

# Editor's Note

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Uncharacteristically, this issue of *Science & Global Security* contains only one article. It is a general assessment by Jan Stupl and Götz Neuneck of the potential of long-range laser weapon engagements, and a more detailed technical assessment of the capabilities of the Airborne Laser (ABL) in boost phase missile defense, the application of directed-energy long-range laser weapons which has received the most attention.

The ABL, a megawatt-class laser mounted on a cargo aircraft, has recently become operational for testing. Its capability for boost phase defense will depend on the laser intensities that can be achieved, the induced temperature rise on target (of a missile in its boost phase), and the impact of such temperature rise on the missile performance. Overall, the authors conclude that the capability of the ABL is limited.