



General Assembly

Fourteenth Session

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First Committee – Disarmament and International Security

This committee wants to create a more peaceful world. Its members talk about dangerous weapons, find threats to peace and solutions to world security. They focus on finding ways to make the world more secure.

This committee believes cooperation improves the world. They might talk about keeping weapons from terrorists or how less arms can make the world safer. Also, countries find ways to reduce weapons. They want to create a world where the fear of war is much less but where people are safe from terrorism and violence. Countries can do this by working together.

They have passed resolutions on ammunition, military spending and missiles.

Agenda Item 95.A – Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space

Guiding Questions

With your fellow delegates you need to find a way to work towards making the following goals a reality.

- How can countries come up with a plan to keep space free from weapons and make sure that it is shared resource with all countries?
- What should be considered a weapon in space and how can countries encourage each other to not send or use weapons in space?

Satellites are important to a country's development as it can provide telecommunications, GPS, and perform experiments in space. How can we make sure this resource is shared with all the countries in the world fairly?

Background

Humans have always been curious about outer space. In 1865 Jules Verne wrote From the Earth to the Moon about three people who are shot out of a large gun and land on the moon. His book became very popular and shows it is a topic people that interests many people.

During World War II many countries were experimenting with rockets. In fact, it was during WWII that humans first sent an object into space. After the war, many countries continued to experiment with rockets and by October 1957 the USSR (now Russia) sent the first satellite into space. Less than a month later they sent up a dog which was the first animal in orbit. Over the next 15 years the U.S. and the USSR would compete in what history calls the Space Race.

The Space Race was positive because new technologies were created but people were also worried. What if a country put weapons in space? The U.S. at one time had a plan

Background

called Project A119 to explode a nuclear bomb on the moon. The USSR had a program called Almaz that made space stations with a cannon that could shoot in space.

The United Nations believes that space should be used for peaceful purposes. During the 1950s and 1960s the UN talked a lot about how countries can use space peacefully. They created the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space Committee. They also helped create the “Outer Space Treaty”. This treaty says no country can put weapons of mass destruction in space or on an object in space – like the moon.

Recent Developments

- Space is talked about in both 1st and 4th Committee. In 4th Committee the focus is on the peaceful uses of space.
- Treaties ban countries from putting weapons of mass destruction in space. Other arms, however, are not banned.
- Each year the General Assembly presents and adopts a resolution on the prevention of an arms race in space. Israel and the U.S. always abstain from voting.
- The U.S. is building a national missile defense program. It will destroy missiles before they reach the U.S. These missiles could also reach objects in space.
- In 2008, China and Russia presented a treaty that would ban all arms from space. The short name for the treaty is the *Treaty on Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer*. You can read the 2014 version here: <http://bit.ly/22ovXzl>.
- In 2007, China used a missile to destroy one of their old satellites. In 2008, the U.S. used a missile to destroy a satellite that was broken. No country was harmed – that was not the point. Now the whole world knows these countries can destroy any satellite they want.
- The earth has a problem with space debris. There are 19 000 pieces of debris bigger than 5 cm circling the Earth. This can damage spaceships, satellites and anything put into orbit. Weapons in space will make more space debris.
- The EU made an International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities in 2008. Some countries agree, some do not.

Treaties & Agreements

Outer Space Treaty

- ✓ The basis for space law.
- ✓ Came into force on 10 October 1967.
- ✓ Bans weapons of mass destruction from space.
- ✓ No country can ‘claim’ the moon or any other space object.
- ✓ Space should be used for peaceful purposes.

