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SECURITY AND STABILITY IN OUTER SPACE: LESSONS FROM ARMS CONTROL

Abstract

Growing geopolitical instability on Earth is having spillover effects on the security of outer space, which threatens continued access to and innovation in this critical environment. Momentum to support the development of norms of behaviour for military and security activities in space as an essential means to reduce risk in the operating environment is growing. But such norms, while enhancing safety and peacetime stability, cannot by themselves produce collective security and strategic risk reduction in a domain subjected to intense power rivalry and warfighting. In other domains of defense activity, arms control and other restraints have successfully enhanced the security of all parties. Although space is a unique environment, the interests and actors are not. Building on the lessons learned from previous research to map the existing contours of norms in space, this paper will examine best practices and lessons learned from these domains and experiences to inform additional frameworks for security in outer space.