



**International Network
of Engineers and Scientists
Against Proliferation**

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Press release

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New movement towards a space weapons ban

On June 10 and 11, a workshop and expert meeting were held in Berlin, Germany, on the questions how a space weapons ban could be achieved. On the invitation of three scientific organizations, experts from the US, China, Russia, the United Kingdom, and Germany met to discuss proposals for a space weapons ban that have been officially tabled in the past.

The Chinese representative surprised the attendants with a brand new proposal that will be officially introduced into the United Nations' Conference of Disarmament at the end of this month. Fu Zhigang from the Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China to the CD explained details of a working paper his country drafted jointly with Russia. The suggested agreement would obligate the States Parties "not to place in orbit around the Earth any objects carrying any kinds of weapons, not to install such weapons on celestial bodies, or not to station such weapons in outer space in any other manner."

Several other draft treaties were also presented and discussed by the scientific, legal, and policy experts at the workshop. The Space Preservation Act of 2002, introduced at the US Congress by Representative Dennis Kucinich, is complemented by the companion Space Preservation Treaty and used as a tool to both educate the public on the dangers of an arms race in space and build pressure on the US administration to reconsider its space weaponization plans. Considerably older is the Proposed Treaty on the Limitation of the Military Use of Outer Space drafted by German scientists in 1984 which at that time was supported by the SPD and Green Party in the German Bundestag.

The discussion showed that activities to prevent an arms race in space are as important now and then. The participants will continue their efforts in the future to raise international attention for a space without weapons.

Background information: The workshop "Space Weapons Ban – How Can It Be Achieved" was held on June 10 and 11, 2002, at the Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften in Berlin and convened by ACDIS (Program in Arms Control, Disarmament, and International Security at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), INESAP (International Network of Engineers and Scientists Against Proliferation), and VDW (Federation of German Scientists).

For further details contact INESAP Coordinator Regina Hagen by e-mail at inesap@hrzpub.tu-darmstadt.de. Due to other conference commitments, the INESAP telephone will not be answered until June 17.