

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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**LETTER DATED 4 OCTOBER 2002 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT
ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE
TRANSMITTING THE TEXT OF THE RESPONSE BY THE MINISTER FOR
FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, IGOR IVANOV, TO A
QUESTION FROM THE RUSSIAN MEDIA REGARDING THE PREVENTION
OF THE DEPLOYMENT OF WEAPONS IN OUTER SPACE**

I have the honour to forward herewith the text of a statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Igor Ivanov, in response to a question put to him on 2 October 2002 by the Russian media regarding the prevention of the deployment of weapons in outer space.

I would be grateful if this statement could be issued as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament and distributed to the delegations of all member States of the Conference and non-member States participating in its work.

(Signed): Leonid SKOTNIKOV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the
Russian Federation to the
Conference on Disarmament

**Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Igor Ivanov,
in response to a question put by the Russian media regarding the prevention of the
deployment of weapons in outer space**

Question: In your statement to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session, you returned yet again to the issue of preventing the deployment of weapons in outer space and mentioned a proposal to develop a comprehensive agreement designed to preserve outer space as a zone free from any kind of weapon. Could you give us some more details about Russia's approach to this issue? Are there any new elements in the Russian position on this?

Response: Russia, as everyone knows, has always campaigned for outer space to be kept peaceful and for talks to be commenced, as soon as possible, on preventing the deployment of weapons in outer space. Over the last few years we have come up with a number of focused initiatives designed to prevent outer space being turned into an arena of armed confrontation.

Thus, in his statement at the Millennium Summit in New York in September 2000, the Russian President, Vladimir Putin, offered to host an international conference in Moscow in spring 2001, under the auspices of the United Nations, on preventing the militarization of outer space, timed to mark the fortieth anniversary of the first manned flight into outer space. That conference, organized with the two-fold aim of studying ways of preventing the deployment of weapons in outer space and of exploring prospects for the peaceful use of space, was held from 11 to 14 April 2001 under the slogan: "Space without weapons: an arena for peaceful cooperation in the twenty-first century". Some 1,300 delegates from 105 different countries attended the conference.

In our statement to the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session, on 24 September 2001, we suggested that work begin on the preparation of a comprehensive agreement on the non-deployment of weapons in outer space and on the non-use or threat of force against space objects and we also sketched out specific obligations that could underpin such an agreement. We also put forward the idea of placing a moratorium on deploying weapons in outer space, pending a relevant international agreement.

I would also like to recall that the Russian initiatives announced in 2001, at the fifty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly, were embodied in the Russian-Chinese working paper on possible elements for a future international legal agreement on the prevention of the deployment of weapons in outer space, which was circulated in 2002 as a document of the Conference on Disarmament.

Russia believes that an agreement of this kind will help ensure that peaceful activities can be effectively conducted in outer space and that multilateral cooperation can be expanded in

this area, in conformity with international law, and that it will help strengthen the international legal regime for the protection of present and future space objects on the basis of the principle enshrined in the United Nations Charter of the non-use of force or the threat of force in international relations.

We are also prepared to accept a new mechanism to ensure openness and to build confidence in the domain of outer space: the advance notification of planned launches of space objects, their purpose and their basic parameters.

2 October 2002

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