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INTERNATIONAL INTERESTS AND TOP-DOWN APPROACHES TO TRANSPARENCY &  
CONFIDENCE-BUILDING MEASURES IN OUTER SPACE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF  
UNITED NATIONS

**Abstract**

Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures (TCBMs) in outer space have become an increasingly debated topic within the United Nations. During the past few years, discussions on TCBMs have dominated the discussions on space security within United Nations Conference on Disarmament and have slowly integrated into the meetings of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, especially as part of the discussions on the long-term sustainability of outer space. Emerging treaties and principles such as the European Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities and the Treaty on Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space have become clear points of contention for how international space diplomacy addresses the next large emerging debate – outer space security.

The growing popularity of discussing such a contested topic within the international space community is indicative of a much large discussion on space security and the long-term sustainability of outer space. This concern was reflected throughout the negotiation processes throughout the development of the Outer Space Treaty, and is still evident in today's proposed treaties. Throughout the 20th century, discussions on different types of verification measures can be found in a much broader conversation on the development and the applications based off of their dual-use nature for both conventional weapons such as small arms, and among others such as nuclear.

From the late 1950s, COPUOS talks in the United Nations began under a very clear but underlying pretense that outer space security was a major, motivating factor. Scholars and practitioners have argued that measures such as the Outer Space Treaty leaned toward disarmament texts, which sought to create a standard for and principles guiding the uses for outer space. The research emphasized here seeks to place the current dialogue on TCBMs into the broader conversation on outer space security. As a result, this will also create an opportunity to explore the historical context of the developing space age to address questions such as: (1) how have confidence-building measures used with other emerging technologies be applied to the development of outer space applications?; and (2) can the broader historical context address today's current trends on TCBMs in outer space?

Space diplomacy has played a critical role in the direction of and discussions on space security for the international space community and will continue to encompass the ways in which Member States will move forward with these discussions.