

## WEAPONS IN SPACE

**Q. What is Canada's reaction to US Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld's plans for a revitalized Air Force Space Command, notably his intention to consider developing space-based weapons to protect US military satellites?**

### **Suggested Reply**

- Outer space remains the last environment in which humanity has not deployed weapons.
- Canada and other nations are increasingly reliant on satellites for their economic and national security.
- Canada is opposed to the basing of weapons in space given the likelihood that this will simply provoke an escalatory deployment by other states who feel that their economic and security interests have been challenged.
- We want to prevent an arms race in outer space before one begins. Canada is therefore seeking to negotiate a convention preventing the "weaponization" of outer space.
- Such a convention would ban all actual weapons orbiting the earth or otherwise stationed in outer space, going beyond the ban of weapons of mass destruction secured in the 1967 Outer Space Treaty.

**Q. Are space-based weapon systems envisioned to be part of the system?**

### **Suggested Reply**

- The missile defence system proposed under the Clinton Administration did not envisage "weapons" in space, although special radars were a part of the design.
- We have no information that would suggest that the Bush administration is considering basing weapons in space as a part of a missile defence system.
- The stationing of weapons of mass destruction in space is banned by the Outer Space Treaty of 1967. The ABM Treaty also puts limits on US and Russian activities in space.
- Canada does not oppose all military operations in space. Some, like remote sensing and search and rescue, can benefit international security.