

# MOVING BEYOND THE SANCTUARY PARADIGM: CANADA MUST FACE UP TO THE REALITY OF A CONTESTED AND DANGEROUS SPACE ENVIRONMENT

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## Abstract

This article outlines historical shifts in US and Canadian space policies using the sanctuary-contested policy framework. It highlights that sanctuary policies were born out of necessity rather than the pursuit of a peaceful global common; they never intended to, and did not, prevent the militarization and weaponization of space. It then describes challenges to global space governance and argues that diplomacy will not prevent conflicts in space. After introducing elements of deterrence theory, this paper concludes that Canada should move beyond the sanctuary ideology, make space a national whole-of-government issue, and align its space policy and strategy with allies and partners, credibly communicating Canada's resolve to protect and defend space assets. It further recommends that Canada develops niche capabilities that contribute to more effective national and collective deterrence and defence in space. Those capabilities should build upon existing niche strengths, not create space debris, and leverage industrial innovation in space.

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