

IISL COLLOQUIUM ON THE LAW OF OUTER SPACE (E7)  
Safety Zones on Celestial Bodies and in Outer Space (5)

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“WHAT’S IN A NAME?” LEGAL ASPECTS OF ‘SAFETY ZONES’ ON CELESTIAL BODIES AND  
ELSEWHERE IN OUTER SPACE**Abstract**

The concept of ‘safety zones’ and the possible application thereof to areas of outer space, in particular on celestial bodies, has recently attracted considerable attention and debate, mainly because it constituted one of the elements in the Artemis Accords. Most notably, concerns were raised that the establishment of any such zones would violate the foundational principle of absence of territorial occupation and sovereignty in outer space stemming from Article II of the Outer Space Treaty. The present paper will, first, look deeper into, and critically analyse, the approach taken by the Artemis Accords on the issue, in particular in the light of the Outer Space Treaty and other relevant international law. Second, it will briefly assess more broadly how in some other domains concepts of ‘safety zones’ or similar constructs have been developed as well as the legal ramifications thereof. This should allow, third, at least for a preliminary assessment of the conditions under which establishment of ‘safety zones’ on celestial bodies respectively elsewhere in outer space would, could and/or should be considered legal.