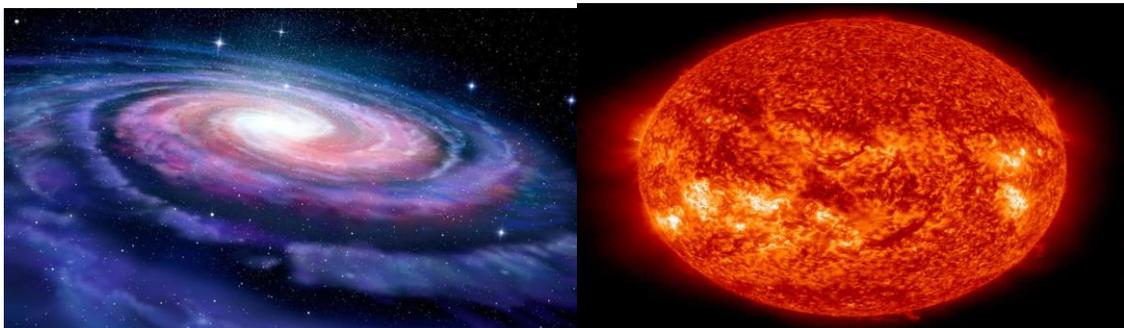


# UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON OUTER SPACE AFFAIRS

Chair: Jake Gillis

Vice Chair: Deirdre Flanagan



## Letter From The Chair

Welcome delegates! My name is Jacob Gillis and I am a senior at Saint Ignatius College Prep. I am looking forward to guiding intelligent and thoughtful debate in this committee regarding outer space exploration. My vice-chair is Deidre Flanagan, a junior, and will be assisting me in running committee smoothly. This is my first time chairing a committee at SIMUN however last year I served as a vice chair in the Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Affairs Committee. During my sophomore year, I also served as a vice chair in the International Atomic Energy. This is my fourth year participating in Model UN and it has taken me to many amazing locations, such as Boston and St. Louis. More importantly, I enjoy Model UN because it involves debating issues of grave importance to mankind including climate change, the global economy, and nuclear weapons. It also can be incredibly useful in your careers, even if they do not involve politics. Outside of Model UN, I participate in the student newspaper and our school's chapter of the National Honors Society.

To all those who are veteran members of Model UN, I expect you to work hard in and out of committee, whether that includes speaking, talking with other delegates or writing a particular resolution. Please understand that hard work will be rewarded. To all those who are new members of Model UN, welcome! Some of the best and brightest ideas often come from those outside the walls of the political establishment. Do not be afraid to speak, argue, and represent your country forcefully, yet politely.

This committee is called the United Nations Office on Outer Space Affairs. Formed in 1962, during the heart of the Space Race, the office is responsible for supporting discussions between countries with regard to space technology and assisting countries that wish to develop space technology. In regards to the more contemporary era, the office also helps countries suffering from the consequences of climate change by helping receive information via satellite images.

Topics discussed during the committee include the security and militarization of outer space and the potential benefits and costs incurred from space exploration. The first topic will discuss how much regulation there should exist on military equipment and defense capabilities in space. Large countries with enormous investments in space technology, the United States, Russia and China, desire less regulation while European countries with lesser involvements in outer space want more regulation from the international community. The second topic discusses to what extent the international community and countries should involve themselves in space. Fiscal conservatives argue that there are too many pressing concerns on Earth (i.e. poverty, healthcare, terrorism) to be excessively spending money in space, while most scientists argue that investment in outer space technology can result in the creation of new jobs and new technology.

I look forward to the spirited debate that you all will have in committee. Please remember to do extensive research and print out your position papers so that I can collect them before committee. Follow the guidelines laid out on the SIMUN XVI website and understand that the failure to turn in position papers will disqualify you from receiving an

award.

Best wishes,  
Jake Gillis '18



## Topic A: Security and Militarization in Space

### *Part I: History*

Outer space has always been a place where great powers demonstrate their superiority over other nations. This began during the Cold War between the Soviet Union and United States. Afraid of the possibility of nuclear war, the United States began testing anti-satellite technology in 1950s, including nuclear weapons. 1958 saw the establishment of NASA, America's space exploration agency, which was designed to seek the peaceful exploration of space for scientific purposes. Despite the pretexts of its establishment, the Defense Department played a large role within NASA in establishing surveillance on American satellites. In 1967, the United Kingdom, United States and the Soviet Union signed the Outer Space Treaty, which banned the placement of weapons of mass destruction in space, military activities on celestial bodies, and creates general

guidelines regarding the peaceful utilization of space. However, the agreement did not explicitly prohibit the militarization of space. Tensions began to heighten again in the 1980s when the Reagan Administration invested billions of dollars into the Strategic Defense Initiative (Star Wars), which was designed to counter the threat of Soviet intercontinental ballistic measures. One of the ways in which the United States demonstrated its strength came in 1985 when an F-15 shot down a falling satellite lowly orbiting earth.

