not be overloaded with definitions. In the new non-paper we distribute today you will find our views on this issue, possible variants of its solution, as well as some specific proposals on eventual definitions of such key terms as "outer space", "outer space object", "weapon (in outer space)" and others. Similar to the previous Russian-Chinese documents, this one too is mainly an invitation to common creative work, a food for thought and further discussions. We expect that the non-paper distributed today will be carefully studied by all delegations. Your comments and observations are mostly welcome.

Subsequently, it is our intention to organize a new meeting of an open-ended group to discuss all three thematic non-papers by the Russian and Chinese delegations. We hope that a thorough discussion of the issues raised in them will bring us closer to our objective – working out of an international legal instrument on the prevention of placement of weapons in outer space.

We would also appreciate any comments pertaining to these non-papers, delivered in any manner, including bilateral contacts.

Thank you.