

(Mr. Dinstein, Uruguay)

that might seem to be intelligently controlled, in such a way as not to antagonize or provoke them.

I have already stated that this is not an acknowledgement of another life.

It is just, I think, a question of prudence. I should like to conclude with the words of Mr. Gorb:

"Science should regard anything as possible so long as it cannot be proven impossible by facts based upon observation."

In this way, in my view and the view of my delegation, we shall outgrow the outlook of our forefathers when they argued vehemently that the earth was flat, that man could never fly, that no one could ever reach the moon, or go beyond it to the stars.

Mr. KALASHNIKOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (Interpretation from Russian): The launching of the first artificial earth satellite on the flight of Yuri Gagarin opened up to mankind the path towards stellar worlds. It opened up a new era of exploration and exploitation of outer space. At present the exploration of outer space through space vehicles is on the main road. The era of the active intervention of science in the secrets of space has started. The scientists of the Byelorussian SSR take an active part in this, through large-scale and intensive work for the study of

outer space and the use of the results of space exploration for economic purposes. Now that man has begun the constant exploration of outer space to benefit his economy, so as to explore the resources, to control weather, astronautics, waters, planned areas, astronautical science is influential in the field of radio and electronics, machine construction, meteorology, computer technology and many other fields.

Astronautics are also an integrating factor in science, unifying the efforts of scientists of various specializations in the study processes in space and on earth. The activation and expansion of space exploration have raised the question of the regulation in international law of the activities of States in outer space. Life requires that specific instruments in international law should be worked out which, on the basis of equality and respect for the interests of all States, large and small, developed and developing, define the activities of States in the exploration and exploitation of space.

(Mr. KALASHNIKOV, Byelorussian SSR)

The first positive steps have already been taken in that direction.

Pursuing the initiative of the Soviet Union, nuclear weapon tests have been prohibited in outer space, a treaty has been concluded on the principles governing the activities of States in the exploration and use of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, and an agreement on the rescue of astronauts, the return of astronauts and the return of objects launched into outer space. The Byelorussian SSR has signed and ratified these important international agreements which in practice began the legal regulation of activities of States in the exploration and exploitation of outer space.

However, the achievements of science and technology in the exploration and exploitation of outer space are so great that they make it possible to settle ever-more complex problems in the study of nearby and interplanetary space, the Moon and the planets of the solar system. The orbiting and photographing of the far side of the Moon, the soft landing on the Moon of the Soviet automatic station, Luna 9, the landing of the first man on the Moon, subsequent expeditions of American astronauts on the lunar surface and the experiments carried out by the USSR by means of Lunokhod-1 and other automatic machines open up to mankind new prospects for the exploration of the Moon. These achievements will soon lead to a further expansion of the activities of States on the surface of the Moon.

That confronts us with the question of the conclusion of a large-scale universal agreement especially devoted to the Moon. Starting from existing international agreements on space, such an agreement could regulate in detail all the main aspects of the activities of States on the Moon. That is the object of the draft treaty concerning the Moon presented by the Soviet Union at this twenty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly.

(A/6591, pp. 1-6). As was rightly pointed out in the latter of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Mr. Gromyko, to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, dated 27 May 1971:

"... steps should be taken now towards the further elaboration and formalization of rules of international law to govern the activities of States on the Moon. As the Earth's only natural satellite, the Moon has an important role to play in the conquest of outer space and it should be used exclusively in the interests of peace and for the benefit of all mankind. It is essential that the activities of States on