

Forum: United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Issue: Developing Regulations on the Weaponization and Militarization of Space

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Introduction

In our modern age, an issue that is of growing importance is that of the ethical utilization of outer space. Humanity finds itself in a time that is rife with political tension, military conflict, economic instability and a variety of other concerns, and yet, it is to be expected that these issues will only be amplified as it sets forth into a renaissance of technological development. Countries now find themselves relying on the creation of new, more technologically advanced weapons in dealing with disputes with others, and every opportunity that could help a state gain an advantage over its political and military adversaries is being explored post-haste. Thus, it is perhaps no big surprise that certain countries are already planning to use a particularly appealing new development to their advantage: the exploration and usage of outer space.

The international community's interest in the prospects that come with being able to use space is not necessarily new. Even in the early 20th century, countries were fighting over who would be the first to develop a satellite, capable of reaching Earth's outer orbit: the USSR would become the first to do so, when it launched the Sputnik 1 in October of 1957. From there, the goalpost continuously moved, further and further, prompting the arisal of the Space Age, a new period in which governments were devoting themselves more than ever to exploring the extraterrestrial. More artificial satellites were launched, rockets were sent out, and soon enough, the very first examples of space weapons were put into use to bring down satellites.

This development was obviously treated as being somewhat concerning, prompting the United Nations General Assembly to come together for the first time to speak on the peaceful usage of space. Draft treaties were proposed to form the very foundation of what would soon be known as "space law", and a

multitude of different committees were formed to address the unique issues that arise in trying to regulate what countries are and aren't allowed to do outside of Earth's orbit. While many of these measures have been successful in forming a precedent that space cannot be used for militarist reasons, they are not fully comprehensive- meaning that more regulations must be put into place to ensure that all countries use space for purely peaceful purposes.

Of course, this is no easy feat. While the Space Race between the USSR and the United States of America did bring the international community together to agree on the main principles that should be followed when conducting activities in outer space, times have changed: the Space Race is over, and more countries than ever have begun to work on their own space programmes, some of which even rival the USA's own systems. [1] The development of ballistic missiles and ICBMs has also made the usage of reconnaissance and early-warning satellites lucrative, and in a sense, necessary.

Regardless, the ethical employment of scientific discoveries remains an absolute priority. While fully preventing states from developing weapons that could function in outer space may not be feasible, regulations must still be put into place to guarantee that an arms race does not take place outside of Earth's orbit, and that no state is able to monopolize on outer space and exploit celestial bodies for non-peaceful purposes.

Definition of Key Terms

Space Militarization:

The usage of outer space in a way that would allow a state to gain a military advantage over its rivals, and aid it in conflicts or disputes. Examples of space militarization would be the placement of military technology in Earth's orbit or on celestial bodies, or the utilization of satellites for the purposes of gaining important intel. Space militarization is an issue of growing predominance, and is intrinsically connected to space weaponization as well. [2]

Space Weaponization:

Space weaponization, on the other hand, is the development and research of weapons that are specifically intended to be situated in outer space. Constructing and deploying space weapons, or storing weapons on one's extraterrestrial facilities, would also be considered as a form of space weaponization.

Examples of space weapons would include anti-satellite systems, High Altitude Electromagnetic Pulses (HEMPs), and missiles.

Astronauts/Cosmonauts:

An astronaut is any individual who has been trained within a space program, and who has received the necessary certification to serve as a crew member on a spacecraft. The term astronaut is used to refer to all such individuals, while the term cosmonaut is instead reserved for those who had been employed in the Soviet Union's own program. [3] The rights of astronauts are protected by agreements such as the Outer Space Treaty.

Weapons of Mass Destruction:

Also known as WMD's, weapons of mass destruction are defined as weapons that are intended to harm a large number of people through chemical, biological or nuclear means. While the development and usage of WMD's is heavily restricted by a multitude of different international treaties and agreements, fully banning them has proven to be impossible thanks to the interference of countries who possess them: even to this day, treaties like the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and Geneva Protocol have not been ratified by all member states.

