



# General Assembly

Seventy-seventh session

## First Committee

**22<sup>nd</sup>** meeting

Wednesday, 26 October 2022, 3 p.m.  
New York

Official Records

*Chair:* Mr. Pieris .....(Sri Lanka)

*The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.*

### Agenda items 90 to 108 (continued)

#### Thematic discussion on specific subjects and introduction and consideration of draft resolutions and decisions submitted on all disarmament and international security agenda items

**The Chair:** Before proceeding, I would like to inform delegations that the General Assembly will consider agenda item 89, entitled “Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency”, directly in plenary on 9 November at 10 a.m.

The Committee will now continue its thematic discussion under the cluster “Outer space (disarmament aspects)”. Delegations wishing to exercise their right of reply will be able to do so after we exhaust the list of speakers for this cluster. Before I open the floor, I would like to remind all delegations that the time limit for statements during the thematic segment is five minutes when speaking in their national capacity and seven minutes for statements on behalf of several delegations.

**Mr. Turner** (United States of America): Space systems provide critical services to every corner of the world, including security and treaty verification, the tracking of, and warning for, major weather events, environmental monitoring for food and water security, access to the Internet and cutting-edge medical research conducted in space for treatments on Earth. Yet those shared benefits for humankind face a number of growing threats.

The most urgent near-term threat to space systems comes from destructive testing of Earth-to-space anti-satellite missiles. Over the past two decades, several such tests destroyed satellites in orbit. One recent test created 1,785 pieces of trackable debris. Debris from such tests degrades the outer space environment, increases the cost of operating in space and reduces the benefits that space enables.

To respond to that threat, in April of this year the United States announced its commitment to not conducting destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile tests. Furthermore, in order to gain multilateral support for that commitment, the United States submitted draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.62, calling on all countries to commit to not conducting such tests. That is a commitment that meaningfully limits the deliberate creation of new orbital debris, is easy to understand and is generally observable and verifiable. It complements the ongoing multilateral efforts to develop norms of responsible behaviour and effective transparency and confidence-building measures for outer space. We hope that all States will join us in supporting the draft resolution and making that commitment.

Ultimately, this is not an issue of strategic stability or one that affects only the developed world. Reckless, destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile testing also negatively affects the developing world by denying critical space services. We encourage all countries to join us in recognizing that the continued destructive testing of such weapons is unacceptable. Importantly, this draft resolution notes that this is an urgent, but also only an initial, measure. It is a first step. That

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22-65473(E)



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reflects our commitment to a larger approach to cooperating with the international community to identify norms of behaviour that can help to maintain safety and security in the fast-evolving space security environment. Indeed, such norms, as well as other transparency and confidence-building measures, may reduce misunderstandings and misperceptions, and can contribute to the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

As history has shown, a foundation of non-legally binding commitments can provide the framework for legally binding instruments in the future, which we have seen before in the United Nations. We believe that such an approach allows us to achieve near-term progress and spur collective effort to preserve the outer space environment.

In that regard, the United States continues to support the Open-ended Working Group (OWEG) on Reducing Space Threats through Norms, Rules and Principles of Responsible Behaviours, established pursuant to resolution 76/231. Thus far, that body has spurred valuable discussion of the existing legal regime applicable to outer space and threats to outer space systems.

Because the work of the OWEG is ongoing and has been constructive, the United States does not support the proposal to establish a duplicative, less inclusive group of governmental experts in draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.70, on further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space. We call on countries to reject such a provision of that draft resolution because the voices of many States will not be heard on those important space security matters.

To address outer space threats and risks effectively, the United States believes that we need to move beyond efforts that are narrowly focused on legally binding agreements on the placement of weapons in space, and instead take an expanded comprehensive approach to such threats. For that reason, the United States also urges countries to vote against draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.67, on no first placement. Instead, it is time to develop and implement shared norms around observable behaviours to maintain outer space as a safe, stable, secure and sustainable environment.

The United States believes that the international community must work together to address such issues, rather than ignore them because they do not fit some States' definition of preventing an arms race in outer

space. We stand ready to work with all Member States to develop practical measures to maintain outer space as a safe and sustainable environment for us all.

**Ms. Morriss** (New Zealand): In the twenty-first century, all countries have a strong interest in ensuring the safe, responsible and peaceful use of outer space. We all rely on space-based systems to provide crucial services, ranging from navigation to banking, weather monitoring and telecommunications, as well as important defence and security capabilities. In addition, New Zealand is cognizant of the scientific and other potential benefits that outer space carries and the need to preserve the integrity and sustainability of the outer space environment.

Access to space also plays a role in achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. Space-based systems provide information to enable the sustainable use of natural resources, agricultural monitoring and the delivery of education and health care to isolated regions and humanitarian aid to disaster-stricken areas. Space assets can provide early warning of natural disasters and improve responses in their aftermath. As Member States, it is therefore in our collective interest to ensure safe and secure access to and use of space and a space environment that is sustainable, peaceful and free from conflict.

To that end, New Zealand would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the work under way in the Open-ended Working Group on Reducing Space Threats through Norms, Rules and Principles of Responsible Behaviours, established by resolution 76/231. New Zealand is a strong supporter of that workstream. We see the development of norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviour as a pragmatic first step towards mitigating the risk of escalation of tensions through the perception of threat. We welcome the broad and constructive participation of a number of countries, and we look forward to continuing such work in Geneva in January.

