

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 864

Expressing support for the draft United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/C.1/77/L.62 calling upon member states to commit not to conduct destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile tests, introduced by the United States at the 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 8, 2022

Mrs. FEINSTEIN (for herself, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. KING, Mr. KELLY, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. MARKEY, and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Expressing support for the draft United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/C.1/77/L.62 calling upon member states to commit not to conduct destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile tests, introduced by the United States at the 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Whereas the United States is joined by countries around the world in relying on Earth-orbiting satellites for—

- (1) navigation;
- (2) communications;
- (3) financial transactions;
- (4) media broadcasting;

- (5) agriculture;
- (6) detection and surveillance of threats and disasters;
- (7) scientific research; and
- (8) monitoring and forecasting of environmental parameters, including—
 - (A) weather;
 - (B) ocean conditions; and
 - (C) vegetation health;

Whereas the United States is tracking more than 47,000 objects orbiting the Earth that are larger than 10 centimeters, an increase of 47 percent since January 2021, and further estimates a population of more than 100,000,000 objects larger than 1 millimeter orbiting the Earth;

Whereas orbital maneuvering to avoid collisions consumes on-board propellant and shortens the lifespans of spacecraft missions;

Whereas the proliferation of satellites and debris orbiting the Earth results in millions of potential collision warnings issued by the United States Space Command each year, while satellites and debris are expected to continue increasing exponentially;

Whereas destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile tests create large and dispersed orbiting debris fields that deny satellites access to needed orbital space and threaten to inadvertently destroy other satellites and spacecraft for decades after such tests;

Whereas a destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile test conducted by the Russian Federation on November 15, 2021, long after the dangers of orbital debris became well

known, produced more than 1,500 pieces of identifiable debris and threatened the safety of astronauts and cosmonauts aboard the International Space Station;

Whereas a destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile test conducted by the People's Republic of China on January 11, 2007, created at least 3,400 pieces of debris, of which 79 percent is predicted to be in orbit 100 years after the event;

Whereas the United States adopted a voluntary moratorium on the destructive testing of direct-ascent anti-satellite missile systems in April 2022;

Whereas methods other than destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite tests are available to test defense capabilities;

Whereas the international community has previously banned destructive activities in space, including the atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons;

Whereas, during a meeting of the Disarmament and International Security Committee of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly, the United States introduced draft UN General Assembly Resolution A/C.1/77/L.62 calling upon member states to commit not to conduct destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile tests;

Whereas, on November 1, 2022, the Disarmament and International Security Committee approved the draft resolution by a vote of 154 to 8, demonstrating broad international support for the efforts of the United States and sending it to the UN General Assembly for consideration; and

Whereas 8 countries have followed the example of the United States and committed not to conduct destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile testing, including—

- (1) Canada in May 2022;
- (2) New Zealand in July 2022;
- (3) Germany in September 2022;
- (4) Japan in September 2022;
- (5) the United Kingdom in October 2022;
- (6) South Korea in October 2022;
- (7) Switzerland in October 2022;
- (8) Australia in October 2022; and
- (9) France in December 2022: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) expresses support for—

3 (A) the United Nations General Assembly
 4 Resolution introduced by the United States to
 5 call upon member states to commit not to con-
 6 duct destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite mis-
 7 sile tests; and

8 (B) the commitment of the United States
 9 to the peaceful and safe use of outer space;

10 (2) recognizes Canada, New Zealand, Germany,
 11 Japan, the United Kingdom, South Korea, Switzer-
 12 land, Australia, and France for following the United
 13 States in pledging to not conduct destructive direct-
 14 assent anti-satellite missile tests; and

15 (3) calls on other nations, particularly nations
 16 with significant assets in space and that have pre-
 17 viously tested destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite
 18 missiles and nations that recognize the indispensable

1 benefits provided by space capabilities, to join the
2 United States in adopting a voluntary moratorium
3 on the destructive testing of direct-ascent anti-sat-
4 ellite missile systems.

○