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Joint Standing Committee on Treaties
Department of House of Representatives
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CANBERRA ACT 2600

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The Campaign for International Co-operation and Disarmament would like to comment on two of the treaties under review: the amendments to the Antarctic Treaty and the amendments to the Agreement with the United States on Space Vehicle Tracking.

The Antarctic Treaty is an international treaty, mainly dealing with conservation and the environment and this should not be altered in any way.

The treaty bans all military and related activities and stipulates that the area be used for peaceful purposes only.

- All mining in the Antarctic must be prohibited.

The Convention on the Regulation of the Antarctic Mineral Resources was signed in 1988, but never entered into force. The Protocol on environmental protection was also signed but never entered into force.

Efforts should be made to bring these agreements into force and the only amendments to this Antarctic Treaty that should be contemplated is to strengthen it and the conventions and protocols relating to it.

Agreement with the United States on Space Vehicle Tracking etc.

To co-operate with the United States on its space endeavours is desirable, however there is a concern that some of these activities could, at times, be military related.

There are several international treaties governing the use of space and it is vital that these treaties are not breached in any way. Space must be used for peaceful purposes only, whether it be tracking, communications or other activities relating to this agreement.

A breach of the 'Peaceful Use of Space' concept would be against the United Nations Treaties and a serious breach of international law resulting in pressure to terminate the treaty.

Sincerely,

P.D. Mitchell,
Secretary