The deliberate creation of space debris is an irresponsible act that puts both access to space and objects in space at risk. Such testing may also be perceived as a threat that could result in heightened tensions, creating an environment of mistrust. For that reason, New Zealand is pleased to co-sponsor draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.62, on destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile testing.

In July this year, New Zealand's Minister for Foreign Affairs declared that New Zealand would not engage in such testing. New Zealand does not have the capability, neither are we seeking to acquire it. As a launch State, it is squarely in our interests to safeguard access to space. But it is also squarely in our collective interests, whether or not States have launch capability, to ensure that such irresponsible behaviour does not affect the ongoing operation of infrastructure in space, on which we all rely in the twenty-first century.

On that basis, we call on all States to support the draft resolution. It is not a final step, but rather a small and practical contribution towards the development of a set of rules and norms to ensure the ongoing safety and security of space.

**Mr. In Den Bosch** (Netherlands): In addition to the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union (see A/C.1/77/PV.21), the Netherlands would like to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

Outer space shall be the province of all humankind. That principle is at the core of article I of the Outer Space Treaty. It is now more relevant than ever, given the increasing number of new space actors and users of space services. Space-based applications are being utilized on a daily basis by a huge proportion of the global population. It is essential that all States can benefit from the economic and societal opportunities inherent to the space domain now and for generations to come. A safe, secure and sustainable outer space is therefore of vital importance and a responsibility for us all.

Space governance is founded on the five United Nations outer space treaties. This very month, we celebrate the fact that 55 years ago, the Outer Space Treaty entered into force and became the constitutional document for human activities in outer space. In addition, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities are crucial to safeguarding safety and sustainability in space.

Yet we see that space security governance is falling behind developments in other domains. Now, at the dawn of a new space age, is the time for an urgently required leap forward. We must reduce risks from inadvertent escalation by improving the governance of outer space. We believe that that can be done via a step-by-step approach, based on responsible behaviour, towards a possible legally binding instrument in the future.

Such agreements are viable only if they are supported by the relevant monitoring capabilities and verification measures. The Netherlands would like to highlight the potential of space surveillance and tracking in that context to enhance compliance with such agreements.

The weaponization of space has harmful consequences, which may affect the use of space for economic, social, scientific and security purposes, and could precipitate substantial humanitarian costs. Apart from the legitimate ethical and security concerns shared by many members of this forum, such activities are unsustainable, as they increase the likelihood of losing access to space. We therefore remain committed to the prevention of an arms race in outer space and stress the need for further practical measures. Such measures should be gender-responsive, as well as inclusive, taking into account the more vulnerable position of women and marginalized groups and ensuring the diverse representation of women and people of diverse backgrounds in decision-making.

The inherent dual-use and dual-purpose nature of space objects complicate the discussion on weaponization. As any space object could be used as a space weapon, approaches that solely focus on capabilities are not feasible and are detrimental to the use of space for technological or socioeconomic development. Instead, addressing irresponsible behaviour will automatically address capabilities regardless of their definition, thereby preventing the upward spiral towards an arms race in outer space. In that regard, the current Open-ended Working Group on Reducing Space Threats through Norms, Rules and Principles of Responsible Behaviours has demonstrated its relevance as a forum to discuss that issue. We note that this year, the Conference on Disarmament decided to establish a subsidiary body on the peaceful uses of outer space. We look forward to future discussions in that body, and we believe it would be premature to now initiate any further parallel processes.

A fundamental prerequisite for a safe, secure and sustainable outer space is to minimize the creation of space debris. We are therefore co-sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.62, submitted by the United States, which calls on countries not to conduct destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile tests. In our view, that initiative is a first pragmatic step towards enshrining voluntary commitments in a future legally binding instrument. Such an instrument could

eventually further expand its scope beyond testing by addressing the behavioural aspect of not deliberately destroying objects in space in a comprehensive manner.

We believe that the continued international discussions on outer space here in New York, as well as in Vienna and Geneva, can result in constructive and concrete proposals that encourage States Members of the United Nations, spacefaring or not, to realize a sustainable, safe and secure space domain. The Netherlands remains fully committed to that endeavour.

**Mr. Francese** (Italy): While Italy aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union (see A/C.1/77/PV.21), I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Historically, Italy has been engaged in actively improving space security and is strongly committed to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. That is an essential goal for strengthening international security and stability and for safeguarding the long-term use of the space environment for peaceful purposes on an equitable and mutually acceptable basis.

With the new space paradigm and the current technological developments, security in space is linked more to economic and social stability on Earth. It is increasingly critical to ensure that future space exploration and exploitation activities are conducted in the most balanced way possible.

The current strategic space environment appears increasingly congested, contested and competitive. The development and proliferation of new dual-use technologies, capabilities and systems have blurred the line between military and civilian use. Security from and in space no longer appears to be a purely military and national issue, but rather a multisectoral and global issue that must be addressed at the international level with the broadest engagement of all States Members of the United Nations, international organizations, commercial actors and civil society representatives.

We emphasize the need to ensure the peaceful use of outer space and to address potential escalation dynamics and the security threats that such dynamics may pose. We feel a sense of urgency in that regard.

Potentially hostile activities are on the rise and increasingly affect the stability and security of outer space. The management of space debris, the effects of the deployment of large constellations on the orbital debris environment, the risks imposed on space

missions by new applications and emerging threats to the security and resilience of orbital infrastructures require heightened attention.

Hybrid space operations span an increasing number of sectors, adding an extra layer of complexity to risk and threat assessments, and areas of potential regulation. Threats more closely related to potentially hostile behaviour include the use of electronic warfare to overwhelm satellites and compromise their operation.