Tensions regarding space militarization continued to grow following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. In 2001, President Bush withdrew the United States from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, which placed restrictions on anti-ballistic missile technology. Tensions between Russia and the United States were further increased when the United States increased its sea and land-based missile defenses. During the first decade of the twenty-first century, China became an important player in outer space affairs. In 2007, China became the fifth nation to successfully send a lunar orbiter to circle the moon. To counter to dominance of America in the space realm, China began developing anti-satellite technology that same year. China, along with Russia, began to express concerns that American satellites could access military positions of both countries in contested areas, such as the South China Sea, with regard to the former, and Crimea, with regard to the latter. The following year, the United States began developing a ballistic missile defense system in response to the growing presence of Russia and China. Both the United States and China began using anti-satellite technology to retire failing satellites. However in 2008, Russia and China sent a draft treaty banning weapons in outer space to the Committee on Disarmament.

In 2010, the Obama administration announced its willingness to consider additional arms control agreement and to build confidence among other nations to encourage peaceful uses of technology in outer space. However the original proposals submitted by Russia and China were rejected and the United States determined that the "fundamentally flawed" draft did not warrant the beginning of negotiations. President Obama budgeted five billion dollars for national security operations in outer space before leaving office.

### ***Part II: Important Issues Discussed***

**Arms Race in Outer Space** - The delegations of many countries are concerned about the threat of an arms race and many see a multilateral peace agreement as the most successful way to mitigate the threat. Consider the agreement submitted by Russia and China in 2008.

**Missile Defense Systems** - many international delegations have expressed concern over anti-satellite technology being used by the United States and China - countries with advanced space programs maintain it is in their interest to defend national interests.

**Space Debris** - Space debris is left up in space as a result of human activity resulting from old satellites or transportation between space stations and the Earth. Launching and testing weapons in space also causes space debris. Consider what efforts the international community can take to combat this issue.

**Arms Control** - It is reasonable to assume that space weaponization can be reduced through efforts to limit the amount of weapons, particularly WMD's. In 2009, the United States and Russia renewed the START Treaty, which both countries agreed to not deploy more than 6,000 nuclear warheads and 1,600 ballistic missiles. It has been successful in causing both countries to remove 80% of strategic nuclear weapons. Consider what

efforts the international community can take to reduce the presence of deadly weapons.

### ***Part III - Blocs***

Generally speaking, Russia, China, and the United States favor less regulation on space militarization and its delegates stress national security and sovereignty as reasons why using equipment in space for military purposes may be necessary. However, Russia and China may sometimes support some regulation in an effort to hinder the efforts of their competitors, such as the United States

“The U.S. government should vigorously pursue the capabilities called for in the National Space Policy to ensure that the president will have the option to deploy weapons in space to deter threats to, and, if necessary, defend against attacks on U.S. interests.” - Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld (2001-2006)

Generally speaking, European countries (members of the joint European Space Agency) and countries with less developed space programs favor more regulation of military actions in space and want negotiation and dialogue between countries regarding ways to resolve the issues discussed above.

"Policies and procedures to minimize the possibility of accidents ... or any form of harmful interference with other States' right to the peaceful exploration and use of outer space." - EU Code of Conduct for Outer Space Affairs

### ***Part IV - Questions to Consider***

1. What proposals will your country suggest and discuss in committee regarding the cessation of space debris and militarization?
2. To what extent should states govern their own affairs regarding their national defense systems in outer space and to what extent should the international community get

involved?

3. What strategic interests are valued by the country you will be representing regarding space militarization?

*Works Cited*

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/war-in-space-may-be-closer-than-ever/>

<http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/resources/fact-sheets/critical-issues/5448-outer-space>

<http://www.vqronline.org/essay/militarization-american-space-program-historical-perspective>

<https://www.cfr.org/report/code-conduct-outer-space>

[https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2005\\_12/DEC-CVR](https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2005_12/DEC-CVR)



## Topic B: Future of Space Exploration

### *Part I: Space Programs by Country*

In 2004, during his reelection campaign, U.S. President George W. Bush announced the retirement of the space shuttle in 2010. This was partly due to safety concerns in the wake of the Space Shuttle Columbia disaster, in which the ship disintegrated into the atmosphere resulting in the deaths of all seven passengers. The program was also cancelled because of a growing federal budget deficit. Given the impact of the Great Recession in 2008, President Obama did not reverse Bush's decision. Due to the growing deficits as a result of the financial crisis, Obama cancelled NASA's Constellation program, which is responsible for the construction of new Orion spacecraft and Ares rockets. An emotional NASA chief Charles Bolden told reporters, "To people who are working on these programs, this is like a death in the family." Upon assuming the presidency, President Trump and his administration promised even more draconian

cuts to the space agency. This includes the cancellation of five earth science programs and NASA's education office, totaling to \$560 million in cuts in the 2017 US federal budget. Austerity taking place in space exploration programs in the United States has forced NASA to rely on Russian spacecraft to transport American scientists to space.

