ENMOD fits within the larger context of international treaty law on the protection of the environment in times of armed conflict. Yet at least one State Party maintains that ENMOD has nothing to do with the protection of the environment. It is — this Party alleges — solely concerned with prohibiting a certain means of warfare. Of course this is patently not the case because, even taking the most limited interpretation of the Convention, its ban is not confined to military uses but also covers…"any other *hostile* use" of environmental modification techniques… [W]hy are we bothering to outlaw military or other hostile uses of environmental modification techniques if it is not precisely because we want to protect the environment from the horrendous damage that might otherwise ensue?

I raise this…to make the point that there is a fundamental disagreement among States Parties even over what constitutes the overall objectives of the ENMOD Convention. Debate, however, has mainly focused on the scope of ENMOD.

There are some States Parties who maintain…that ENMOD is a futuristic document, covering exotic technologies that have yet to be invented, while at the same time asserting that it also covers the use of herbicides, a decidedly low-technology environmental modification technique, in existence for at least as long as the Convention itself. Canada prefers the more consistent approach that any and all environmental modification techniques are covered, regardless of the level of technology employed…

There is no basis for affirming the continuing effectiveness of the ENMOD treaty unless and until we clear up the interpretational problems. That is why Canada, along with other delegations, sought a decision of this Review Conference to establish a Consultative Committee of Experts (CCE)…Let me indicate now that Canada will be consulting with other countries on the issue of requesting…the establishment of the CCE before the end of 1994...

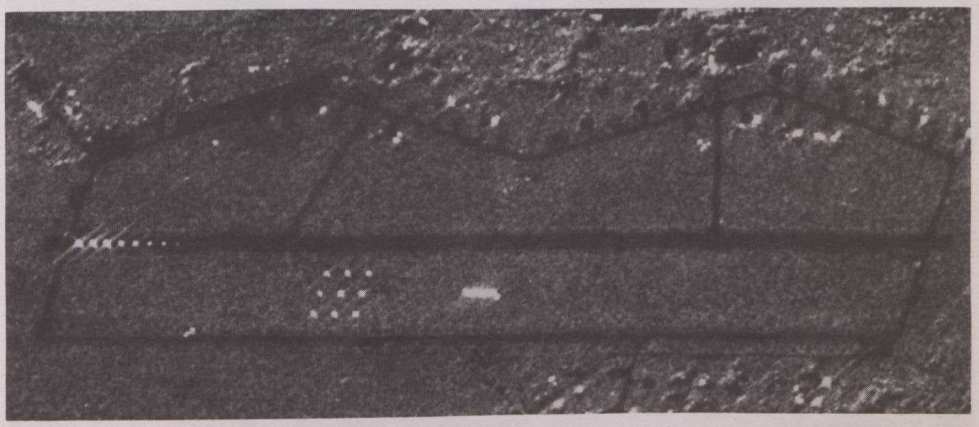
In summation…[we] have it in our power to bring ENMOD into contemporary relevance. I believe the Final Declaration takes a very modest step in that direction. Let us ensure we follow through and see that a Consultative Committee of Experts…is established to carry on this important work. ■

Open Skies Sensor Parameters Defined

Technical issues dominated the agenda as the newly-formed Open Skies Consultative Commission (OSCC) made agreement on the operational parameters and specifications of airborne imaging sensors a priority following signature of the Open Skies Treaty in March. Canada took the lead as chair of the OSCC's first session.

In June, the OSCC negotiated the technical parameters for Open Skies-permitted cameras, assisted by trial overflights at Boscombe Down in the United Kingdom in which the Canadian Department of National Defence took part. As a result of the trials, such issues as camera and film types, methods for optimum film processing, and minimum requirements for aerial camera operations were recommended and introduced as Decisions 3, 4 and 5 of the Open Skies Treaty.

The OSCC's next task was the development of technical specifications for synthetic aperture radars (SARs), the most complex of the sensors allowed under the Treaty. In September, under a United Kingdom chair, the OSCC's informal working group on sensors met with technical experts in Vienna to discuss an outline of agreed parameters and specifications for SAR sensors.



Synthetic aperture radar (SAR) imagery collected by a Canadian aircraft, owned by Intera Information Technologies Ltd., during a trial overflight in Hungary in October. The bright returns located on the airfield's main runway and between the taxiways are readily discernable. The spatial resolution of this image is six metres. The Open Skies Treaty permits SAR imagery resolution down to three metres.

These were tested on October 6 and 7 at an abandoned airfield south of Budapest in Hungary. Three aircraft and SARs, provided respectively by Denmark, Russia and Canada, flew over a series of agreed targets, or corner reflectors, provided by the United States. The reflectors were specifically designed to backscatter SAR microwave energy. The intent of the trials was to demonstrate technical issues with respect to the spatial resolution calibration of three very different SAR systems, and to introduce the "lessons learned" into the Open Skies Treaty as a decision.

The resultant SAR data were processed at the Hungarian Institute of Geodesy, Cartography and Remote Sensing, where specifications of calibration targets to measure dynamic range, impulse response and the ground resolution of the SAR systems were determined. These data were taken back to Vienna to be discussed by the OSCC and drafted as Decision 7 by the SAR technical experts.

This experiment was a milestone in technical cooperation among parties to the Open Skies Treaty. The monumental task of negotiating such complicated issues as SAR parameters was a vivid example of the confidence-building intent of the Treaty at work. Technical experts from the Department of National Defence and EAITC participated in the October SAR trials. ■