Some issues need to be addressed with particular urgency, such as the persistent development or testing of anti-satellite missiles. Such activities are of great concern because they compromise the security of outer space activities. In that regard, we welcome the commitment made by the United States and several other States not to conduct destructive tests of direct-ascent anti-satellite missiles.

The legal framework governing space activities plays an invaluable role in consolidating a legal regime to promote the use of outer space and strengthen international cooperation in space activities. The 1967 Outer Space Treaty is the cornerstone. Its universalization and effective implementation should remain a priority. At the same time, we recognize the pace at which space activities are developing and diversifying. While new opportunities are opening up, we are also collectively confronted with the challenging task of ensuring that outer space remains an operationally stable and safe environment.

Italy believes that norms, rules and principle of responsible behaviours should be elaborated and put in place in order to promote security, safety and sustainability in outer space and to safeguard the long-term use of the space environment for peaceful purposes. In that regard, Italy fully supports the activities of the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) aimed at reaching a common understanding of how best to act to reduce threats to space systems in order to maintain outer space as a peaceful environment, free from an arms race and conflict, for the benefit of all. The OEWG can pave the way for constructively addressing such challenges.

Italy also emphasizes the importance of the work by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on the implementation of the 21 guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities and continues to be firmly committed to the long-term sustainability, safety and security of the outer space.

In conclusion, it is important to develop initiatives aimed at increasing confidence and mutual trust between current and future space actors. We remain committed to actively and constructively engaging for the advancement of space security and space governance.

**Mr. Bandiya** (Nigeria): The Federal Republic of Nigeria aligns itself with the statement delivered on this cluster on behalf of the Group of African States and by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/77/PV.21), and wishes to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

Given the challenges regarding outer space and the contemporary global security environment, my delegation underscores the importance of ensuring continued international commitment and attention to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, thereby enhancing global security and the maintenance of international peace. The prevention of an arms race in outer space has assumed greater urgency because of the vulnerability of the outer space environment and the taking into consideration of legitimate concerns that the existing legal instruments are inadequate to deter further militarization of outer space or prevent its weaponization. To that end, Nigeria recognizes the need for a comprehensive, legally binding treaty on the placement of weapons in outer space, as well as on armed attacks against outer space objects.

My delegation also stresses the importance of the international legal framework that allows for the equal exploration of outer space based on the principles of non-appropriation and peaceful uses of outer space in conformity with the five United Nations treaties governing space activities, in particular the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies.

For Nigeria, a legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space is a necessary condition for the promotion of international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes and for preserving international peace and security. It is therefore essential that any treaty of such a nature should, *inter alia*, ensure the primacy and applicability of the Charter of the United Nations in outer space; the use of the moon and other celestial bodies exclusively for peaceful purposes; the freedom of access to outer space without discrimination and on

a basis of equality; the pacific settlement of disputes; the right to develop technology for peaceful purposes; international cooperation and assistance in facilitating the peaceful uses of outer space, including provisions for training and capacity-building; and the objective of general and complete disarmament.

My delegation reaffirms its support for the prohibition of the placement of any weapons in outer space for offensive or defensive purposes; any armed attacks or use of force against satellites or other outer space objects, including through the use of missiles or other kinetic methods, such as manoeuvrable satellites or robots; any use of outer space objects as a weapon to conduct armed attacks or harmful interference against outer space or terrestrial targets; any intentional harmful interference that would interrupt or affect the normal functioning of satellites or other outer space objects that is under the jurisdiction of another State or group of States; and the developing, testing and stockpiling of weapons that are designed for the sole purpose of conducting armed attacks against satellites or other outer space objects, including anti-satellite weapons, or for use as an outer space weapon.

My delegation believes that all States, especially those with major space capabilities, have a special responsibility to actively contribute to the objective of the peaceful use of outer space and of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. They should also refrain from actions contrary to that objective and to the relevant existing treaties in the interest of maintaining international peace and security and promoting international cooperation.

We also re-emphasize the urgent need for the commencement of substantive negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a legally binding and multilaterally verifiable instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects.

**Ms. Lipana** (Philippines): The Philippines associates itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and of Malaysia on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) (see A/C.1/77/PV.21).

We view outer space not only as a global commons, but as a common heritage of humankind. All nations have the right to the peaceful uses of outer space, but that right must be exercised with due regard for the rights and interests of others and for the preservation of

outer space for future generations. Spacefaring nations are mere stewards for future generations. Preserving outer space also requires that we secure it and keep it free from weapons and weaponization. We remain driven by our aspiration for legally binding instruments on preventing an arms race in outer space, including the prevention of placement of weapons and the threat or use of force against space objects. We must continue to work to that end.

At the same time, the absence of agreed norms heightens the risks and threats to outer space security. The debate on the commencement of negotiations for such instruments must not hinder progress on practical consensus measures that will enhance outer space security. It is in that context that President Ferdinand Marcos called on the General Assembly last month to define the norms of responsible behaviour in outer space (see A/77/PV.5).

We therefore welcome the ongoing work of the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) established by resolution 76/231. The Philippines, together with ASEAN and other like-minded partners, has been working constructively at the OEWG, building bridges with the view to achieving positive outcomes.

Like many developing countries, the Philippines is becoming increasingly reliant on space-based infrastructure. We have a modest space programme that we intend to expand. We see access to outer space as an inalienable right of developing countries. We have a direct interest in our outer space security, a topic that should never be an exclusive preserve of a few major spacefaring States.