Arms Race:

A competition between two or more states, where the goal is to gain superiority over the others through increasing military spending, deploying weapons and gathering intel. Arms races became especially prevalent in the aftermath of World War 1, with particularly infamous examples being the Dreadnought arms race between Germany and the USA, the Cold War arms race between the USA and the USSR, and the ongoing arms race involving nuclear weapons. [4]

Space Debris:

Space debris refers to pieces of machinery, junk or biological waste that are left by humans in outer space, either on celestial bodies or in their orbits. The most prevalent examples of space debris are unused satellites, which are often not returned to Earth after they've completed their missions. It is

speculated that thousands of instances of space debris currently occupy Earth's orbit, which all pose a threat to further space operations- and satellites that are actually in use. [13]

Ethics in Scientific Developments:

In attempting to develop mankind's collective scientific knowledge, there are a number of ethical concerns that must be addressed to ensure that any research done is for humanity's betterment, as opposed to its decline. This issue becomes especially prevalent when it comes to arms research: technology like missiles and nuclear bombs have been responsible for the death of millions, even if they are now a critical part of most countries' military arsenals. Hence, the scientific community must see if the benefits of a new piece of military technology outweigh the potentially disastrous risks it poses: the same scrutiny is required when it comes to space weapons as well.

General Overview

The Space Race

In understanding how technology has advanced to the point of causing such an issue to become prevalent, one must first look at how the exploration and research of space has progressed over the years. The earliest examples of space militarization were seen during the Space Race, a competition that took place between the United States and the Soviet Union (also known at the time as the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, or USSR) during the 20th century, specifically in the aftermath of the second World War.

The Space Race was, in a sense, the result of an already ongoing conflict between the two countries: the Cold War. Being an example of an arms race, the Cold War saw the USA and USSR fighting to forge alliances with European states and working to gain political influence over each other. Neither state engaged in direct war with the other, but they supported completely opposing ideologies, and their intentions often clashed when it came to whom they supported in conflicts.

To further the support they could provide to other states, and their own military power, both countries began to pursue a new goal: the development of weapons of mass destruction that could be used over long distances, in case an actual, non-proxy war was to break out. This culminated in the creation of the very first intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), which could be used to transport nuclear armaments across extremely long distances.

Simultaneously, both the USA and USSR needed a way of conducting espionage on their competition, in order to remain informed of what new technologies the other side was working on, and any military operations that they were running in secret. Reconnaissance satellites seemed like the best alternative to normal espionage operations: with them, governments would no longer be able to conceal their weapon manufacturing sites or testing involving nuclear weaponry. ICBMs could also be detected from the very moment they were launched, providing ample time to ready up against them. [5]

Both of these new exigencies prompted the early stages of the Space Race, as the USA announced its desire to launch the very first artificial satellite- which was followed by the USSR declaring its intentions to launch one as well. Both would work on the matter for almost 3 years, before the USSR managed to successfully launch the Sputnik 1 into low orbit. The USSR's preliminary victory would spark a period known as the Sputnik crisis, in which the American government became afraid that the USSR's technology had become more advanced than their own- motivating them to invest even further in satellite research.

Unfortunately, the gap only opened more as the USSR sent out Sputnik 2, an even more elaborate satellite capable of carrying a living being onboard. A few years later, it was also able to get its first cosmonaut in space: April of 1961 saw Yuri Gagarin becoming the first human to enter outer space aboard the Vostok 1, a monumental achievement for the USSR and further proof to the USA that it had to work harder if it wished to not stay behind.

The USA would manage to achieve an important milestone of its own, soon enough, for in July of 1969, Apollo 11 successfully landed on the moon, carrying three of the United States' own astronauts. This outcome is commonly regarded as the "ending" of the Space Race, that cemented the USA's victory when

it came to becoming the first state to explore a celestial body. Development of space technology did not end here, though- and nor did concerns of just how harmful space weaponization could be.

Countermeasures Against Space Militarization

With the advent of the Space Race, and the escalation of tensions between the USA and USSR over it, members of the international community began to voice worries over the usage of outer space as a means of attacking countries lacking space technology, without the possibility of retaliation. States wanted to ensure that outer space's resources would be used in a fair manner, and that all of humanity would be able to benefit from its exploration.