Because of the decline in the price of petroleum and international sanctions (largely due to Russian occupation of Crimea), Russia has also been forced to make budget cuts in its space program. Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev has announced plans to cut its space program by thirty percent. The country has spoken about sending humans to the moon in 2029, but because of austerity, it may be forced to delay its past goal. However Russian President Vladimir Putin remains undeterred and reassured citizens of the importance of the space program as a priority within the budget process, promising a space station to replace the International Space Station and said that previous promises will be followed through. Despite budget cuts, Russia is currently constructing a cosmodrome, or a location where spacecraft are capable of launching, in Siberia. However, construction is currently running behind and controversy has erupted over labor laws being violated. The space program has been involved in many allegations of corruption and mismanagement, leading to fifteen rocket failures. Despite the woes with regard to finance, Russia remains the only country that regular launches astronauts into outer space. NASA signed an agreement to continue the controversial process of Russian rockets transporting American scientists into space until 2019. NASA also relies on the Russian space agency for engines to power American rockets and Congress agreed to allow the continuation of this process until 2022. Russia has also partnered with the European Space Agency on a project to search for evidence of life on Mars. While the

Russian space program remains strong, it is likely that the economic process will hinder some of its ambitions.

Fiscal austerity with regard to Russia and America's space programs has opened up the path for other countries to play a large part in space exploration. China's space program, in particular, has been ambitious in challenging the domination of space by the United States and Russia. A spokesperson from the Chinese National Space Administration told reporters of the country's plan to reach the moon's dark side by 2018 and Mars before the end of the decade. The deputy chief of the Chinese space program announced its goal to launch two Mars probes to collect surface samples. Although it entered the space race late, China has recently invested billions of dollars in research and training and it plans on rivaling Russia and the United States by 2030. India has also recently also been involved in the space race and recently launched 104 satellites into space, which Indian Prime Minister Modi called a "remarkable feat". Unlike, the United States and Russia, India is increasing its space budget. It even plans on sending an orbiter to Venus to examine its hot and cloudy atmosphere. Another important player in the space race has been the European Space Agency, which is discussing plans with China about establishing a human outpost on the moon in the future. The European Space Agency is an intergovernmental institution consisting of countries in the European Union. In the future, the space agency has a goal of analyzing a sample brought back from a Chinese mission.

### *Part II: Important Issues Discussed*

**The amount of Space Exploration** - The United States and Russia have been cutting their space agency programs because of economic woes and recession. Meanwhile,

China and India have been increasing their space budgets and power within space. Fiscal conservatives argue that spending money on space exploration should be a lesser priority than poverty, terrorism and the national debt. However, some scientists argue that the benefits of space exploration with regard to jobs and technology will outweigh its initial cost.

**Cooperation Among Nations In Science** - Delegates are encouraged to pass resolutions with regard to scientific cooperation, whether in the solar system or on terrestrial bodies. This includes the Chinese and European space agencies working with one another in regards to data collection and analysis. Members are also encouraged to take action to reduce the power of one country in space, whether it is Russia or the United States.

### *Part III: Questions*

1. Should your country spend more money on outer space affairs, or defer to their domestic problems?
2. What steps will your country take to work with other countries with regard to the advancement of the sciences?

### *Works Cited*

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/quora/2017/02/02/why-did-nasa-end-the-space-shuttle-program/>

[http://www.nbcnews.com/id/35209628/ns/technology\\_and\\_science-space/t/nasa-grieves-over-canceled-program/#.WXULY8aZOqA](http://www.nbcnews.com/id/35209628/ns/technology_and_science-space/t/nasa-grieves-over-canceled-program/#.WXULY8aZOqA)

<http://spacenews.com/white-house-proposes-19-1-billion-nasa-budget-cuts-earth-science-and-education/>

<http://money.cnn.com/2015/04/27/news/economy/russia-space-crisis->

[cosmodrome/index.html](http://cosmodrome/index.html)

[http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/future\\_tense/2017/03/russia\\_s\\_space\\_program](http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/future_tense/2017/03/russia_s_space_program)

[is\\_in\\_trouble.html](http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/future_tense/2017/03/russia_s_space_program_is_in_trouble.html)

<http://www.cnn.com/2016/12/28/asia/china-space-program-white-paper/index.html>

[http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/future\\_tense/2017/03/why\\_india\\_is\\_investing\\_in\\_space.html](http://www.slate.com/articles/technology/future_tense/2017/03/why_india_is_investing_in_space.html)

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-04-26/china-talking-with-european-space-agency-about-moon-outpost>

### ***Positions***

#### Countries Represented in Committee

- Austria
- Brazil
- China
- Denmark
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- India
- Iran
- Ireland
- Italy
- Japan
- Nigeria
- North Korea
- Norway
- Philippines
- Romania
- Russia
- Saudi Arabia
- South Korea
- Spain
- Sweden
- Ukraine
- United Kingdom
- United States of America

1. Delegates representing European countries (with the exception of Ukraine and Russia) are to speak and write resolutions on behalf of the European Space Agency.
2. Delegates representing Saudi Arabia and Nigeria are to speak and write resolutions on behalf of the developing space programs in the Arab and African Leagues, respectively, as its largest member-states.