Discussions on outer space security need to transcend the traditional strategic paradigm. The security of our outer space is no longer about maintaining strategic parity among major spacefaring Powers. It is about securing outer space for the peaceful uses of all nations, including developing countries — and all generations.

We are concerned about the security doctrines that classify outer space as a strategic or warfighting domain. We see a risk in insufficient understanding of the purpose and use of certain space assets and technologies and of mutual threat perceptions, and in the lack of channels of communication and transparency in national space programmes, policies, strategies and doctrines, and of clear and internationally understood standards and norms of behaviour.

Together with Germany, we presented a constructive characterization of our outer space security concerns and provided a list of behaviour that we consider to be risks and threats. The Philippines is particularly concerned about any deliberate debris-creating behaviours, including kinetic direct-ascent anti-satellite missile tests, uncoordinated launches, and uncoordinated and uncontrolled re-entry. We urge all Member States to subscribe to the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation. Also important to enhancing outer space activities are the legally binding obligation of due regard as a foundational principle in defining responsible behaviour in outer space, transparency, communications, and consultations.

The only enduring way to secure outer space for all nations and all generations is through a legally binding instrument. In this regard, we must overcome our political and ideological differences, sharpen our convergences and demonstrate that multilateralism works. We support calls for the commencement of substantive negotiations on a legally binding and multilaterally verifiable instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, including the prohibition of the placement of weapons in outer space and the prohibition of the threats or use of force against outer space objects. Any initiative on this subject must take into account the security concerns of all States and their inherent right to peaceful uses of space technologies.

**Mr. Zlenko (Ukraine):** For eight months, Ukraine has been fighting a full-scale invasion by the Russian Federation. The Kremlin's goal is very clear: to deprive Ukraine of its sovereignty and destroy, dissolve and extinguish Ukrainian national identity. To achieve its goals, Russia uses various types of weaponry in its military arsenal, including space-rocket technologies.

Since the beginning of the war, Russian armed forces have fired more than 3,000 missiles of various types, including ballistic missiles, at peaceful cities, towns and villages in Ukraine. At the same time, Russian strikes are increasingly indiscriminate in terms of their targets. As a result, thousands of civilians have been killed, including women and children. These horrific statistics continue to grow on a daily basis.

Against this backdrop, in recent years, the Russian Federation has been strengthening the military component of its space activities. Its basic scientific programme evolved from being predominantly peaceful to being predominantly aggressive. Most Russian

satellite constellations consist of military spacecraft. Moscow is also creating a new missile defence system with an anti-satellite component.

We are convinced that the Russian Federation's actions contradict international values in the field of peaceful space exploration. The peaceful uses of outer space have always been focused on saving or improving peoples' lives. Unfortunately, the Russian Federation has chosen a different path: through its strategy and actions, Russia is posing an existential threat to international global peace and security, bringing unprecedented and long-term challenges to global stability. An immediate response is therefore required.

Ukraine played a significant role in the space industry of the former Soviet Union, but after regaining its independence, Ukraine discontinued all military space programmes and has since been firmly committed to the principles of the peaceful uses of outer space. Our delegation fully supports further development of norms, rules and principles to support preventing an arms race in outer space and excluding the possibility of using space technologies for destructive purposes.

We positively note that an increasing number of States have undertaken a commitment not to conduct destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile testing. Our delegation considers this to be an important step towards the future drafting of a legally binding instrument. We consider this type of weapon to be dangerous and destructive to the future of humankind. In the first instance, such activities will contribute to an increase in the amount of space debris. They could further become a trigger for the start of a conflict in space.

We support and co-sponsor the draft resolution entitled "Destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile testing", submitted by the United States (A/C.1/77/L.62), which aims at preventing threats to the long-term sustainability of the outer space environment.

In conclusion, the ease with which the Russian Federation has violated the principles of global international security that arose after the Second World War necessitates not only the establishment of norms of behaviour in space, but also the creation of an international enforcement mechanism for their implementation. Ukraine takes this opportunity to call on the international space community to condemn the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine and stop implementing joint projects with all Russian space-related companies and organizations.

**Mr. Guerra** (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Argentina considers space activities essential for the welfare of humanity through the provision of different types of services, communications, positioning, navigation and timing, salvaging of vessels, precision in weather forecasting, inter alia. We understand that space assets are critical to addressing such global challenges as climate change and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

A conflict in outer space would have catastrophic consequences and endanger all uses and users. There are various emerging threats from space activities that could, intentionally or unintentionally, have dire consequences and quickly escalate into conflict or affect cybersecurity, for example, the exponential increase in the number of satellites in orbit and the resultant potential interference in the services they provide or even possible collisions that would generate enormous economic losses.

For Argentina, the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies is the cornerstone of the international legal regime on space. My country reaffirms the fundamental role that the Treaty plays in maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes. Accordingly, we reaffirm our strict adherence and respect for the principles and agreements that should govern the activities of States in the exploration and uses of space, including non-militarization and its strict use for the improvement of living conditions and peace among the peoples that inhabit our planet as well as regional and universal cooperation in the development of space activities.

We understand that the current regime does not explicitly contain any restrictions or legal obligations on conventional weaponry in outer space. However, the provisions of the Treaty expressly prohibit the testing of any type of weapons on the moon and other celestial bodies.

