Paper ID: 56358
oral
student

IISL COLLOQUIUM ON THE LAW OF OUTER SPACE (E7)
Application of space law to cyber activities (4)

Author: Mr. OLUSOJI NESTER JOHN
African Regional Center for Space Science and Technology Education in English (ARCSSTE-E), Nigeria

Prof. Adewole Adedeji
Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria

CYBER ATTACK ON SPACE ASSETS AND THE APPLICATION OF ARTICLE 51 OF THE UNITED NATIONS CHARTER

Abstract

Space plays an increasingly vital role in the functioning of societies of the world today, either in their economic development or military efficiency. The transformative potential of space-based services either in terms of economic and developmental benefits or security and military efficiency, has made several nations of the world to invest heavily in space assets. Now, the services and products of these assets can be targeted. Several attack options, ranging from anti-satellite missiles, electronic, space-based weapons, directed-energy weapons, and the most recent cyber, are available for use to cause damaging effects on space assets. Some affected States see any of these attacks as "armed attack" that can give rise to the right of self-defense under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. This paper which is a part of an on-going research examines situations under which a cyber activity targeted on space assets of a country can be legally considered as an 'attack' and in severe cases "armed attack", that can give rise to the right of self-defense under the Article. Pursuant to this, it outlines emerging technologies and capabilities in the electronic and cyber technologies, and considers issues of state-sponsored and non-state sponsored attacks, especially the later as it concerns some countries in Africa, where terrorism and cybercrimes have been bourgeoning. Cyber attack can be done either from home or office by an individual or a group. Therefore, questions concerning issues of targeting by a cyber criminal or a terrorist group and a potential responsive application of Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations by the affected State, are extensively discussed from an African perspective.