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REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ADDITIONAL ITEM IN THE  
AGENDA OF THE THIRTY-NINTH SESSIONUSE OF OUTER SPACE EXCLUSIVELY FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES  
FOR THE BENEFIT OF MANKINDLetter dated 27 September 1984 from the First Deputy Chairman of the  
Council of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union  
of Soviet Socialist Republics to the Secretary-General

The Soviet Union proposes the inclusion in the agenda of the thirty-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly of an important and urgent item entitled "Use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes for the benefit of mankind".

This proposal is motivated by a desire to ensure that the inexhaustible opportunities for the use of outer space are utilized in the interests of all mankind and not to its detriment.

The peaceful exploration of outer space, which has become a symbol of the spectacular achievements of science and technology, is destined to serve as an effective means of solving many global problems, including that of economic development. This involves, for example, the study and wider use of the Earth's natural resources, natural disaster control, provision of food to the population, improvements in transport and communications, and development of promising materials and technologies. Positive experience has already been accumulated in concerting the efforts of States in this domain, including joint missions by astronauts of different countries, rescue of people and of vessels and aircraft in distress, international scientific and technological experiments and research, and co-operation in developing spacecraft and placing them in orbit.

However, the danger that outer space may be transformed into a springboard for aggression and war has lately become increasingly real. Programmes are under way to develop space weapons designed to destroy objects in outer space and to strike from outer space against targets on Earth. These actions, prompted by calculations of gaining military superiority, can make an arms race in outer space irreversible

and result in a drastic destabilization of the situation, and are heightening the risk of nuclear war. Spreading the arms race to outer space would impair the prospects for limiting and reducing armaments in general.

Understandably, the militarization of outer space, if not checked in time, will consume enormous material and intellectual resources and erect insurmountable barriers to international co-operation in the peaceful exploration of outer space and to the devotion to peaceful uses of the results of scientific and technological progress in this field.

The USSR proposes that the United Nations General Assembly should proclaim the historic responsibility of all States to ensure that the exploration of outer space is carried out exclusively for peaceful purposes, for the benefit of mankind and should recommend the adoption of specific measures to this end.

The Soviet Union believes that today as never before it is important that exclusion of outer space from the sphere of the arms race should become a mandatory norm of State policy and a generally recognized international obligation, and that all channels for the militarization of outer space without exception should be safely blocked. The point is that no attack weapons of any kind - conventional, nuclear, laser, particle beam or any other - should be placed and deployed in outer space, whether on manned or unmanned systems. Space weapons of any basing mode should not be developed, tested or deployed for anti-ballistic missile defence, or as anti-satellite systems, or for use against targets on Earth or in the air. Any such systems already created should be destroyed. The use of force in outer space and from space against Earth as well as from Earth against objects in outer space should be prohibited for all times. In other words, the USSR proposes that agreement be reached on a radical solution to the question of preventing the militarization of space - on banning and eliminating space attack weapons, as well as any land-, air-, or sea-based systems designed to destroy objects in outer space.

The United Nations is required to raise its voice in favour of the early elaboration through negotiations of appropriate reliably verifiable agreements on a bilateral and multilateral basis.

Only guaranteed prevention of the militarization of outer space will provide an opportunity for its exploration for creative rather than destructive purposes. Thereby a way would be opened to concerted efforts by States in this domain, which could eventually result in the establishment of a world organization for the use of outer space for the benefit of mankind.

I request you, Sir, to regard this letter as the explanatory memorandum required under the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and to circulate it, together with the annexed draft resolution, as an official document of the General Assembly.

(Signed) A. GROMYKO  
First Deputy Chairman of the Council  
of Ministers of the Union of Soviet  
Socialist Republics, Minister for  
Foreign Affairs of the USSR

ANNEX

Use of outer space exclusively for peaceful  
purposes for the benefit of mankind

The General Assembly,

Expressing grave alarm over the threat of an extension of the arms race to outer space, which would lead to a sharp increase in the risk of nuclear war, impair the prospects for limiting and reducing armaments in general and erect insurmountable barriers to international co-operation in the peaceful exploration of outer space,

Deeply convinced of the need to prevent, before it is too late, the militarization of outer space, which should be used exclusively for peaceful and creative purposes,

Noting that concerted efforts by States in the peaceful exploration and use of outer space would create new opportunities for studying the Earth's natural resources, controlling natural disasters, providing food to the population, improving transport and communications, developing promising materials and technologies and performing other economic, scientific, technological and cultural tasks,

1. Proclaims it a historic responsibility of all States to ensure that the exploration of outer space is carried out exclusively for peaceful purposes for the benefit of mankind;

2. Declares that exclusion of outer space from the sphere of the arms race should become a mandatory norm of State policy and a generally recognized international obligation,

and to this end calls upon all States, and above all those with major space capabilities:

- to take urgent measures to prohibit for all times the use of force in outer space and from space against Earth as well as from Earth against objects in outer space and to ban and eliminate space attack systems, including space-based anti-satellite and anti-ballistic missiles systems as well as any land-, air- or sea-based systems designed to destroy objects in outer space;

- to seek through negotiations the early elaboration of appropriate reliably verifiable agreements on a bilateral and multilateral basis;

3. Indicates that guaranteed prevention of the militarization of outer space will provide an opportunity for its peaceful exploration and use in solving acute major problems of economic, social and cultural development facing mankind today as well as in concerting the efforts of States of the world in this domain, including the eventual establishment of a world organization for the use of outer space for the benefit of mankind;

4. Requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations to seek the views and proposals of Member States about the provision of guarantees for the prevention of the militarization of outer space and the possible establishment, in these conditions, of an organization for its peaceful use, and to report to the fortieth session on the subject.

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