In that context, it is important for Argentina to establish clear terminology in order not to legitimate the placement of any type of weapons in space. Argentina supports the negotiation in the Conference on Disarmament of a treaty prohibiting the placement of weapons in outer space. As long as such a negotiation does not take place, it is imperative that transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities continue to be strengthened. We therefore welcome all initiatives in this regard.

Argentina favours a comprehensive approach to drafting an instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space (PAROS) that includes both the regulation of behaviour and the control of capabilities, equipment and technologies. In turn, and taking into account the dual nature of space technology, we understand that particular attention should be paid to avoiding elements that may affect the right to develop and acquire technology and equipment for the peaceful uses of outer space. Along these lines, it is also important to highlight that an eventual instrument on PAROS contains provisions on capacity-building that correspond to the obligations provided for therein. In this context, Argentina believes that verification represents one of the main challenges in drafting a binding instrument, mainly because of the technological difficulty involved, particularly with increasingly smaller space objects.

Finally, it should be noted that the current state of space activities and technological development involves numerous actors from both the private and academic sectors, so that it is not only States that should be seen as capable of developing technologies that generate threats from space systems and their applications. These technological advances generate an imperative need to address this issue creatively and comprehensively, and for promoting the interconnection between the different forums and spaces that discuss outer space issues. We therefore welcome a new joint meeting of the First and Fourth Committees on challenges to the security and sustainability of outer space.

**Mr. Brückler** (Austria): Austria aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of the European Union in its capacity as observer and the written contributions submitted. In addition, we would like to share some remarks in our national capacity.

Outer space has become increasingly critical to our everyday lives. At the same time, we are faced with a wide range of risks and threats related to outer space activities starting from increased tensions on Earth itself, security risks emerging from the development of anti-satellite capabilities and the general risk of weaponization of space. All of this is of great concern to us.

Austria therefore welcomes all multilateral efforts aimed at reducing those threats, improving space security and preventing an arms race in outer space, which would ultimately come at the expense of the

security of all humankind. At the same time, the complexity of security issues in outer space is increasing through unprecedented advances in technology, which will continue or even accelerate in future. New stakeholders, such as commercial actors, have been entering the realm of outer space. We are witnessing a new era of spacefaring and an increasing dependency on services provided through outer space systems.

The highly disruptive potential of malicious space operations, be they interorbital or ground-to-orbit, entails significant repercussions on civilians on Earth by having an impact on health care, transportation, communications and energy. We are concerned about the possible humanitarian consequences of a conflict in outer space and emphasize that international humanitarian law fully applies to outer space, in particular its principles of distinction, proportionality and precautions.

In the light of the foregoing, it is regrettable that long-standing multilateral efforts on preventing an arms race in outer space, be it in the United Nations Disarmament Commission, the Conference on Disarmament or the various groups of governmental experts on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, have not yielded substantive results. Processes relating to the peaceful uses of outer space, particularly in the framework of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, have delivered concrete outcomes, and our work should benefit from these results. We therefore appreciate the convening of a joint meeting with the Fourth Committee and will participate actively in it.

The situation in outer space, which is increasingly congested and contested, creates a growing perception of threats, which in turn increases the potential for misunderstandings and possible escalation. Security challenges like these require multilateral answers, and we value the opportunity to discuss them within the Open-ended Working Group on Reducing Space Threats through Norms, Rules and Principles of Responsible Behaviours. We recognize the benefits of a behaviour-based approach for our work due to the inherent dual-use nature of many space applications and systems, which require a better understanding of possible threats and the perception thereof. At the same time, we should not lose sight of the capabilities themselves, which are a technological necessity for any of those threats.

The work on such an approach must also not exclude the possibility of a legally binding instrument. In relation to this, we see a clear necessity to improve information-sharing on the purpose of space objects and the intention of operations as well as on their respective mechanisms. We further see a lack of multilateral means for attribution and verification in relation to space objects, which we should rectify, *inter alia*, through the newly available technologies.

Transparency and confidence-building measures are important instruments for starting to mitigate several of the aforementioned risks. We encourage spacefaring nations to improve information-sharing on operations and on their national policies on increasing cooperation with respect to space situational-awareness capabilities. We also encourage them to observe the relevant provisions of the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation.

As to the specific rates and risks, we are particularly concerned about the development and testing of kinetic anti-satellite capabilities. With the debris they create, they endanger the peaceful uses of outer space as well as any current or future spacefaring nations; they must therefore be considered to be an irresponsible behaviour. Accordingly, we welcome the commitment by the United States and a growing number of States to declaring a moratorium on direct-ascent anti-satellite missile tests.

The conduct of non-kinetic attacks and cyberwarfare on outer space systems is also extremely concerning, as it is difficult to ascertain accountability and responsibility in such attacks. The damage to space systems and the disruption of services through directed-energy capabilities, electromagnetic interferences, jamming, spoofing or cyberattacks often have impacts beyond the initial target. We are very concerned about the reverberating effects that any disruption or destruction of infrastructure in outer space could have on our societies, economies as well as on human lives.

The infrastructure in space on which we all rely must not be endangered through military ambitions or irresponsible behaviour. The exploration and use of outer space must be carried out for the benefit and in the interest of all countries, as provided for in the Outer Space Treaty of 1967.

**Mr. Omar** (Pakistan): Over the past six decades, outer space has witnessed transformational developments in several aspects, ranging from peaceful exploration

to the growing deployment of assets and an increasing reliance on such assets for a variety of uses. Concurrently, the international community has developed universal principles and norms to control, regulate and in some cases, prohibit activities incompatible with the peaceful uses of outer space and to ensure that outer space remains a global commons for all people and States.

