

# Keep Space for Peace

## Why we oppose the space launch

- ★ Virgin Orbit will launch nine small satellites from 'Spaceport' Newquay. Four of them are for military use while others have possible future military uses. This launch therefore initiates a new era of military space expansion by the UK with Britain wholeheartedly joining a space arms race which will inevitably lead to greater risk of instability and conflict. The MoD and close allies have openly said that they have determined space to be a war fighting domain.

- ★ Rather than this military expansion into space which government argues is in the national interests, the UK should be upholding and extolling the virtue of the Outer Space Treaty, signed in 1967, which recognises that space is a 'global commons' to be used for peaceful purposes and for the benefit of all countries and humankind. The treaty was aimed at preventing national and commercial exploitation of space and the damage that would cause. Instead of upholding that common good, the UK and other states in conjunction with a gang of billionaires - are now doing the exact opposite.



- ★ The cost to international security and the environment of a new space arms race should be at the front of our thinking - not an almost forgotten afterthought. Billions of pounds are going to spent launching military systems into space with an untold amount of harm being done to the environment as a result. There urgently needs to be proper and detailed research undertaken into the environmental impact of a UK space programme.



- ★ It is simply not good enough to say that if we don't do this then others will. The UK should be upholding the principles behind the Outer Space Treaty and working with its allies to update it to make it relevant to the current context and to technological developments.
- ★ Outer space is a region of wonder and inspiration. It continues to challenge and inspire many people who wish to explore and discover. However, a growing number of space activities are now focussing on commercial exploitation and warfighting.
- ★ We're calling for more public discussion and debate about this new push to exploit space for military and commercial purposes. Currently, decisions with huge implications are being made by a small elite of policymakers and wealthy entrepreneurs for their own purposes and not for the benefit of humanity. This must change.

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