



PERMANENT MISSION OF SRI LANKA

GENEVA

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

STATEMENT BY  
AMBASSADOR BERNARD A.B. GOONETILLEKE  
OF SRI LANKA  
ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 21  
BEFORE THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON  
THE PREVENTION OF AN ARMS RACE  
IN OUTER SPACE  
3RD AUGUST 1993

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27

1

THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE PREVENTION OF AN ARMS RACE IN OUTER SPACE

STATEMENT OF THE GROUP OF 21

MR. CHAIRMAN,

I WISH TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 21.

ON DECEMBER 9TH, 1992 THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTED RESOLUTION 47/51 ON THE PREVENTION OF AN ARMS RACE IN OUTER SPACE. THE RESOLUTION GATHERED AN IMPRESSIVE DEGREE OF SUPPORT AS SHOWN BY A VOTING RECORD OF 164 VOTES IN FAVOUR AND NO DISSENTING ONES.

RESOLUTION 47/51 ASKS US TO BUILD UPON AREAS OF CONVERGENCE, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT RELEVANT PROPOSALS AND INITIATIVES WITH A VIEW TO UNDERTAKING NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE CONCLUSION OF AN AGREEMENT OR AGREEMENTS AS APPROPRIATE TO PREVENT AN ARMS RACE IN OUTER SPACE IN ALL ITS ASPECTS. RESOLUTION 47/51 AS WELL AS PREVIOUS REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEE RECOGNIZED (A) THE NEED TO CONSOLIDATE AND REINFORCE THE LEGAL REGIME AND ENHANCE ITS EFFECTIVENESS TOWARDS GUARANTEEING THE PREVENTION OF AN ARMS RACE IN OUTER SPACE; AND (B) THE IMPORTANCE OF STRICT COMPLIANCE WITH EXISTING AGREEMENTS BOTH BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL.

IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT WE HAVE BEEN REQUESTED BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO CONSIDER THIS QUESTION AS A MATTER OF PRIORITY, THE GROUP OF 21 CONSIDERS THE PROMPT ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE PREVENTION OF AN ARMS RACE IN OUTER SPACE A POSITIVE MOVEMENT. THE GROUP ALSO RECOGNIZES THAT THE WORK SO FAR CARRIED OUT BY THE COMMITTEE HAS PREPARED THE GROUND FOR UNDERTAKING THESE NEGOTIATIONS IN A CONCRETE MANNER.

THE PREVENTION OF AN ARMS RACE IN OUTER SPACE, WHICH BY DEFINITION ENTAILS MEASURES AGAINST DEPLOYMENT OR USE OF WEAPONS IN THAT ENVIRONMENT, WILL NO DOUBT, PAVE THE WAY FOR THE EXPLORATION AND PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE SOLELY FOR THE COMMON INTEREST AND BENEFITS OF MANKIND. AT A TIME WHEN NATIONS SEEK SECURITY THROUGH REDUCTION AND ELIMINATION OF ARMAMENTS, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT INTERNATIONAL MEASURES ARE TAKEN TO HALT AND REVERSE THE TRENDS TOWARDS THE EXTENSION OF AN ARMS RACE IN OUTER SPACE, AND THE APPLICATION OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW WEAPONS

THEREIN. THESE TRENDS SEEM TO REFLECT EMERGENCE OF DOCTRINES SUSTAINING A MAJOR ROLE FOR SPACE IN THE EVENT OF MILITARY CONFLICT WHICH COULD HAVE FURTHER REPERCUSSIONS ON THE WEAPON FREE STATUS OF OUTER SPACE. THE G-21 IS DEEPLY CONCERNED THAT THE ABOVE MENTIONED COMMON OBJECTIVES ARE ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY THE ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE MILITARIZATION OF OUTER SPACE INCLUDING RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OF BALLISTIC MISSILES FOR NON PEACEFUL PURPOSES. SUCH ACTIVITIES NOT ONLY PUT THE EXISTING INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS IN JEOPARDY, BUT ALSO GENERATE A CLIMATE OF INSECURITY. IN THIS CONTEXT, STATES WITH ADVANCED SPACE TECHNOLOGY AND CAPABILITIES HAVE SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE DISCONTINUANCE OF ALL WEAPON RELATED ACTIVITIES ADVERSELY AFFECTING THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE. IT IS REGRETTABLE THAT THERE STILL EXISTS RELUCTANCE ON THE PART OF SOME MEMBER STATES TO ENGAGE IN CONCRETE NEGOTIATIONS AIMED AT PREVENTING AN ARMS RACE IN OUTER SPACE.