Once the exclusive preserve of a few States, there is now an increasing number of States, other actors and objects in outer space, along with ever greater integration with, reliance on and diverse users of the new technology at the terrestrial level. At the same time, the nature and extent of security threats in, from and to outer space as well as Earth has grown many times over. The most visible manifestation of these threats is the unstoppable arms race in and placement of weapons in outer space, with attendant risks to peaceful users. Even more worrisomely, such threats are magnified by a growing integration of weapons technologies, platforms and dedicated force structures in the nuclear, cyber, conventional and outer space domains.

The development and deployment of missile-defence systems and their amalgamation with outer space systems represents yet another layer of threats to strategic stability at the global and regional levels. In the absence of legal constraints, these systems allow pre-emptive and disarming strikes against terrestrial systems, entailing dangerous consequences for safety, security and sustainability on Earth and in outer space.

The line between peaceful and military uses of outer space is being further blurred as non-governmental actors themselves are no longer singularly confined to its peaceful exploitation. The growing fusion between civilian intelligence and military institutions and endeavours is no longer a well-kept secret. Some States speak openly about extending deterrence to outer space. Destabilizing capabilities such as anti-satellite weapons and directed-energy weapons are being complemented by the placement of weapons in outer space with serious implications for outer space as well as on Earth.

These developments undermine the spirit and principles of existing international law governing outer space. Left unaddressed, these growing risks will mutate into serious threats to global and regional peace, security and stability.

This state of affairs underscores the imperative of reinforcing the existing normative and legal architecture relating to the security dimension of outer

space and enabling it to respond to the growing risks. Foreseeing these dangers and recognizing the dearth of legal rules to offset them effectively, the international community has for decades called for further measures and appropriate international negotiations to prevent an arms race in outer space.

The tenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament together with numerous subsequent resolutions of that universal body reaffirmed the importance of realizing this long-standing imperative. Despite negotiations on PAROS being on its agenda for almost four decades, the Conference on Disarmament (CD) has unfortunately been prevented by some from starting them. Notwithstanding increased evidence of weaponization and the growing arms race, some States continue to obstruct commencement of such negotiations to this day, citing concerns that could be addressed during the course of the CD's work. Pakistan reiterates its call for the immediate commencement of negotiations in the CD on PAROS to comprehensively address the gaps in the international legal regime governing the exploration and use of outer space. While recognizing the value of transparency and confidence-building measures in promoting trust and confidence among States, Pakistan does not see such voluntary measures as a substitute for legally binding treaty-based obligations.

The primary litmus test for the relevance and value addition of any initiative on outer space is whether and to what extent it maintains an international consensus on preventing an arms race in outer space and tackles well-known destabilizing weapons capabilities and threats from placement of weapons in outer space. The use of outer space for the benefit and in the interests of all countries is the fundamental principle enshrined in the Outer Space Treaty and the cardinal principle of ensuring equal security of all States. As the agreed global norm on the primary responsibility of States with significant military capability vis-à-vis prevention of an arms race in outer space, it must remain central to our efforts.

Negotiating and concluding legal instruments is more urgent than ever to guard outer space from increasing threats. It is important to avoid the mistakes of the past and not ignore previous realities of the nuclear arms race and expansion in nuclear arsenals. If history is any guide, technological or military monopolies of the few do not last for long. It is therefore both urgent and prudent to prevent weaponizing outer space and

the ensuing devastating consequences for the peace, security and socioeconomic consequences of States and societies. Further delay will be counterproductive.

**Mr. Vorontsov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The space activities of the Russian Federation are carried out in strict compliance with international law, including the 1967 Outer Space Treaty. It is not aimed at anyone whatsoever. The Russian Federation has been consistent in its advocacy for keeping space as an area for exclusively peaceful activities of all States on an equitable basis.

The implementation of policies by Western countries, led by the United States, to deploy weapons in outer space and use outer space for military purposes with the aim of ensuring those countries' domination and supremacy poses a serious threat. Their acts have a very adverse impact on international peace and security. They create a risk of acute destabilization and of an arms race in outer space. This would fully undermine the prospects for arms reduction and limitation in general. We call upon Western countries to stop their attempts to position outer space as a new arena for rivalry and conflicts among States.

I wish separately to emphasize a very dangerous trend that has been thrown into sharp relief during the events in Ukraine. I am referring to the use by the United States and its allies of civilian infrastructure components in outer space, including the use of commercial infrastructure in armed conflicts. This quasi-civilian infrastructure could end up being a legitimate target for retaliatory strikes. The Western actions needlessly put at risk the sustainability of peaceful outer space activities as well as many socioeconomic processes on the Earth that underpin the well-being of people, primarily in developing countries. This provocative use of civilian satellites is also questionable in the context of the Outer Space Treaty and should be very strongly condemned by the international community.

We are convinced at this stage that it is still possible to prevent a full-fledged arms race in outer space. We have not yet passed the point of no return. To that end, we need to confirm our dedication to existing international legal agreements that govern outer space activity. We need to adopt commitments at the national and international levels not to deploy weapons of any kind in outer space. There should be a ban on the threat or use of force against outer space objects or with outer

space objects. Specifically, we propose not using outer space objects as a means of striking any targets on the Earth, in the air or in outer space.