The Rescue Agreement

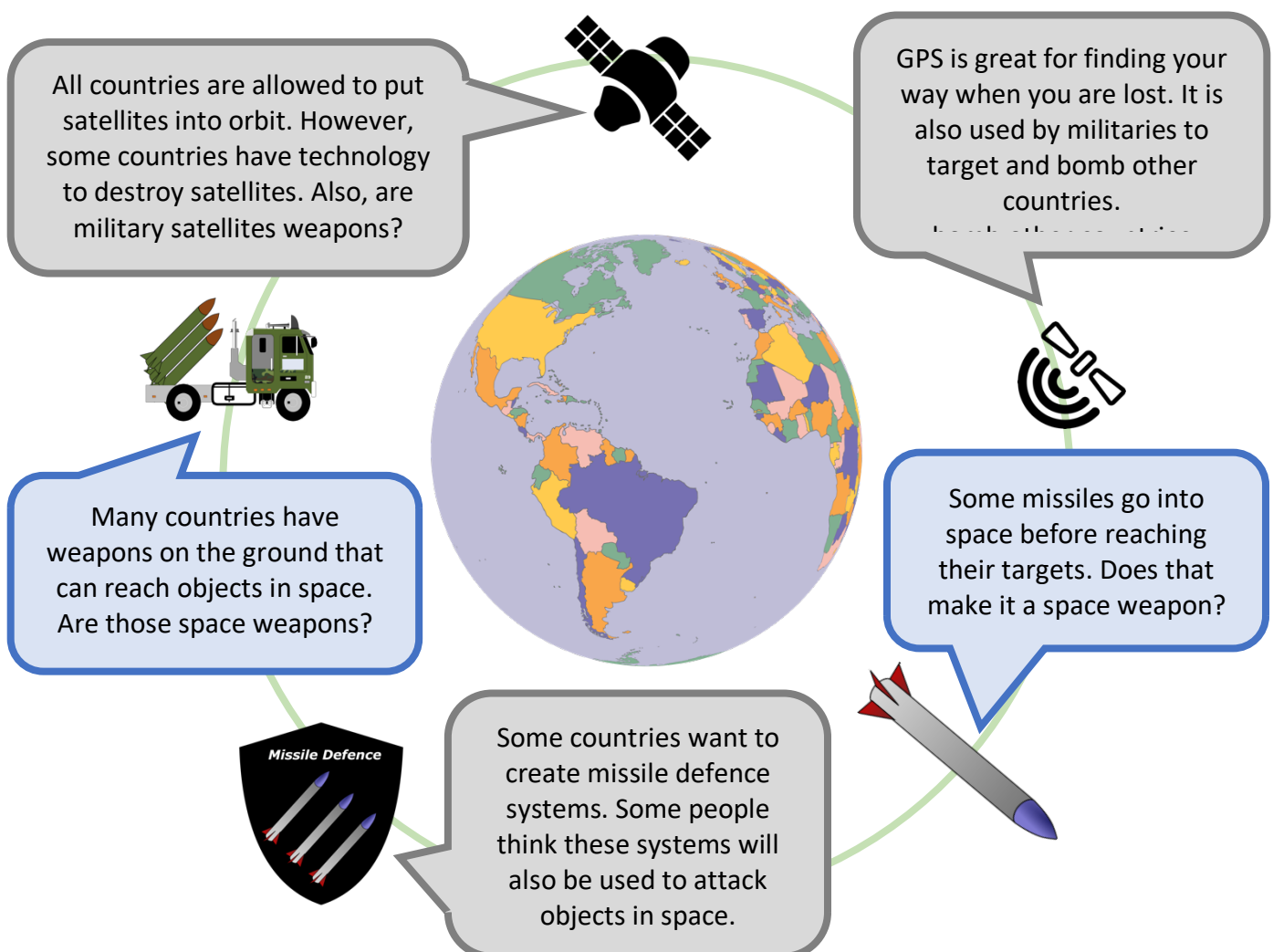
- ✓ Gives more detail about Article V in the Outer Space Treaty.
- ✓ Came into force on 3 December 1968.
- ✓ States all members of the treaty should help astronauts in need.
- ✓ This agreement protects astronauts who land in other countries.
- ✓ If space technology lands in another country it must be returned.

Liability Convention

- ✓ States that a country that puts something into space is responsible if it causes damage.
- ✓ Came into force on 1 September 1972.
- ✓ The USSR satellite Kosmos 954 crashed in Canada in 1978. Canada charged the USSR C\$6 million.
- ✓ In 1979 NASA's Skylab crashed in Australia. NASA was fined \$400 for littering.

Moon Agreement

- ✓ This treaty says the moon and all natural objects in space should benefit all countries and people.
- ✓ Came into force on 11 July 1984.
- ✓ Bans military use of the moon and other natural objects in space.
- ✓ It is a failed treaty because only 5 countries have ratified it.
- ✓ It says if a country takes resources out of space it needs to be shared with all nations. For this reason countries do not want to sign.

The Militarization of Space

Guiding Questions

1. Can your country send objects into space? Does it send up objects with the help of another country? How has your country been involved in space? How might it be involved in space in the future?
2. Look at some of the treaties dealing with space. How do these treaties help keep space free from weapons? What do countries need to agree to in order to keep all arms out of space?
3. Read the China-Russia Draft Treaty: <http://bit.ly/22ovXzI>. What do you think would need to change for more countries to agree?
4. The 3 main parts of the EU International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities are:
 - All states have the right to use space for peaceful purposes.
 - Countries should not attack or interfere with the space objects of other countries.
 - Countries can use space for defense.

Do you think your country could agree to these terms? Why or why not?

5. What are some reasons that states might want weapons in space?
6. Look at the graphic on page 3. What should be considered a space weapon?
7. Research some of the ways that space debris is becoming a problem. How would arms in space make this problem worse?
8. Does the problem exist in your community?
9. How does being a delegate from a different country help you understand this problem in your community?
10. How do the choices you make in your life help resolve this problem?

Resources

Title	Hyperlink	How is it helpful?
<i>United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs</i>	http://www.un.org/disarmament/	Gives broad information about disarmament.
<i>Space for Peace</i>	http://www.space4peace.org/	Organization working for peace in space. Lots of good information about space.
<i>United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs</i>	http://www.unoosa.org/	Information about treaties and how countries work together to use space peacefully.
<i>Nautilus</i>	http://nautil.us/blog/some-dead-satellites-refuse-to-go-quietly-to-their-graves	Article on how space waste is becoming a problem.
<i>Draft Treaty</i>	https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G14/050/66/PDF/G1405066.pdf?OpenElement	Treaty proposed by Russia and China that would ban weapons from space.
<i>UN Press Release: Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space</i>	http://www.un.org/press/en/2015/gadis3532.doc.htm	Overview of a meeting in the First Committee about arms in Outer Space. The opinions of countries are noted.
<i>The Space Review</i>	http://www.thespacereview.com/article/2575/1	Article about the problems with the Treaty proposed by Russia and China.
<i>Nuclear Threat Initiative</i>	http://www.nti.org/learn/treaties-and-regimes/proposed-prevention-arms-race-space-paros-treaty/	Timeline of events related to the prevention of an arms race in outer space.