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Topic: DISEC / Prevention of Arms Race in Space

An arms race in space, doesn't seem so bad, but a very real and very scary threat. There have been attempts to put weapons in space, some very far fetched. The US once had a project, titled project A119, the goal of this was to blow up the moon. The USSR once had a project called Almaz, which was an attempt to build space stations armed with cannons.

Recently in 2007, China used a missile to use a broken satellite belonging to them. The US, in 2008, similarly used a missile to destroy a satellite of their own. These weren't hostile actions directed at any country, but it shows that these countries are able to destroy satellites and attack any country from space whenever they wish. Now, there have been some treaties, such as the outer space treaty, known as the base for a space law, which bans any weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) from being put or entering in space.

Montessori Model United Nations

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Now, the MMUN delegates have been debating the best ways to solve the problem and prevent the militarization of space. There have been many ideas from both the MS and UE conferences. The countries from the MS conference all believe there should be a conventional weapons ban. I questioned whether that was a good idea, for what if a terrorist group somehow got into space if aided by a hostile country? A large station like the ISS could easily be taken hostage if no weapons were allowed. But a delegate from Ghana said “It is absurd, a terrorist group couldn’t get into space,” while a Jamaican delegate said “a terrorist group couldn’t reach space.” Clearly not accepting the possibility, and showing the world is unprepared for the threat.

The UE committee’s delegations were also full of ideas. A common idea seemed to be putting in place a ban of all weapons. But, there were some ideas and even some accusations here that were also quite extravagant, such as Costa Rica’s idea of sending spies into countries suspected of building space weapons. This idea was brought down and dismantled quickly though, a main argument being that the UN is supposed to bring peace, not cause war. Costa Rica also proposed the creation of a treaty, which would prevent spying in space, but the fate of this treaty is unknown. The Costa Rican delegation also accused Russia and Japan of having a nuclear bomb “bigger than the Empire State Building” this was, of course, denied by Japan when questioned and wasn’t given much thought by the other delegations on the DISEC committee. Costa Rica also suggested the building of a moon base, to monitor satellite launches and monitor the activities of countries, but this was seen as an invasion of privacy and went against their earlier anti-spying treaty, and was not discussed further.

A common goal between both MS and UE committees was the need to ban all weapons from space. Meanwhile in the MS committee, the delegation from Guyana went as far as to suggest the possibility of imploding the moon. The committee still went on strong despite the absence of a key figure, the United States, who is currently building a “space force” and is one of the 11 countries on the Earth who is capable of launching ships and satellites into outer space. Of course, this was not given much thought either, for I spoke with a delegate representing Cameroon, who clearly stated his country did not support this idea and. While there were some far fetched ideas, there was much progress all around. All countries within MS DISEC were able to vote on a final draft resolution, as was the UE committee.