We call for all States not to construct, use or deploy or test outer space weapons for missile defence, as anti-satellite capabilities or for use against any targets on the ground or in the air. We also call for all States not to destroy or damage or disrupt the normal functioning of outer space objects of any other State or to alter their trajectories. We believe that without reliable guarantees for keeping outer space free from weapons, which are guarantees to be enshrined in international legally binding agreements on the prevention of an arms race in outer space (PAROS), tackling issues linked to the peaceful uses of outer space and to ensuring the security of outer space activities will not be promising.

For the purposes of studying and submitting recommendations on substantive elements of a multilateral legally binding document on PAROS and on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space, we propose renewing the work of the specialized United Nations group of governmental experts. We are not talking about duplicating the Open-ended Working Group established under resolution 76/231; rather, this new group of experts would take up its mandate after the end of the group's final session in August 2023, and focus solely on working out recommendations on specific elements of a future legally binding instrument on PAROS. This is in keeping with the interests of the overwhelming majority of the States Members of the United Nations.

Russia has another initiative in mind as well, with a view to stabilizing the situation while the proposed multilateral instrument is being drafted. I am referring now to a political commitment on no first placement of weapons in outer space, which already has some full-fledged participants — more than 30 States — and the number of proponents continues to steadily rise. We encourage all States to join this initiative on no first placement of weapons.

The Russian Federation has submitted for the First Committee's consideration draft resolutions entitled "No first placement of weapons in outer space" (A/C.1/77/L.67), "Transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities" (A/C.1/77/L.71) and "Further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space" (A/C.1/77/L.70). We call on all States to support our drafts and co-sponsor them.

**The Chair:** Before proceeding further, I wish to point out that we have a long list of speakers for the two remaining thematic clusters. According to our programme of work, the Committee is expected to complete its thematic discussion tomorrow, Thursday, 27 October. In order to exhaust our list of speakers, I propose that, subject to the Committee's approval, we proceed as follows: first, that the rights of reply be heard at 6 p.m., after we release the interpreters; and, secondly, statements for the cluster "Disarmament machinery" be limited to four and six minutes, respectively.

With those measures in place, I am confident that we can exhaust the list of speakers. If there are no objections, may I take it that it is the wish of the First Committee to proceed accordingly?

*It was so decided.*

**Mr. Li Song** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): All countries enjoy an equal right to the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes. At the same time, they have a common responsibility to maintain outer-space security. Outer-space activities promote the development and prosperity of humankind. On the other hand, they also pose increasing security challenges. The risk of the weaponization of outer space and an arms race there is increasingly becoming a reality and poses the greatest and most fundamental threat to outer-space security. The root cause of the arms race in outer space lies in the attempts of a super-Power to dominate it. In clinging to a Cold War mentality, the country in question has long pursued a strategy for dominance in space. The new directive of the United States Department of Defense on space policy continues to regard outer space as a priority arena for national military power and seeks to provide a durable strategic advantage. That amounts to a sword of Damocles hanging in outer space, threatening its peace and tranquillity and the welfare and common security of humankind.

Earlier this year, the United States announced that it would no longer conduct destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile tests. It is now proposing a draft resolution on that issue (A/C.1/77/L.62) in the First Committee. We welcome all arms-control initiatives that are genuinely conducive to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, but we oppose any attempt to expand unilateral military advantages in the name of arms control. It is noteworthy that the United States began testing direct-ascent anti-satellite missiles

as early as 1959. It has long possessed a full range of anti-satellite technologies, enabling it to build operational anti-satellite capabilities through the use of its missile-defence equipment. It no longer needs to conduct destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite tests. If the United States truly cared about outer-space security it should have introduced such a draft resolution 60 years ago. The United States initiative would not impose any constraints on its own space military strategy or the build-up of its Space Force. As a high-ranking officer of the United States Space Force testified in the United States Senate Committee on Armed Services, “We don’t give up too much because we have other ways to test our abilities”.

The United States initiative is similar to the expand-first-and-control-later approach adopted by the super-Powers during the Cold War, which was aimed at restricting others while developing their own capabilities. Initiating such an arms-control initiative in the twenty-first century is an attempt to deceive the international community, which is quite ironic coming from this super-Power. The Chinese delegation objects to the draft resolution proposed by the United States and calls on all parties to distinguish between right and wrong.

The Chinese delegation welcomes and supports the statement by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries yesterday (see A/C.1/77/PV.21), which reflects the broad appeal by the international community. Many developing countries further elaborated on their proposals in their statements on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. All parties believe that the maintenance of security in outer space must be premised on preventing the weaponization of outer space and an arms race there. Over the past 40 years the General Assembly has adopted an annual resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space by an overwhelming majority, and the Conference on Disarmament has also been working on the issue. The thrust of the draft treaty proposed by Russia and China in 2008, on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer-space objects, is the non-placement of weapons in outer space and the elimination of any threat or use of force against space objects. Those two obligations under international law are perfectly aligned with preventing the weaponization of outer space and an arms race there and with the maintenance of its continued security. If

a country has no ambitions to dominate outer space, it should have no difficulty in upholding those obligations under international law.

The United States representative clearly mentioned in his statement yesterday (see A/C.1/77/PV.21) that the scope of the outer-space arms-control treaty advocated by the United States is limited to the issue of destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite tests. I would like to stress that the draft treaty proposed by China and Russia clearly calls on all countries to refrain from using or threatening to use force against space objects. It therefore adequately addresses concerns about anti-satellite weapons. Given that the country concerned is bent on avoiding embracing a comprehensive solution while promoting an extremely narrow arms-control initiative that imposes no restraints on itself, its motives and sincerity are questionable. Such an initiative has very limited practical value in terms of arms control and does not contribute to the maintenance of outer-space security in a common, comprehensive, cooperative or sustainable manner.

