

functions, this could be done in relation to confidence-building measures, leading to more concrete measures to prevent an arms race in outer space.

42. In connection with the reiteration of some proposals for a comprehensive ASAT ban, one delegation of the Western Group stated that it did not believe that verification schemes proposed to date were adequate for this purpose. A key problem was verifying compliance with such an agreement. Another problem concerned the legal issue of how ASAT weapons should be defined and categorized. The delegation reiterated that the existing legal regime placed a wide variety of legal restraints on the nature, deployment and uses of ASATs. It stated that conventionally-armed ASAT weapons that lacked an ABM capability and that were not armed with nuclear weapons were currently not limited by any arms control agreement.

43. Some delegations of the Group of 21 stated that not only were national technical means of verification adequate to detect and verify testing of space weapons in an ASAT mode including the "direct ascent attack mode" but a mutually agreed definition of dedicated ASAT weapon did exist. Once listing of directed energy weapons like ground-based lasers which were a threat to satellites is fully under way, more complex understandings would need to be negotiated. The unconstrained development of ASAT systems was a means of avoiding the limits on BMD development set by the ABM treaty. If lasers could be construed in terms of total brightness, their potential to attack satellites in high orbit would be controlled. It was easily conceivable to impose first use limitations, rules-of-the-road agreements and limited capability restriction on ASATs like dismantling of existing systems and test limits. These elements needed to be put together for a comprehensive ban on satellite intercept capability, which would mean restricting military space activities or undertaking them cooperatively, prohibiting all forms of anti-satellite defences, satellite ballistic missile defence and many offensive and laser systems.

44. One delegation reiterated its proposal (contained in CD/939) to amend Article IV of the Outer Space Treaty so as to make its prohibition applicable to any kind of weapons and to contemplate the negotiation of an Additional Protocol for the purpose of prohibiting the development, production, storage and deployment of anti-satellite weapon systems which were not stationed in outer space. The proposal provided also for a second additional protocol to deal with the verification system to ensure faithful compliance with the obligations assumed by the States Parties.

45. Confidence-building and predictability measures of States' activities in