

### Early warning satellite systems

Early warning satellites were initially developed to detect enemy missiles as soon as they were launched. These missiles are detected through the use of sensors able to detect the infra-red radiation emitted by the hot plume of a rocket. With the rapid developments in thermal imaging sensor technology, it is foreseeable that the missions of early warning satellites will extend to the detection of ASAT missiles and cruise missiles aboard tactical aircraft.

### Nuclear explosion detection satellites

Nuclear explosion detection satellites are used to verify compliance with nuclear test-ban agreements, by both signatory and non-signatory states. They are equipped with infra-red sensors capable of detecting even underground nuclear explosions.

### Conclusion

Reconnaissance satellites are used by both super-powers to monitor the military activities of each other as well as those of other states. The information and images obtained through the use of such satellites is of the highest military importance to both space powers. The interpretation and perception that each country may have of these images contributes to the establishment of state strategic planning.