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PREVENTION OF AN ARMS RACE IN OUTER SPACE

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE

Letter dated 4 July 1984 from the Permanent Representative of
the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you the text of the statement of the Soviet Government dated 29 June 1984, which has been officially transmitted to the Government of the United States of America.

I request you to circulate this statement as an official document of the General Assembly under items 54 and 72 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) O. TROYANOVSKY

* A/39/50.

ANNEX

STATEMENT OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT

The Soviet Government most insistently draws attention to the need for urgent measures to prevent the militarization of outer space.

The spread of the arms race to outer space would sharply increase the risk of military catastrophe and undermine prospects for the limitation and reduction of armaments in general. Awareness of this fact is growing everywhere and demands are mounting for a halt to such a turn of events before it is too late. Everything must be done not to miss this opportunity and safely to block every single channel leading to the militarization of outer space.

In practical terms this means that no weapons of any kind - conventional, nuclear, laser, particle-beam or any other weapons - should be introduced into outer space and deployed there on either manned or unmanned systems. No space weapons in any basing mode should be developed, tested or deployed for anti-missile defence, as anti-satellite devices, or for use against targets on earth or in the air. Such weapons as have already been developed should be destroyed.

The use of force in space or from space against the earth, or from earth against objects in space, should be banned for all time.

This approach, under which a whole class of armaments - attack space systems, including anti-satellite and anti-missile space-based systems and any land-, air-, or sea-launched systems intended to hit targets in outer space - would be banned and eliminated, makes it possible to monitor reliably the compliance of the parties with their commitments.

The Government of the Soviet Union proposes to the Government of the United States that Soviet-United States negotiations on preventing the militarization of outer space should be initiated at the level of specially appointed delegations. The question of the complete mutual renunciation of anti-satellite systems should also be resolved within the framework of those negotiations.

The negotiations could start in September this year in Vienna (Austria) subject to the consent of the Austrian Government. The specific date for the opening of the negotiations would be agreed through diplomatic channels.

With a view to providing favourable conditions for the achievement of agreement and taking practical measures even now to prevent an arms race in outer space, the Soviet Union also proposes to impose, on a reciprocal basis, a moratorium on the testing and deployment of space weapons from the date of the opening of the negotiations. Naturally, other States would be welcome to join this moratorium.

As the leading Powers in space exploration, the USSR and the United States must do everything in their power to ensure that space is peaceful for mankind and

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to set an example for other States in accomplishing this task facing the whole of humanity by laying the foundations for a multilateral agreement to that effect.

In view of the urgency and importance of the question, the Soviet Government expects an early and positive response from the Government of the United States to this appeal.
