

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000900/26
to the Commission
Siegbert Frank Droese (ESN)
(4 March 2026)**

Subject: Reform or modernisation of the Outer Space Treaty

Does the Commission consider that recent geopolitical and technological developments involving Western states, the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China warrant a reform or modernisation of the Outer Space Treaty?

Submitted: 4.3.2026

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the European Commission
(13 April 2026)**

International law is applicable to outer space, including the UN Charter and the 1967 Outer Space Treaty (OST) and other relevant UN treaties, as well as international law of armed conflicts and consensual principles developed in the UN framework. The OST, as well as the guiding principles, constitute the cornerstone of the global governance in outer space.

Outer space has witnessed a surge in security challenges over recent years. As technological advancements often outpace the development of law and policy, the international community needs to discuss on a variety of instruments and measures. The EU is an active participant in the UN Open-Ended Working Group on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS).

In the Commission's view, dealing with contemporary challenges is best achievable by a combination of legally binding and non-binding instruments and measures.

The Commission believes that developing norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviours is a more realistic and practical way to deal with immediate threats.

The Commission's approach is that instead of reopening existing legal instruments or drafting new ones with a lengthy procedure, developing norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviours is the most pragmatic and immediate way forward to contribute to PAROS and to tackle the most pressing threats.

Many legally binding instruments drew from previous non-binding commitments and principles or resolutions in the UN framework.

With no initiative on the table currently aiming to amend the OST, it is the Commission's conviction that initially non-legally binding rules, norms and principles are the most appropriate measures to set guardrails to the behaviour in outer space in short and medium term.
