

Symposium on Space Without Weapons

Over 100 academics and outer space specialists, representing 24 countries, gathered in Montreal, October 25 to 27, 1989, for a symposium on "Space Without Weapons." The symposium was organized by McGill University's Centre for Research in Air and Space Law in association with the Arms Control and Disarmament Division of EAITC.

For the past several years, the Centre for Research in Air and Space Law has been associated with the Arms Control and Disarmament Division in a study of the role of international law with respect to the military use of space. In 1985, the Centre organized a symposium entitled "An Arms Race in Outer Space — Could Treaties Prevent It?" This was followed in 1987 by a symposium on "Space Surveillance for Arms Control and Verification: Options." The October symposium represented another step in the progressive study toward the continuing use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

It is generally recognized that without the military use of outer space in terms of space-based remote sensing for verification purposes, the strategic arms control agreements between the USA and the USSR would not have been possible. In this sense, the military use of space has had a stabilizing effect. How-

ever, the introduction of weapons into space, termed the "weaponization" of space, could have the opposite result. This symposium studied the weaponization issue in its various forms.

Canadians played a key role in the proceedings. Dr. Peter Hughes from the University of Toronto and Dr. Lucy Stojak from McGill University examined the technical and legal aspects of the issue respectively. Dr. F.J.F. Osborne of SPAR Aerospace and Mr. Robin Gubby of Telesat Canada added industry's perspective to the discussion. Representatives from the Federal Republic of Germany, France, the USA and the USSR provided an international dimension. Canada's Ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament (CD), Mr. de Montigny Marchand, summarized the proceedings at a closing banquet.

The symposium was particularly timely given that Canada has been confirmed as Chairman of the 1990 Ad Hoc Committee on Outer Space at the CD in Geneva. The discussions undertaken at the symposium related directly to the Committee's mandate, which is to prevent an arms race in outer space. Proceedings of the symposium will be made available to CD members early in the CD's 1990 session. ■

Forecast

A list of arms control and disarmament activities involving Canada, January through May, 1990.

January: Third session of the UN Group of Governmental Experts on Verification, New York

January 11-12: Meeting of the Consultative Group on Disarmament and Arms Control Affairs, Cornwall, Ontario

January 12 - February 22: CFE Round 5, Vienna

January 16: Phase 2 of the Group of Scientific Experts' international seismic data exchange experiment begins

January 16 - February 23: CSBM Negotiation Round 5, Vienna;

January 16 - February 5: CSBM Negotiation seminar on military doctrine, Vienna

February 12-28: Open Skies Conference, Ottawa

Mid-February - mid-April: Conference on Disarmament, Geneva

March 15 - April 26: CFE Round 6, Vienna

March 19 - April 27: CSBM Negotiation Round 6, Vienna

April 23 - May 4: Third NPT Preparatory Committee, Geneva

April 23 - May 11: Open Skies Conference, Budapest (proposed)

May 7 - May 29: United Nations Disarmament Commission, New York

May 17: CFE Round 7 opens, Vienna

May 21: CSBM Negotiation Round 7 opens, Vienna ■

Canada-USSR Agreement on the Prevention of Incidents at Sea

On November 20, 1989, in Moscow, Canada and the Soviet Union entered into an Agreement Governing the Prevention of Incidents at Sea Beyond the Territorial Sea. The purpose of the agreement is to ensure the safety of navigation of the ships of their respective armed forces and of the flight of their military aircraft beyond the territorial sea.

Among other things, the parties agree to observe strictly the letter and spirit of the 1972 International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea. Ships of the parties operating in proximity to each other are required to remain well clear of each other to avoid risk of collision. The parties also agree that their ships shall not simulate attacks by aiming weapons in the direction of ships and aircraft of the other party, and shall not launch hazardous objects in the direction of ships of the other party. Similarly, they agree that their aircraft shall not simulate attacks nor perform aerobatics over ships of the other party, nor shall they launch hazardous objects in the direction of ships of the other party. The parties agree to exchange, in a timely manner, appropriate information concerning instances of collisions or other incidents at sea between their ships and aircraft.

The actions prohibited by the agreement are also not to be taken against non-military ships and aircraft of the parties. ■