

3.3.3 Multilateral Participation in Treaty Administration and Verification (Continued)

- (a) The small number of tests and deployed systems deemed sufficient to constitute a significant threat.
- (b) The possibility of ground tests or tests of component systems in space in a mode difficult to detect.
- (c) The multi-functional nature of certain technologies and launchers (e.g. rocket boosters, aircraft, lasers).
- (d) The relative ease of concealment of certain destructive mechanisms (especially conventional or nuclear explosives).

Indeed, these considerations have been put forward by the current US Administration as an argument against the pursuit of a comprehensive ban on weapons in outer space.

Compounding this situation is the fact that certain cooperative verification techniques of relevance to other arms control areas are not possible in the outer space realm. On-site inspection, for example, although available as an adjunct to NTM's for certain terrestrial activities, is of little relevance to certain space related activities. If the system in question are spacebased, on-site inspection may be impossible, unless the parties are willing to contemplate system retrieval by other states for the purpose of examination.

Based on these considerations then, there is a prima facie case for the maximization and multiplication of verification assets at the disposal of the signatories to an outer space arms control regime. This need not, however, imply either a multilateral treaty administrative and compliance body or verification assets under the control of such a body. Other options include an increase in NTM's, or a simple assessment that what is available is adequate, though less than ideal. It is therefore necessary to outline