

built up in the application of confidence-building and security-building measures by the States participating in the CSCE. Specifically, Poland proposed measures for the exchange of information and observations on the occasion of launches of space objects. France stands ready to give favourable consideration to a measure providing for assessment visits at the launch site or orbital control site of a registered space object. It is aware of the possible difficulties or objections that such a measure might prompt, and considers that such visits should take place on a voluntary basis: only a State which had expressly agreed to such an inspection could be visited.

Hence France proposes that the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space should give thought to the circumstances in which such measures might be feasible, drawing on experience accumulated within the CSCE framework.

II - SPACE AND TRANSPARENCY

As the French arms control and disarmament plan states, "information is the prime condition of confidence". In order to allow the smooth operation of a system of confidence-building measures in space, France proposed in 1989 (CD/937) the establishment of a centralized trajectography system. Moreover, as the potential contribution of satellite images in the implementation of regional agreements on security and confidence is increasingly widely recognized, France proposes the establishment of regional agencies responsible for transparency.

A - The international trajectography centre (UNITRACE)

Compliance with and effective application of the broadened rules for registration and the rules of behaviour that would be drawn up under a regime of confidence-building measures imply the establishment of an international management tool with the function of accumulating all the information gathered and making it available to satellite managers. Since it would be designed to alert the States concerned in the event of threatened incidents and to supply evidence of good or bad faith in the event of an incident (which would minimize the risk of international disputes), it should meet the requirement of transparency and be in permanent possession of updated information concerning the trajectories of space objects.

At the same time, if it is to be acceptable to satellite-owning States, such a centre should be able to observe a degree of confidentiality in respect