Introducing Our

Space Security Programme

#UNIDIRSpaceSecurity

Overview

- Established in 2022, UNIDIR's Space Security Programme **contributes to the maintenance of peace and security in space** by building knowledge and awareness of challenges and global security implications relating to the space environment.

- Our research **develops capacity**, contributes to **building trust** in the international sphere, promotes **common understanding** on space security challenges and how to address them, and **informs multilateral processes** as they grapple with the complex legal, technological and security issues at play in this arena.

Key Issues We Cover

- Threats and challenges to space systems

- How international law applies to space

- Verification and monitoring

- Links between space security and space sustainability

- The space-nuclear nexus

- Bridge building and cross-sector dialogue with commercial actors, academia and civil society

- Gender and space security

Our Impact

Digital tools for **transparency and accessibility**:

- **A Lexicon for Space Security**: a global reference point available in all six UN languages, enabling common understanding of key topics and terms.

- **Space Security Portal**: a living resource mapping the global space security governance landscape, with profiles on policies of States, intergovernmental organisations and multistakeholder initiatives.

Knowledge transfer: raising awareness of the importance of space security and facilitating the cross-sectoral exchange of ideas that can sustain it.

- **Outer Space Security Conference**: a key annual forum to consider challenges and solutions in this area, attracting over 1,000 participants in 2023.

- **Regional events** (for ASEAN, LAC, Africa, SIDS): bringing in local narratives and increasing the saliency of space in regional disarmament debates.

Support for international processes: briefing UN Member States on space law and policy, as well as providing substantive support to UN processes aiming to prevent an arms race in outer space (GGEs, OEWGs).

Recognized expertise: our researchers are established experts in their fields, publishing and presenting widely on space security-related matters.

Background

Humankind's growing reliance on space services means that **the maintenance of peace and security in outer space has become an increasingly critical issue** for the international community.

Space technology enables services that States, companies and citizens alike rely on every day, including navigation, communications, commerce, transportation, financial transactions, environmental monitoring and disaster relief.

As space becomes more economically and strategically important, there is growing concern that **tensions between different actors are growing in ways that could lead to conflict**.

Counterspace capabilities that can destroy or damage space systems are developing and proliferating at pace, and some States have enacted national policies that deem space a warfighting domain or a potential theatre for conflict. **These changes demonstrate the very real threats that exist and highlight the importance of keeping space peaceful**.

What's Next?

- The importance of space security is only increasing, and UNIDIR will continue to assist the international community in its efforts **to prevent an arms race in outer space and foster space security for all**.

- The Space Security Programme will continue to develop tools to make space security more accessible and transparent:

  » In 2024, we will launch an **interactive version of our Lexicon for Outer Space Security** and begin to develop informational factsheets for all topics and terms.

  » **Threats and Risks Mapping**: UNIDIR will also start to develop a digital interactive map of risks and threats to space systems to aid States in understanding how best to address and mitigate them.

  » **Space Security Verification and Monitoring Toolbox**: building on prior research in this area, UNIDIR will begin to develop an interactive toolbox detailing the mechanisms for ensuring space security that are available to States and other stakeholders and how these can be used.

- UNIDIR will also continue to **provide thought leadership on space security matters** through publication of reports on key issues, organization of events such as the flagship Outer Space Security Conference and provision of substantive support to UN processes (such as the OEWG on Space Threats, pictured left).

Partners

- Over the last two years, we have been supported by:

  Australia, the **Centre for International Governance Innovation**, **China**, **France**, the **Foundation for Strategic Research**, the **Holy See**, **Japan**, **Norway**, the **Russian Federation**, the **Republic of Korea**, the **Secure World Foundation**, the **UN Office for Disarmament Affairs**, the **United Kingdom** and the **United States**.

Find Out More

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