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Author: Mrs. Thaís Zandoná
Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul - MG/II/UFRGS, Brazil

Ms. Marina Lima
ASB - Brazilian Space Startup Alliance, Brazil
Ms. natalia Oliveira
Brazil

THE ROLE OF LATIN AMERICA IN SPACE GOVERNANCE: IS THERE A PLACE FOR LATIN
AMERICAN AGENCY?

Abstract

Latin America is a developing region with some national space programs in slow development but in need of space applications for its main economic activities, such as agriculture, cattle raising, and mining. In 2021, some countries of the region reunited to establish the Latin American and Caribbean Space Agency (ALCE) to address these challenges. Since outer space plays a strategic domain for States and enables the use of everyday technologies, accessing it is essential not only for spacefaring nations but also for those nations that do not have the capacity to explore it - outer space is a global common and Space Law defines it as a common heritage of humankind. This working paper explores the role Latin America can play in space governance and what to expect from ALCE. The first part presents the challenges of international space governance. The second part introduces Latin America's institutions and space programs and why it matters. The third part proposes a comparison between what ALCE intends and the European Space Agency (ESA), already consolidated and which can be used as an example of success. In order to analyze the possible adjustments and necessary improvements of the ALCE. The document concludes that Latin America has a significant role to play in space governance and that the development of an effective regional framework for space governance rules will be essential for the region to benefit from important space applications. In order to assist in this objective, the expertise already achieved by other regional organizations can be used. The research methodology is bibliographical and documental, through qualitative analysis, where historical and analytical methods are applied.