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Decision to Act

**SUSTAINABILITY OF INTERNATIONAL PLANETARY DEFENSE
DECISION-MAKING: WHAT CAN GO WRONG EVEN IF WE DEFLECT AN
ASTEROID?**

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ABSTRACT

Even a successful deflection mission can have negative international political implications and in the end cause harm than the potential impact or be ineffective in the long-term. An inadequate decision-making process can lead to undesirable international instability without its sustainability. This can include weakening of global norms, agreements or already fragile international cooperation, justify further weaponization of space or malign actions on the pretext of planetary defense and prove ineffective. Such a threat can also be used to justify exceptional international politics. This can include a unilateral action, the likelihood of which raises if the concrete threat it constrained to a single country possessing all the best technological and financial capabilities for a deflection as the 2019 PDC exercise suggests.

Conceptualization of security is divided by the Critical Security Studies school of thought between negative (aiming for a mere survival) and positive (aiming for a survival and conditions enabling human prosperity). Further, as threat responses are constructed by their constituting politics, negative security that aims at the absence of the threat, itself a short-term one-and-off goal, allows for exclusive and fast-tracked procedures. Meanwhile, positive security is concerned with a long-lasting human prosperity beyond their mere survival require to account for context and overall consequences. This means they require a stable and inclusive decision-making to reach different goals. Further, the nature of planetary defends that include extinct-size comets and asteroids or the so-called “city killer” type of NEOs over a long-period of time, as well as the overall overlap between security, scientific and commercial benefits of NEO study. The decision-making infrastructure for planetary defense should be based in the nature of the threat as well as its long-term sustainability. This paper will aim to connect critical security theory with the characteristics of the NEO threat to provide valuable considerations for the international decision-making process for planetary defense, especially in the light of the 2019 PDC exercise.