LET US ALSO RECALL THAT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY HAS TAKEN NOTE OF AN IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENT WHICH WE HAVE BEEN WITNESSING IN THIS COMMITTEE DURING THE PAST FEW YEARS. THE GROWING CONVERGENCE OF VIEWS ON THE ELABORATION OF MEASURES DESIGNED TO STRENGTHEN TRANSPARENCY, CONFIDENCE AND SECURITY IN THE USES OF OUTER SPACE, COULD IN THE VIEW OF G-21 FACILITATE NEGOTIATIONS AS ENVISAGED IN THE MANDATE OF THE COMMITTEE. THE QUESTION OF CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURES, THE APPLICABILITY OF WHICH TO OUTER SPACE HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED THROUGH RES. 45/55 B IN 1990, IS AN AREA IN WHICH CONCRETE PROPOSALS HAVE BEEN MADE. OF THESE PROPOSALS, MANY ARE RIPE FOR IMPLEMENTATION. ELEMENTS OF THESE PROPOSALS COULD FORM INTEGRAL PARTS OF A MULTILATERALLY NEGOTIATED AGREEMENT ON THE PREVENTION OF AN ARMS RACE IN OUTER SPACE. IN THIS REGARD, WHILE APPRECIATING THE WORK SO FAR CARRIED OUT BY THE FRIENDS OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR CBMS, THE GROUP REITERATES THAT BECAUSE OF THEIR SUPPLEMENTARY AND INTERIM NATURE, THE CBMS ARE NOT AN END IN THEMSELVES. THEIR TREATMENT IN THIS AHC SHOULD IN NO WAY DETRACT, RETARD OR NEGATIVELY AFFECT THE ATTAINMENT OF ITS PRIMARY OBJECTIVE, NAMELY THE CONCLUSION OF AN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT OR AGREEMENTS ON THE PREVENTION OF AN ARMS RACE IN OUTER SPACE WITH A VIEW TO REINFORCING THE EXISTING LEGAL REGIME. SUCH AN AGREEMENT OR AGREEMENTS THEMSELVES SHOULD INCLUDE AND BE THE VERY CORNERSTONE OF THE CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURES.

THE G-21 TAKES NOTE OF AND SHARES THE VIEW OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE FOR THE NEED TO WIDEN AND ENRICH THE PRESENT MANDATE WITH A NEGOTIATING CHARACTER. IN THIS REGARD, IT WISHES TO ENCOURAGE THE CHAIRMAN TO PURSUE HIS CONSULTATIONS WITH A VIEW TO FORMULATING A NEW MANDATE ACCEPTABLE TO ALL.

THE G-21 IS ALSO PLEASED TO NOTE THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE FRIEND OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR TERMINOLOGICAL ASPECTS AND LEGAL MATTERS. THE GROUP NOTES THAT THE DISCUSSIONS ARE YET TO YIELD THE DESIRED RESULTS AND CONSIDERS THAT FOCUSING ON SPECIFIC TERMINOLOGY CONTAINED IN DIFFERENT PROPOSALS WILL CONTRIBUTE TO ACHIEVE PROGRESS IN OUR WORK. THE GROUP REAFFIRMS ITS WILLINGNESS TO WORK TOWARDS FILLING IN THE GAPS THAT EXIST IN THE PRESENT OUTER SPACE LEGAL REGIME.

WE LOOK FORWARD TO FUTURE SESSIONS MARKED BY A RENEWED IMPETUS TO THE EFFORTS DIRECTED TO ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT, IE. THE CONCLUSION OF A MULTILATERALLY NEGOTIATED AGREEMENT OR AGREEMENTS FOR THE ELIMINATION OF THE DANGER FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY OF AN ARMS RACE IN OUTER SPACE.

THANK YOU.

3 August 1993