

A DIALOGUE ON SPACE CODE OF CONDUCT

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Bruce W. MacDonald

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QUESTIONS POSED

- What would be the components of a space code of conduct?
- How would a code of conduct complement other space negotiations?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

- Why a space code of conduct? What is needed in space? What are current pressing issues to be addressed?
- What should be objectives of such a code?

DISCUSSION

1. Need for code of conduct comes more from civilian and military space operators, less from professional diplomats.
2. Region of space near Earth has been transformed from a vast, empty frontier into a bustling, congested, contested, competitive region of substantial and growing activity.
3. Some form of informal regulation, perhaps leading to formal regulation, is needed if “near-space” is not to be rendered unusable through thoughtless human activity, and to be managed so that all may benefit from the potential bounty that near-space offers.
4. Does not preclude the possibility of more formalized arrangements, or treaties, but highest priority is a code of conduct that makes space more usable and user-friendly, and allows for a growing and sustainable space future.

COMPONENTS

1. Debris and other sustainability issues
2. Proximity issues, both physical and electromagnetic
3. Transparency/notification issues
4. Safety and safe passage issues
5. Best practices and information/technology exchanges
6. Establishment of regular lines of communication
7. Space cooperation

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER POSSIBLE SPACE NEGOTIATIONS

1. Non-binding nature means other space diplomatic and security objectives are not precluded.
2. Code of conduct provides a laboratory to demonstrate either that voluntary rules are sufficient to ensure responsible space behavior, or to demonstrate that more formalized agreements are necessary to ensure compliance and world-wide space benefits can be maintained.
3. Consistent with efforts of:
 - a. UN COPUOS Long Term Sustainability Working Group
 - b. Group of Government Experts
 - c. Interagency Space Debris Coordination Committee
 - d. Others
4. Essential precondition to discussions about stability in space, especially crisis stability.

OBSERVATIONS

- 1, Making space safe for space operators is important for all countries, and particularly for those great powers most active in space. The United States and China are the two greatest space powers today. U.S. and China stand to benefit the most from a more orderly and safe space environment.
2. Problems of debris generation, radio frequency interference, orbit allocations, and other symptoms of the growing problems in space cannot wait. They only grow worse as years go by. Cooperation between U.S. and China, and with others like EU and Russia, will pay important benefits to the economies of all space-faring nations.