

48. In that connection one delegation of the Western Group remarked that although the topic "Registration Convention" was listed under the heading of CBM, the Convention, in its view, was not an arms control or confidence-building instrument. Wider adherence to the Convention and compliance with its current provisions would be the best way of strengthening it.

49. Many delegations touched upon the verification issues indicating that consideration of these questions would constitute an important and integral part of the Committee's work, given the technological, political, commercial and even doctrinal aspects involved in considering a strengthened outer space regime. They reiterated the importance of verification and the desirability of multilateral involvement therein.

50. One delegation, member of the Western Group, put forward views on verification and stated that the inability to construct a suitable and effective verification system could prevent agreements from being finalized. The move towards expanding arms control in outer space would require addressing carefully the problems stemming from the fact that space represented a relatively new medium and posed challenges for arms control, involving capabilities which could be entirely different from, but nevertheless interdependent with those employed on the earth's surface. Major verification problems were likely to arise as a result of the need for worthwhile space regimes to cover not only objects and activities in space but also those on the earth's surface related to space. Both environments should be considered in their interrelationship. This delegation noted that while many countries might have an interest in space, and would thus wish to be equal partners in any agreement, the technical capabilities necessary for satisfactory verification might be available to only a few.

51. Another delegation, also a member of the Western Group, added its support to the above-mentioned position saying that no arms control agreement in space could hope to be sustainable without verification. It suggested that it would be useful to evaluate the cost of some of the proposals already put before the Committee and to consider how these costs might be met.

52. The Head of a delegation to the bilateral Defense and Space Talks spoke to the Committee about the revised approach to ballistic missile defense called "Global Protection Against Limited Strikes" (GPALS). The GPALS shifted the focus of strategic ballistic missile defense away from deterrence of a strategic ballistic missile attack to protection against the emerging and limited ballistic missile threat. A GPALS defense would include various