In order to reaffirm these principles and create a legal framework to prevent the weaponization of outer space, the United Nations established the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS, for short) in December of 1958. Initially an ad hoc committee with a limited number of members, COPUOS soon became a permanent member of the UN as the full gravity of the possible consequences of space militarization came to light. The Office for Outer Space Affairs, an expert unit meant to aid the committee in its activities and serve as its secretariat, was formed not long after. [6]

In order to tackle differing aspects of the issue at hand, the COPUOS was split up into three sections: the main committee, responsible for advocating for international cooperation when it came to using outer space's resources; the scientific and technical subcommittee, that researched the implications of new developments in satellite technology, space weaponry and WMD's; and finally, the legal subcommittee, that attempted to formulate the groundwork of "space law", a new set of treaties that would regulate what activities fell under the peaceful usage of outer space, and what activities would not. While the COPUOS did look at issues pertaining to the militarization of outer space as well, most of them were tabled, to be discussed at the Conference of Disarmament. [6]

Treaties on Space Militarization

Ever since the initial establishment of the COPUOS, a variety of treaties and draft resolutions have been submitted to the United Nations, in hopes of ensuring that all states work together for one single goal: preventing the militarization of outer space, and defending the right of countries to conduct space exploration as they please, without being threatened by nations with considerably more power.

The most important of these treaties is undoubtedly the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, referred to as the Outer Space Treaty. Initially drafted by the Legal Subcommittee in 1967, its creation was motivated mainly by the development of ICBMs during the Space Race, which were said to pose a threat to international safety, especially if they were to be situated within outer space.

The main provisions of the Outer Space Treaty relate to banning the usage of any forms of weapons of mass destruction in space, and restricting military operations from being conducted on celestial bodies, or in stations constructed on them. Other important additions included recognizing astronauts as “envoys of mankind”, reaffirming that the sovereignty of space belongs to all states collectively, taking measures against the creation of space debris, and defending the principles of cooperation and mutual assistance when it comes to space exploration. [7]

The Outer Space Treaty is not the only multilateral treaty to be signed on the matter, though. The Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (the Moon Treaty) is another important settlement that was opened to signatories in December of 1979. It sets a precedent for the responsibilities of countries in properly utilizing outer space, by requiring that all activities in outer space be in accordance with international law. It also suggests that celestial bodies should be treated as international scientific preserves, and orders party states to distribute resources gained from said bodies in a fair, equal manner.

Other treaties that are relevant to this agenda item include the Limited Test Ban Treaty, the Treaty on the Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space and of the Threat or Use of Force against Outer Space Objects and the Rescue Agreement. However, compared to the Outer Space Treaty, these attempts at resolving the problem have been less effective, especially due to the low number of states that have ratified them.

Recent Developments

As technology has continued to progress, one of the most important developments that continues to be used to this day, is that of satellite technology. Satellites have a multitude of meaningful purposes, and they play a significant role in daily life: the widely used Global Positioning System (GPS), cable and

network TV, radio communication, meteorological testing and energy networks all rely on satellites to ensure that they continue to function, suggesting that satellites are not only the backbone of most modern means of communication, but also have a role in other sectors as well. [8]

Despite all of this, no measures have been taken to ensure the safety and security of satellites involved in navigation and communications systems. In fact, anti-satellite missiles have been developed by countries like the USA and China to aid them in shooting down obsolete satellites: however, this technology poses a risk, in that it could be used to terminate live satellites, and even bring down a state's entire communications infrastructure during conflict.

Another key development that has unfolded within the last few decades has been the USA and China's progress, regarding their respective space programs. China's own program has recently launched its dedicated space station, and has also been one of the first to deploy military reconnaissance satellites. Said actions have sparked discussions regarding whether military satellites should be allowed in the first place, and if China may be preparing to engage in a Space Race of its own with the United States: this time, regarding the development of space weaponry.

Speaking of the USA, its Space Force was recently separated as a distinct branch of its military- suggesting the possibility that the USA may now recognize outer space as an opportunity for furthering its military presence, one that requires a specialized unit to properly make use of. While these are all hypothetical conclusions, one thing is clear: outer space is being perceived as a new frontier when it comes to military operations, intel collection and armament.

