

stances change, as I am hopeful they will. The trepidation the nuclear powers and the rest of us will undoubtedly feel in taking tentative steps into the post-nuclear weapons era will largely be assuaged by assurances that no one is cheating. That is why improvement and refinement of our ability to monitor adequately such a ban should remain paramount on the multilateral disarmament agenda. We need to continue energetically experimentation with, and testing of, seismic data exchanges. Only by improving the expertise and coordination with which seismic events can be globally monitored will a level of verification be reached that is comforting and assuring to all. Let us not be caught in a position where the nuclear powers are ready to call a halt to their testing but the required verification instruments are not yet in place.

Mr. President. The prevention of an arms race in outer space is something that we all wish to achieve. The march of technology is relentless: more and more countries are developing know-how and the means to send rockets with satellites, space probes and other scientific instruments into space. Our task is to try and assure our publics that these activities, even ones carried out under military auspices, are for purposes that contribute to, not detract from, international security.

But before a start can be made in this regard, we must know what international security means as it relates to the uses of space. International security, as Ambassador Marchand has recently pointed out, implies not only the absence of weapons as such in outer space, it entails the responsibility of the two major space powers to maintain a stable, controlled relationship between themselves on space issues. This means that all efforts to consider the relationship between international security and outer space are predicated on the enhancement of stability. It is our job to identify measures concerning the use of outer space that can be taken on a multilateral basis and through consensus, and that will enhance stability, admittedly a daunting task. That is all the more reason to ensure that the first step provides a strong building block from which further proposals can proceed.



A general view of the Conference on Disarmament in plenary session.

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Let me reiterate the contention already put forward by the Canadian Delegation. Much more attention has to be given to the basic framework involved in the use of space. The current régime on outer space, comprising a number of international agreements and treaties, can be strengthened: we can search for agreement on the definition of key terms, clarify the issue of stability and, in general, thereby set up a solid foundation to guide our work in the coming years. We could make a start, for example, in applying principles of transparency to activities in space by urging more States to sign the Registration Convention and by persuading the parties to the Registration Convention to agree to provide more timely and specific information on the functions of the satellites they launch, including whether specific satellites are intended to fulfil civilian, military or combined functions.

As I am sure you are all aware, Canada is ready and eager to move forward on the negotiation of a treaty banning radiological weapons. We have had a draft before us for many years now. Yet any possibility of advance has been sidetracked by issues which, while important in themselves, are not, in our estimation, fundamental to reaching agreement on banning a new form of weapons of mass destruction. We need not reiterate the arguments that have

brought us to this impasse: rather, let us stand back and put things in their proper perspective. What will this impasse do to all our other endeavours? Will it not undermine the credibility of the multilateral process?

Fortunately, radiological weapons do not at present exist. Simple logic would dictate that now is the time to prevent their future development by agreeing to a comprehensive and effective ban. To some, it may seem a hollow victory that a weapon that does not exist is being prohibited. But look at the other examples of international treaties that have sought, implicitly, if not explicitly, to cut off a potential development before it can take root. We have examples before us: the Antarctic Treaty, the Outer Space Treaty, the Seabed Treaty, the Environmental Modification Treaty.

On a bilateral basis, the ABM Treaty prevents the development, testing and deployment of anti-ballistic missile systems and their components, whether based on current or future technological principles. Many states would concur that blocking the unilateral deployment of ABM systems through this Treaty constitutes a cornerstone of nuclear arms control between the superpowers and helps give the whole process its legitimacy. I would argue that a treaty on radiological weapons would contribute in a similar fashion to the legitimacy, as