

China meeting on space waste delayed

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China, apparently fearing criticism of its recent satellite destruction, has put off hosting next week's global meeting on hazardous space waste.

The Financial Times Friday said the decision to delay the annual meeting of the Inter-Agency Space Debris Co-ordination Committee comes three months after China destroyed an old weather satellite with a missile-launched "kinetic kill vehicle."

That action released more than 1,500 pieces of debris in space and raised international concerns of an arms race in space.

China, which postponed the meeting until November, may have felt the IADC meeting would be used as a platform for criticizing its action, the report said.

Some participants told the newspaper the meeting may also have highlighted how Chinese experts on orbital debris were kept in the dark about the effects of the anti-satellite weapon test.

The decision to postpone the meeting may raise questions about China's commitment to tackling the debris issue.

The Times said the China National Space Administration did not respond to requests for comment. Separately, one participant was quoted as saying, "China has just become a very dangerous producer of debris, so it's important to maintain China within this group."

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