

SWEDEN

17 February 2011

Mr Chairman,

(...)

I would like to give a little bit of information about a side event that was held on space security issues on 7 February.

The organiser of the event was the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), which is an independent international research institution with its headquarters in Stockholm. The event was moderated by the deputy director of SIPRI, Mr Daniel Nord. He mentioned at the outset that SIPRI stands ready to contribute to the CD by sharing its research findings in areas of relevance to the Conference.

At the side event on space security, a SIPRI researcher, Dr Bharath Gopalswamy, provided an account of the situation with regard to the increase in space activities in terms of number of commercial satellites, etc, but also in terms of an the amount of space debris. It was particularly noted that space debris, if it were to increase further, would pose a serious threat to the increasingly important uses of space for communication, navigation and other important purposes.

The Director of UNIDIR, Ms Theresa Hitchens, gave additional information about the current use of space, with an emphasis on the need for additional international agreements and rules for this use. The importance of transparency and confidence-building measures was noted. She also highlighted that it is difficult to separate military and civilian aspects from each other. Another point brought up was the need to establish a kind of division of work and responsibility between the different international fora concerned.

Finally, the Director of Non-Proliferation and Disarmament in the European External Action Service, Ms Annalisa Giannella, gave an account of the European Union's proposal for an international Code of Conduct on outer space activities.

The three presentations were followed by a discussion about the CD and space security issues.

This summary is of course fully my own, and surely other participants will have brought back other aspects of the presentations and discussions. However, for our part we found this event useful to increase our knowledge of issues at hand, just as has been the case with other side events on space here in Geneva. I hope others found it useful too.

Mr Chairman,

while I have the floor, I would like to take the opportunity to thank Australia and Japan for organising the experts side event on FMCT definitions this week. My delegation found these experts discussions very useful in deepening and broadening our understanding of some very technical issues, and I should especially compliment ambassador Woolcott on the way he guided the discussions. We would certainly be glad to participate in more such discussions.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.