

Changing the Face of War: U.S. Militarizing Space

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Zaitsev said that America's push to militarize space may include the use of both nuclear and conventional weapons, which could have dangerous and dramatic implications for future warfare. "The United States, as well as some other leading powers, is attempting to gain supremacy in [space]," Zaitsev explained. "This will enable their aerospace operations at the very beginning of a war to initiate strikes on strategic facilities throughout the [targeted] country."

The United States is moving toward the militarization of space and this will change the face of war in the near future, an academician with the Russian Academy of Engineering Sciences has warned.

Judging by recent developments, the idea of formidable space weapons prowling the last frontier is no longer limited to the realm of science fiction.

The US has published tactical guidelines over the past three years on the use of force in outer space, while systems that may be used as orbiting weapons are undergoing rigorous test flights, said Yuri Zaitsev, Academic Advisor with the Russian Academy of Engineering Sciences.

In a security document released in October, the US Department of Defense (DoD) said that its space-related activities are designed to "maintain and enhance the national security advantages afforded by the use of outer space."

Among its numerous stated objectives, the DoD report said it is US policy to "proactively seek opportunities to cooperate with allies and selected international partners in developing space architectures and in designing, acquiring, and operating military space systems."

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During this year's UN General Assembly, the US conspicuously refused to support a resolution to halt the militarization of space.

In a vote on a resolution titled 'Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space,' 169 member-states, including the Russian Federation, voted in favor of the draft resolution stating, "[The] exploration and use of space...hall be for peaceful purposes...carried out for the benefit and

in the interest of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development.”

Only the United States and Israel abstained from voting on the document, rendering it effectively toothless.

Washington’s refusal to cede control of space likely stems from its increasing reliance on space-based systems: An estimated 90 percent of the US Military reportedly uses or depends on space-based systems.

The Russian academic referred the shock over China’s successful targeted destruction of an old orbiting weather satellite in 2007.

“The Americans were frightened by the Chinese tests of anti-satellite weapons,” Zaitsev said. “It is quite possible that the US may soon initiate negotiations on anti-satellite systems.”

Zaitsev also said that the United States and its allies may attempt to regulate space activity to its advantage.

“The United States and the European Union are working out a draft code of conduct in outer space,” he said. “This document may regulate space activity in the interests of the United States and its allies and may discriminate [against] other states, including Russia.”

“Russia and China are unlikely to sign this document, which means military confrontation in outer space will intensify,” Zaitsev warned.

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