Thirty-ninth session
Agenda items 54 and 72 of the provisional agenda

PREVENTION OF AN ARMS RACE IN OUTER SPACE

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE

Letter dated 30 July 1984 from the Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission 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 a TASS statement of 27 July 1984.

I request you, Sir, to have this statement circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under items 54 and 72 of the provisional agenda of its thirty-ninth session.

(Signed) R. OVINNIKOV
Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations

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ANNEX

STATEMENT BY TASS

As was reported earlier, in order to clarify the ambiguous position adopted by the United States Government in respect of the Soviet Union's proposal of 29 June for holding talks on preventing the arms race from spreading to outer space, the Soviet side recently suggested publishing a joint Soviet-United States statement that would clearly declare the agreement of the USSR and the United States to begin talks with the purpose of working out and concluding an agreement on preventing the militarization of outer space, including total mutual renunciation of anti-satellite systems, and an agreement to impose, as from the opening day of the talks, a mutual moratorium on the testing and deployment of space armaments.

In other words, the Soviet draft of such a statement transmitted to the United States side was drawn up in strict conformity with the content of the Soviet Union's proposal of 29 June, which, according to statements by United States officials, was accepted by the United States without any preconditions.

And what happened? When the United States was forced to disclose its actual position, its reply left no doubt that it had been playing a deceitful game on the question of the Soviet-proposed talks on preventing the militarization of outer space and had in fact no intention of entering into such talks.

The counter-proposal of the United States side for a draft statement does not even contain the words "outer space", let alone talk about preventing the militarization of space or about the introduction of a moratorium on space weapons. Instead, the United States proposes a vague wording concerning some kind of meeting to discuss and specify approaches to negotiations, and the subject of those negotiations remains unknown.

The meaning of that wording is clear: to avoid negotiations on the vitally important problem raised by the Soviet Union — the prohibition of space weapons — and instead of discussing that subject, to substitute a discussion on everything in general and nothing in particular, using that to promote the United States side's transitory aims, which have nothing to do with the task of ending the arms race. By this move, the United States Administration has demonstrated once more in the most obvious manner that it does not intend to give up its militaristic course and its intensified efforts to carry out large-scale military programmes. It can be seen that the very possibility of serious negotiations on arms limitation is perceived in Washington as an obstacle to the realization of such a policy. First, the United States broke off the Geneva negotiations on nuclear armaments, and now it is making it impossible to begin negotiations on outer space.

The stand taken by the United States Government towards negotiations on preventing the militarization of outer space cannot but evoke vigorous condemnation.