

administration or new appointees who are more focused on other policy issues, so the U.S. government will likely need external encouragement and support to turn campaign promises into policy achievements. While it is too early to know what initiatives the Obama administration might support and what kinds of military space activities it might be willing to foreclose if others did likewise, it is not too early to initiate comprehensive international discussions intended to get the United States, China, Russia and others to think seriously about these questions.

Of the countries that have been active on space security, Canada is best positioned to promote a new diplomatic strategy that uses the complexities of space security as a motivation for innovative forms of cooperation rather than for unilateral action. Canada is sympathetic to, but not exclusively focused on, the central concerns advanced by the other major players—the Russian and Chinese desire to prohibit space weapons, the European Union's emphasis on protecting the space environment, and the U.S. interest in freedom to use space for legitimate military purposes. As part of its diplomatic identity, Canada has already assumed a leadership role on space security while other Middle Powers like Australia and Japan have devoted more of their diplomatic energy to nuclear issues. Canada has also been a successful cooperative security policy entrepreneur before, advancing the concept of "human security" and pioneering the Ottawa process that produced the landmines ban.

This paper seeks to stimulate thinking and international discussion about the elements of an advanced cooperative security regime for space and about a pragmatic process for its development. It begins by briefly explaining why the political changes in Washington do not mean that the time is ripe for agreement on a PAROS-style arms control treaty or a voluntary code of conduct to protect the space environment, let alone a stand-alone ban on kinetic energy anti-satellite weapons (KE ASATs) as some U.S. security analysts have proposed. The second section expands on the central insight of a recent Canadian working paper that the dual-use dilemmas created by the global spread of satellite, missile, and missile defense technologies are best addressed through an equitable package of behavioral rules that cover both the military and the environmental sides of space security.⁵ Accomplishing this, though, requires close attention not only to desirable new rules, but also to the principles behind the rules, the purpose they are intended to serve, and the process through which they could be developed and applied.

The third and fourth sections of this paper propose a different way of thinking about the principles, purpose, and process for space security. Framing the central principle of a space security regime as reassurance, not deterrence or war-fighting, would address the core concerns of key players in a way that underscores the need for new forms of cooperation and makes them easier to achieve.⁶ Establishing from the outset a mechanism through which all stakeholders can have their concerns heard and their interests weighed would build the confidence and transparency needed for increasingly consequential forms of cooperation.

⁵ "On the Merits of Certain Draft Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures and Treaty Proposals for Space Security," Canadian Working Paper, tabled at the Conference on Disarmament on March 26, 2009.

⁶ Reassurance and deterrence strategies both seek to influence others' choices by altering their incentives, but deterrence relies primarily on threats to discourage undesirable behavior while reassurance relies more heavily on positive moves to encourage desirable behavior. Reassurance can involve unilateral steps, informal reciprocal restraint, or formal agreements.