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Assuring a Safe, Secure and Sustainable Environment for Space Activities (4)

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ACTIVE DEBRIS REMOVAL AND THE CONCEPT OF ANTICIPATORY SELF-DEFENCE TO
ENSURE SAFE, SECURE AND SUSTAINABLE OUTER SPACE ACTIVITIES

Abstract

During UNCOPUOS and its LTS Working Group various aspects around safe, secure and sustainable environment for space activities were already discussed and extensively analysed in order to formulate guidelines and regulations. Nevertheless, some aspects were raised by some delegation but still kept on the margin of those discussions. Notwithstanding they merit undoubtedly more attention. One of them is the (legal/political) aspect of active debris removal and the concept of anticipatory self-defence. Due to contrasting political approaches in regard to security among UNCOPUOS members, the possibility to invoke the right to self-defence in order to reduce the amount of already existing space debris in orbit is highly questionable. Therefore, the paper will focus on the diverse political and security approaches in this regard to encourage further discussions on relevant associated aspects in international fora like UNCOPUOS to foster a safe, secure and sustainable environment for space activities.