
EU Project for a Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities

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EU Draft Code of Conduct

- On 18 September 2007, the European Union answered to the United Nations General Assembly resolution 61/75 of 6 December 2006 which asked for concrete proposals on international outer space transparency and confidence building measures.
- EU believes that, in line with its Space Policy, such transparency and confidence building measures would strengthen the security of space activities.
- The Code of Conduct for outer space activities and space objects including best practices between space actors would serve this objective.

EU Draft Code of Conduct

- Draft text of the Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities was supported by the Council of the European Union on 8 December 2008.
- The European Union is currently consulting this text with other space faring nations with the aim of reaching a consensus text that would be acceptable for as many States as possible.
- It is envisaged that at the end of the consultation process an *ad hoc* conference would be organized in order for States to subscribe to the Code.

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The project recalls three main principles that should guide the space activities:

- Freedom of access to space for all for peaceful purposes,
- Preservation of the security and integrity of space objects in orbit,
- Due consideration for the legitimate defence interests of States.

EU Draft Code of Conduct

- The main objective of the Code of Conduct is to strengthen the safety, security and predictability of all space activities, *inter alia* by limiting or minimising harmful interference in space activities.
- It covers all outer space activities: civil as well as military and present as well as future ones.

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The purpose of the Code of Conduct is twofold:

- To strengthen the existing UN treaties, principles and other arrangements, as the subscribing parties would commit to comply with them, to make progress towards adherence to them, to implement them, and to promote their universality.
- To codify new best practices in space operations including measures of notification and of consultation that would strengthen the confidence and transparency between space actors and contribute to developing good faith solutions that would permit the performance of space activities and access to space for all.

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- As the Code of Conduct would be voluntary and open to all States and would lay down the basic rules to be observed by space faring nations, it does not include any provision concerning the specific question of non-placement of weapons in space.
- The purpose of such a Code is neither to duplicate or compete with the initiatives dealing with this specific issue, nor to oppose them.
- On the contrary, the project complements and contributes to those initiatives, *inter alia* by insisting on the importance to take “all measures in order to prevent space from becoming an area of conflict”.

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- While the draft Code is not intended for negotiation at any existing international forums, the EU Presidency will continue to inform multilateral bodies, such as the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), the Conference on Disarmament (CD), the European Space Agency (ESA) and others on progress with this initiative.
- The full text of the Code of Conduct for outer space activities is available at the address:
<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/08/st17/st17175.en08.pdf>