

IISL COLLOQUIUM ON THE LAW OF OUTER SPACE (E7)
Dispute Settlement (2)

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THE FUTURE OF GLOBAL SPACE GOVERNANCE: THE NECESSITY OF INTERNATIONAL
COOPERATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

Abstract

Today, space technologies and programs have become vital ingredients of power for major nations capable of space travel. However, the challenges for international space governance (to ensure a safe environment) are enormous, due, for example, to the growing number of non-state actors and the commercialization of space, making the skies and the space more competitive. This is because, space is a strategic domain, in which the classic great space powers and also the emerging ones look for a place in the 21st century (mainly because of the associated socioeconomic benefits). However, with this new space race and age, new challenges arise for the organization of these actors (states and non-states) of International Law, in order to ensure that space continues to be a safe domain. So, while space has much to offer for human growth and prosperity, that potential is hijacked by the risks of conflict. Thus, the main challenge is that States tend to see the domain of space as a field of competition in which the considerable presence of an actor of International Law is equivalent to greater stature and/or national importance. A recent example is the euphoria among Indian leaders after the country successfully tested its first Anti-Satellite Weapons System (ASAT) (considering the statement by the Indian Prime Minister, who successfully conducted an anti-satellite missile test in 2019, that claimed that this capability placed India among the few space superpowers). Thus, currently, countries with space resources seek to establish a decisive space domain. This approach consequently increases competition and stimulates tensions. Due to this reasoning, this article aims to present (through a critical-deductive methodology, made through a bibliographic reference) the challenges for correct spatial governance nowadays, as cooperation and global space governance can increase mutual and reduce the chances of conflicts occurring, given that the geopolitical competition, currently taking place in space, any model of spatial governance should not ignore the inherent competitive tendencies between States, but should aim to promise more incentives through cooperation. The idea of global spatial governance, therefore (incorporated in this article), seeks to maximize prospects for the peaceful exploitation of this global commons, encouraging more responsible and sustainable behavior.