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PAROS:A TECHNOLOGICAL VIEW OF THE PROBLEM

Abstract

Since the beginning of the space age, the weaponization of space has been one of the highest concerns of nations. The prevention of an arms race in outer space was one of the key elements in the early decades of space exploration for the adoption of international treaties, such as the Outer Space Treaty (1967) or the Moon Agreement (1979).Treaties that cast out the possibility of placing weapons of mass destruction in space or celestial bodies. However, they did leave the possibility for an arms race of conventional weapons or even anti-satellite systems (ASAT) in space. Indeed, the early developments of ASAT systems in USA and the former USSR during the 1960s and 1970s demonstrated that interference and attack of space assets was within technological reach of space nations. All these led to additional efforts within the international community to prevent an arms race in outer space (PAROS) and to secure a sustainable and peaceful use of other space. Recent events (like the Chinese and US ASAT tests in 2007 and 2008 respectively) have proven that a perspective of an arms race in space or the loss of space assets due to attacks from other nations are very real.This paper will examine different efforts and initiatives within the PAROS frame (such as the Russia-China PPWT or the European Union code of conduct), and how they cope with past, present and future technological developments and systems that can be used to weaponize space.