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Legal framework for collaborative space activities - New ways of launching (micro-launching) and large constellation microsats (Joint IAF/IISL session) (7-B3.8)

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“LEVIATHAN LITE” - TOWARDS A GLOBAL STEWARDSHIP ORGANIZATION FOR SPACE
DOMAIN AWARENESS, CONDUCT, AND REMEDIATION

Abstract

This paper examines the dimensions, legal and policy implications, and ramifications of a proposed *International Space Situational Awareness Organization (ISSAO)*, whose charter would be to provide leadership for international and collaborative stewardship of the space environment in LEO and beyond. As ever more satellites, rockets, and space stations are launched into space, the need for debris tracking, debris remediation, orbital traffic deconfliction, and definitions of ‘best practices in care-taking the space environment’ grow. Current organizations and programs are successful, at least to some extent, in educating the world on the potential dangers of space debris, and the importance of space situational awareness, yet they have little legal or political standing to provide enforcement, compliance, or remediation. Many global discussions related to space situational domain awareness have called for a cooperative international effort to create guidelines, if not charter an organization tasked with the stewardship of the space environment. Here, we examine important precedents set forth in international law and cooperation, and apply these to a proposed comprehensive body to steward space situational awareness and debris mitigation. We elucidate the requirements, enforceable powers, and probable limits of such an organization as well as important questions to be answered prior to establishment of such a body.