



Press Corps/Australian Associated Press

Press Corps

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Topic: DISEC / Prevention of Arms Race in Space

Outer space is a vast world that we still know little about. Space is infinitely intriguing and mysterious. However, space can be a very dangerous place. Many countries currently have the capabilities to launch weapons into space, and a full blown war could occur in space now or in the near future, which would be catastrophic. This idea of space war is causing lots of tension between countries. On March 6th, 2020, I observed a Middle School and Upper Elementary United Nations (UN) DISEC conference, and as reporter for the Australian Associated Press, I will report on this topic.

When talking about preventing an arms race in space there is one major issue you have to address first: what is classified as a space weapon? This may seem like a simple question at

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first. A space weapon is any weapon in space. However, that is not the case. Would you say a missile sent to destroy a satellite in space is a space weapon, or a missile that travels through space, but starts and ends on Earth? Because of this, what a space weapon is and isn't is a majorly debated topic and most are still in disagreement in what a space weapon is and isn't.

Thankfully, there is a treaty in place called the Outer Space Treaty. The Outer Space Treaty is a treaty that states that no country can put a weapon of mass destruction, such as a nuclear weapon in outer space.

Currently, missiles used to destroy unwanted things in space, such as broken satellites, are allowed. In 2007, China destroyed one of their old satellites with a missile. In 2008, the U.S. did the same thing with a broken satellite. This is bad because it scares off countries from sending satellites and other objects into space, because they might be afraid of the U.S. and China blowing up their satellites, as well as other countries potentially being able to do so as well. But blowing up old space objects has another unwanted side effect. This side effect is spreading space junk. Space junk is debris caused by destruction of manmade objects. Space junk has lots of negative consequences. First, space junk can severely damage other satellites.

Currently, there are 19,000 pieces of space junk circling the Earth that are bigger than 5 cm.

These pieces of space junk can severely damage satellites, spaceships, and other manmade objects sent into space. Also, when these objects are destroyed by space junk, it creates more space junk, so the space junk will eventually climb and swarm our atmosphere if not taken care of.

Luckily, the UN is working on solutions to these problems. In the Middle School conference I visited, the ideas were very erratically. There were some ideas such as imploding the moon, however these were waved off. They did have the good idea of monitoring the amount of space debris in outer space annually to see how we are doing. In the Upper Elementary DISEC conference, things were better. One idea was to inspect satellites and other space objects before they were launched to make sure there are no weapons on board, to make sure that countries do not sneak weapons into space. However there is still a long way to go.

There are solutions being made to help prevent an arms race in outer space. I believe this is a very pressing topic and could determine the future of the human race. While space junk

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is a huge issue, there are solutions currently being researched and developed. I observed some good ideas for preventing an arms race in outer space, and I observed some bad ideas. But I observed something way more important than that. People putting their heads together, and trying to solve a world issue. And with this work ethic, we can prevent an arms race in outer space, and any other problem the world throws our way.