Major Parties Involved and Their Views

The United States of America

As usual, one of the most prevalent parties when it comes to the issue of space militarization is undoubtedly the United States. The USA possesses the world's second largest collection of weapons of mass destruction, and in 2022, had the highest military spending out of any country in the world. Its space programme is also one of the most advanced, and it's been involved in space exploration ever since the beginning of the Space Race. All of these factors make it worrying that the USA has begun to turn its attention towards outer space as a means of protecting its dominant political and military position. During

his administration, President Donald Trump mentioned how space was "...the world's newest war-fighting domain..", a view which aligned with many of his efforts to essentially prepare the USA for efforts to militarize outer space. These efforts included establishing the United States Space Force, increasing both NASA and the Space Force's annual budget, training personnel for future space operations, and developing anti-satellite missiles that could be used to take down foreign reconnaissance satellites. [10]

Russia

Another important perpetrator is the Russian Federation. It too has been a key figure in space exploration and the development of WMDs for a very long time, and it was responsible for the first ever artificial satellite to be placed into Earth's orbit. Because of this, Russia's space technology has often been ahead of its time, and continues to be to this day: its space program, known as the Russian Aerospace Forces, is reminiscent of the Space Forces in that it is a branch of the military dedicated solely to aerial and space warfare, along with the progression of missile defense systems and aerial weaponry like ICBMs. Due to its ties with China and its past tension with the United States, it is likely that Russia would wish to use outer space as a tool against the USA. It too has designed and put into force its own anti-satellite missiles, and a variety of other measures against WMDs and space weaponry. The most sophisticated example of this would be the Peresvet Ground-Based Laser System, an energy weapon that is capable of deactivating and terminating most satellites with ease. [11]

China

The final country of note in this matter would be the People's Republic of China. Although China wasn't originally involved in preliminary space exploration during the Cold War, as it initiated a period of rapid industrial and technological development, it too began to work on its own satellites, probes and rockets, all of which has culminated in China becoming one of the most prominent member states when it comes to satellite technology and space operations. The Strategic Support Forces serves as the country's agency that is responsible for space warfare, albeit unlike the USA and Russia, it is not purely dedicated to this cause, and it actively works on cyber operations and espionage as well. Regardless, China's work when it comes to developing anti-spacecraft and anti-satellite technology is not to be taken lightly, and outer space appears to be an essential component of its military strategy- that is prevailing as time goes on.

Timeline of Events

July 30, 1955	The United States declares that it will be working on launching the very first artificial satellite into Earth's orbit. Russia reveals similar plans mere days later.
October 4, 1957	Russia launches Sputnik 1, the very first artificial Earth satellite. It remained in orbit for a month, before running out of battery.
November 3, 1957	Shortly after its initial success, Russia launches Sputnik 2, a satellite capable of conducting scientific measurements and carrying a payload.
December 13, 1958	The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space is established by the United Nations, with a preliminary 18 members.
December 12, 1959	Amidst rising tensions between the USA and USSR over the launch of Sputnik 1 and 2, COPUOS becomes a permanent committee of the UN General Assembly.
April 12, 1961	Yuri Gagarin, aboard the Vostok 1, becomes the first human to enter Earth's orbit on a spacecraft and return safely. The USA works to get a man on the moon by the end of the decade.
December 20, 1961	The General Assembly unanimously passes Resolution 1721, making the UN Charter applicable in outer space. COPUOS' legal subcommittee is formally created.

January 27, 1967	The Outer Space Treaty is opened for signatures, and is signed and ratified by the USA, the UK and the Soviet Union promptly after.
December 3, 1968,	The Rescue Agreement is opened for signatures following negotiations between the General Assembly and the Legal Subcommittee. It is put into force approximately two weeks later. [12]
July 20, 1969	The USA's Apollo 11 becomes the first spacecraft to touch down on the surface of the Moon, marking the end of the Space Race.
December 18, 1979	The Moon Agreement is drafted and opened for signatures.
July 11, 1984	After almost 5 years, the Moon Agreement is finally put into force, having received five ratifications. No space-faring states ratify the agreement.
September 13, 1985	The first instance of a satellite being shot down is recorded, after the USA destroys one of its obsolete satellites with an anti-satellite missile.
February 4, 1989	One of the first satellites utilized in the GPS system, Block II, is successfully launched into orbit and used in determining a location's precise geographic coordinates.
December 16, 2002	George W. Bush signs a national directive, granting the country's Missile Defense Agency the permission to begin work on ballistic missile defense systems.

January 11, 2007	China conducts its own anti-satellite missile test, destroying one of its unused weather satellites.
October 28, 2009	The General Assembly passes Resolution 64/25, in an attempt to prevent the possibility of an arms race in outer space.
December 20, 2019	The USA establishes its Space Force, and designates it as a special branch of its military hierarchy.
December 16, 2020	Resolution 75/36 is adopted by the General Assembly, aiming to reaffirm the applicability of international law in outer space, and reduce threats against the shared sovereignty of celestial bodies.
November 15, 2021	Kosmos 1408, a Soviet satellite that was designated as space debris, is destroyed by the Russian army through a ground-based missile.

