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HIGH ROAD OR LOW ROAD: WHERE ARE WE HEADED IN THE SPACE ARENA?

**Abstract**

We are starting the decade of the 2020s with much promise for space activities, in terms of new capabilities, new actors and new markets, but also much peril in terms of governance challenges, debris, orbital congestion, and a proliferation of counterspace activities. Which way will things develop by 2030? Will we be on a High Road to a bright future of space as an expanded sphere of human economic activity, characterized by international cooperation and the peaceful exploration and use of space for the benefit of all? Or will we be on a Low Road to a space environment threatened by poor governance, irresponsible actors, increased nationalism and the potential for conflict in space? We have used foresight methods to attempt to answer these questions by imaging a set of possible futures in the High Road and Low Road scenarios. We identify the drivers for each of these High/Low Road scenarios and the interventions that will be needed as on-ramps to direct us onto the High Road and off-ramps to take us off the Low Road.