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FROM ENDORSEMENT TO CODIFICATION: EXAMINING NORM IMPLEMENTATION IN SOUTH  
AMERICA**Abstract**

International governance measures – whether binding or non-binding – are tested at the national level where stakeholders must enforce or implement commitments made by states in multilateral forums. In today’s evolving governance discussion, debris mitigation guidelines emerge as the strongest set of norms, enjoying vocal support from states and private operators alike.

The need exists to examine progress in implementation at the national level. This paper seeks to build on the collection of early experiences in implementation of the Guidelines for the Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities, with a focus on the adoption of space debris-related measures in South America. It will describe the relationship between the generation of non-binding norms and its effects in modifying the political conduct of the state and national stakeholders to adopt responsible behavior related to the management of space debris. Building on state-level reporting to the United Nations, this paper will also examine regional challenges, opportunities or perspectives impacting the norm-generation process. Finally, the paper will conclude by illustrating gaps and opportunities related to the adoption of such norms at the international level and national-level codification.

In the current geopolitical climate, developing countries may become especially relevant for strengthening and maintaining the principles of international space activity that shape and sustain international space governance. From an academic and practitioner standpoint, this research provides a unique contribution that could help enable the definition of more realistic governance scenarios. Stakeholders in multilateral domains, for example, may be able to identify, based on comparative evidence, the dynamics and gaps that feed into dichotomies between a state’s political behavior and its process of establishing norms and policies capable of regulating its own conduct within the domestic sphere. This research will also help increase broader awareness of processes related to space policy and law in the South American region.