Relevant UN Documents

United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/75/36, “Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space”: This resolution, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2020, aims to prevent the escalation of an arms race in outer space. It calls upon all countries to prevent the placement of weapons of mass destruction in outer space and to refrain from the use of force when it comes to the displacement or removal of space objects.

United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA), “Guidelines for the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities”: These guidelines, published in 2019, provide recommendations for ensuring the long-term sustainability of outer space activities. They cover topics such as space debris mitigation, orbital disposal, and responsible space resource utilization.

United Nations Report of the Group of Governmental Experts, on “Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities” (A/74/29): This report, released in 2019, outlines recommendations for enhancing transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities. It discusses pre-launch notifications, information sharing, and dispute resolution mechanisms.

United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), “Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies”: This treaty, also known as the Outer Space Treaty, was adopted by COPUOS in 1967 and entered into force in 1967. It establishes principles for the peaceful exploration and use of outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies.

United Nations Disarmament Commission, “Report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (A/68/189)”: This report, published in 2013, provides recommendations for practical measures to prevent an arms race in outer space. It discusses topics such as transparency measures, confidence-building measures, and legal frameworks for space activities.

Treaties and Events

Outer Space Treaty (1967):

Date: January 27, 1967.

Signatories: 109 countries.

Function: Prohibits the placement of nuclear weapons in space, establishes space as a peaceful domain, and prevents any national appropriation of celestial bodies. This agreement is also the milestone for the first organized recognition of the space race.

Rescue Agreement (1968):

Date: April 22, 1968.

Signatories: 109 countries.

Function: Ensures the prompt return of astronauts and cosmonauts to their home country in the event of an emergency during a space mission. This agreement also sets an example of the humanitarian role of the UN in the space militarization and space race.

Liability Convention (1972):

Date: March 29, 1972.

Signatories: 90 countries.

Function: Establishes liability for damage caused by space objects to other countries' space objects and personnel. To be reminded, any space debris or accident that occurs during any launch has the potential to land anywhere and cause serious damage. The damages caused by space objects had the potential to create a crisis between countries. To release potential diplomatic dangers in the future, the convention established a liability.

Moon Agreement (1984):

Date: Opened for signatures on December 18, 1979; entered into force on July 11, 1984.

Signatories: 18 countries.

Function: Establishes a framework for the use and exploration of the Moon and other celestial bodies, emphasizing international cooperation and the prevention of any national appropriation. Moon, our natural satellite, still has the property of being international and completely open for any scientific research, without violating any nation. Moon's agreement states that any future project regarding our natural satellite must not cause any diplomatic tension between any nations.

Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

It is clear, from a first glance at the wide range of treaties and agreements that have been drafted on this matter, that initiative has been taken to try and ensure the peaceful usage of outer space, by all states- regardless of military power, or political influence. These treaties succeed in covering a variety of important aspects of how outer space should be utilized: restrictions have been imposed to prevent the contamination of celestial bodies, to uphold the right of scientists to explore and research outer space freely, to stop the passage of space's sovereignty to any one country, and all in all, to affirm space's role as an area of scientific interest to all of humanity, as opposed to a battleground.

However, three significant issues arise that limit the efficacy of these treaties in our modern day. The first- and perhaps most important- is that these treaties still do not have global applicability. They only become binding once a country has signed and ratified them, meaning that they have no real value if they have a low number of signatories. Documents like the Moon Treaty and Rescue Agreement have important provisions when it comes to ensuring the common, shared usage of outer space's resources: however, they are meaningless if not signed by countries that actively work on space technology.

The second issue that was mentioned in previous segments pertains to just how rapidly new developments have begun to arise in the modern age. Many of these treaties were prepared back in the 1960's and 1970's, when space technology had only just come into existence as a concept: almost five decades have passed since then. It would have been impossible at the time to predict just how crucial civilian satellites would become, or to what extent WMDs and space weaponry would be improved: but now that these situations have arisen, new measures are absolutely necessary to make sure of their resolution in an efficient and quick manner.

