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NAVIGATING SPACE ALLIANCES: BRAZIL IN THE US-CHINA RIVALRY

Abstract

The prevailing competition between the United States and China stands as the paramount feature shaping the landscape of international politics in the foreseeable future. As both nations actively pursue the protection and advancement of their national interests, attention has increasingly centered on the ramifications of this rivalry on regional politics worldwide. Notably, this contest extends into the realm of outer space, given its pivotal role in security and economic domains. Brazil, owing to its distinctive geographical positioning, extensive engagement in space activities over several decades, and its political aspirations to assume a more substantial role in space affairs, emerges as a significant participant in the unfolding space rivalry within the South Atlantic region. Despite Brazil's longstanding collaboration with China in the joint development of the Sino-Brazilian satellites CBERS, recent developments have seen Brazil aligning itself more closely with the United States. This shift is evidenced by its participation in the Artemis project, an initiative spearheaded by the United States in the realm of space exploration. Furthermore, Brazil has solidified its ties with the United States by signing a Technology Safeguards Agreement, facilitating commercial space collaboration and investment in the nation. Upon this background, this study undertakes an analysis of the escalating geopolitical significance of space within the evolving Sino-American rivalry. The focus is on Brazil's dynamic interactions with these two superpowers in a geopolitical landscape characterized by polarization. Additionally, the paper evaluates Brazil's ambitions in space and underscores the importance of a robust space strategy in maintaining its influential position in the South Atlantic region. Consequently, the paper sheds light on the geopolitical, legal, and policy frameworks that guide Brazil's activities in outer space. It also contemplates the current challenges and opportunities facing emerging nations, particularly those in Latin America, as they navigate the intricate dynamics of the international competition for space supremacy.