Finally, these treaties lack any means to ensure that their provisions are followed by space-faring countries. They are devoid of any verification measures, nor do they provide any propositions as to how their application in signatory states would be monitored. Treaties are binding, yes, but nothing is stopping a state from running operations in secret- as is the case right now, when it comes to the activities of the USA, China and Russia's own space programmes. [14] All in all, these concerns must be addressed if these treaties are to be enacted and applied rigorously, which requires new solutions: some of which have been discussed below.

Possible Solutions

Comprehensive Space Traffic Management (STM):

Develop an international STM framework and organization that includes real-time tracking, collision avoidance protocols, and coordinated maneuvers to enhance space traffic safety. The protocols must be discussed by the UNCOPUOS and every party to ensure any national security subjects. This new STM

organization should be missioned to oversee and enforce these regulations, ensuring responsible space operations. These regulations should be declared as internationally secured rules regarding space missions, with the UN guarantors.

Debris Mitigation and Removal Strategies:

Implement guidelines for spacecraft design to minimize debris generation during launch and operations. Debris has the risk of landing in foreign areas and damaging urban areas. Delegates may wish to invest in and deploy active debris removal technologies to reduce existing space debris, preventing potential collisions and damage to critical satellites. Any damaged foreign satellite caused by any country might start a crisis. Here, the key issue must be negotiating with countries about their Space agencies and programs.

International Space Governance Body:

Create an international space governance body, possibly under the United Nations, to regulate and oversee space activities. Define and enforce transparent regulations covering space exploration, military activities, and the prevention of weaponization. UNCOPUOS might be in contact with a new space governance body. The new governance body must have the authority to take legal and demanding actions regarding any party who violates the regulations about space, and the parties shall be punished internationally with the authority of this new body.

Arms Control and Disarmament Agreements:

Pursue and strengthen arms control agreements specific to space, limiting the deployment of space-based weapons. Although the already existing agreements' limits partially consist of arm control regarding space, most of the already declared agreements have the risk of being overruled by time issues. Noticing that the new technologies of the space military have developed themselves, new regulations must be implemented by noticing new techniques. Establish verification mechanisms to monitor compliance and discourage the weaponization of outer space, regarding the current 25-year minimum.

Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures:

Implement pre-launch notifications for significant space activities, fostering transparency and reducing the risk of misunderstandings. Neighboring countries or foreign states might feel threatened by missile launches in space. Transparency is necessary in preventing any potential crises. Encourage nations to share information on the nature and purpose of their space missions to build confidence among space-faring nations. If necessary, the UN must have the authority to force countries to release more information about their space projects and plans.

Space Sustainability Standards:

Develop and adopt international standards for sustainable space activities, covering aspects such as spacecraft design, orbital disposal, and responsible use of space resources. The standards must comply with today's modern engineering standards. Promote awareness of these standards through diplomatic incentives and cooperation. These standards must be overseen by UNCOPUOS (or even a newly established UN body, if delegates see a necessity for one) to ensure that they're not only realistic, but also non-invasive.

Notes from the Chair

Dear delegates,

I'd like to preface this final section of the report by thanking my predecessor, Buğra Ermihan, who was responsible for writing the very first draft of this chair report and who was initially supposed to be deputy chair of COPUOS. Much of the research he did was beneficial in my attempts to rewrite this report.

The matter at hand here - the militarization of outer space - is one that initially doesn't seem all too significant. Research into the usage of space and celestial bodies has certainly accelerated over the past few decades, but it is clear that we don't understand just how much it has truly developed. Satellites exist that are capable of collecting intel in a quicker and more inconspicuous manner than ever before, weapons of mass destruction can easily be placed and housed within Earth's orbit, and the possibility of an arms race involving outer space is becoming increasingly more likely as countries rush to weaponize space for their own needs.

It is certain that measures must be taken quickly to ensure that such a situation does not come into fruition: past efforts have certainly helped, but they have not been comprehensive enough to prevent the militarization of outer space, once and for all. This is where you come in. The goal is simple: protecting satellites that serve the general public, averting the usage of outer space for the deployment of weapons of mass destruction, and continuing to uphold the principles first put forth by the Outer Space Treaty.

How exactly you accomplish this goal depends mostly on your country's intentions. The solution alternatives proposed in this chair report may not be applicable for all states, so it is up to those in a position of power in this ordeal to either use it to defend their own interests, or to guarantee that states will peacefully use outer space.

Whatever option you choose, just remember that this is a critical issue that will only continue to grow out of hand if drastic measures are not taken. Diplomacy, as always, is key.

I hope to see all of you soon.

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