Between 2018 and 2019, the Group of Governmental Experts on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space conducted in-depth and substantive discussions on all kinds of issues pertaining to a relevant international legally binding instrument and produced a valuable draft report. It was not adopted, owing to the obstruction of a single country — the United States. This year, China, together with 20 sponsors, has proposed an updated draft resolution (A/C.1/77/L.70) on further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space, to reconvene a Group of Governmental Experts on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space. The process complements the work of the Open-ended Working Group on Reducing Space Threats through Norms, Rules and Principles of Responsible Behaviours. As their work is mutually reinforcing, they will jointly serve the overall purpose of preventing an arms race and ensuring security in outer space. We hope that all countries will actively support draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.70.

The full text of my statement will be uploaded to the Secretariat websites.

**Mr. Alam** (Bangladesh): Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/77/PV.21), and I would like to make an additional statement in my national capacity.

Bangladesh considers outer space as a global commons beyond the jurisdiction of any one State. We therefore recognize access to outer space as an inalienable right of all States. We believe that the exploration and use of outer space should be exclusively for peaceful purposes, which would benefit all humankind. Based on that belief, we became a member of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) last year. In today's world, space assets have transformed the way we live, and outer-space systems are vital to understanding and solving global problems such as the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and climate action. It is therefore imperative that all activities in outer space be done in accordance with international law and the principle of the non-appropriation of outer space.

We remain deeply concerned about the catastrophic consequences of the weaponization of outer space and strategic competition and military conflicts there. Armed conflict in space would make the entire domain a battlefield and jeopardize international peace and security. As a State party to the Outer Space Treaty, we reaffirm the vital importance of preventing an arms race in outer space. Bangladesh re-emphasizes the urgent need for the commencement of substantive negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) on a legally binding and multilaterally verifiable instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. We call for enhanced coordination between the work of the First Committee and the other relevant United Nations bodies, including COPUOS, the CD and the Disarmament Commission.

Bangladesh took note of the first meeting in May 22 of the Open-ended Working Group on Reducing Space Threats through Norms, Rules and Principles of Responsible Behaviours, established pursuant to resolution 76/23, to consider those issues and how they would contribute to legally binding instruments in that regard. We hope that Member States will be able to put aside their differences and have a productive discussion in the Open-ended Working Group. Increasing congestion and competition could imperil our succeeding generations' access to and use of outer space. With the launch into space of our first communications satellite, Bangabandhu-I, we have a greater stake in a secure and peaceful outer space than ever before. We therefore call on spacefaring nations to respect the applicable laws and norms on the use of weapons in outer space and develop appropriate and effective instruments that will prevent an arms race there.

Bangladesh underscores that activities in outer space should not remain the exclusive preserve of a small group of States. We call for strengthening capacity-building programmes, with particular emphasis on developing countries, to ensure that outer space is both in principle and in practice a truly global commons of which all States can avail themselves. We call on the international community to scale up its capacity-building efforts so that developing countries can contribute to the discussion on outer space in an inclusive and transparent manner. While trust and confidence-building measures can be useful for preventing the weaponization of outer space, there is no denying the importance of concluding a legally binding international instrument in that regard. We urge States to refrain from using any space- or ground-based capabilities, including anti-satellite capabilities — whether exclusively military or multi-use in nature — to deliberately damage or destroy space assets.

Lastly, the major space actors that have been mostly responsible for damaging the outer-space environment to date should also take upon themselves the added responsibility to make this expanding frontier for human endeavour safe and sustainable.

**Mr. Damico (Brazil):** We can hardly overemphasize or dispute the relevance of outer space in the light of its increasing role in our peoples' development. Satellites are essential components of almost all types of critical infrastructure on Earth. Space-based assets are of critical importance to the societies and economies of all countries in a wide range of activities, such as global communications, imaging, climate-change monitoring and national security. Our increasing reliance on space has heightened concerns that outer space could be converted into an arena for conflict, especially considering the development of offensive space capabilities by several States. Any conflict in space would seriously endanger the prospects for the sustainable use of Earth's orbits for peaceful purposes for generations to come.

As a developing country with space capabilities and aspirations to become a full spacefaring nation, Brazil is committed to maintaining a peaceful, stable, safe outer space that is accessible to all, as is the international community, as attested to by a host of multilateral initiatives, such as the subsidiary body of the Conference on Disarmament on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, the Group of

Governmental Experts on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, the sixty-second session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, during which its Guidelines for the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities were adopted by consensus, and, more recently, the Open-ended Working Group on Reducing Space Threats through Norms, Rules and Principles of Responsible Behaviours.

In Brazil's view, the discussions on the prevention of an arms race in outer space are a result of the recognition that the existing international regime on space security is inadequate to addressing the current threats and risks and that its further development is an urgent task that cannot be delayed any longer. Nevertheless, we are far from operating in a legal vacuum. The 1967 Outer Space Treaty provides an important bedrock of general principles for stability and sustainability in the use of outer space. It retains its validity and relevance today. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space has also contributed significantly to providing legal certainty, with the adoption of its Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines and Guidelines for the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space. That consensus text successfully addresses the mitigation of safety-related threats to space sustainability.

On the security side, some progress has been achieved, especially through the adoption by the General Assembly of the recommendations of the 2013 Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities. Unfortunately, our efforts to achieve the long-standing goal of negotiating in the Conference on Disarmament a legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space have fallen well short. The erosion of mutual trust among major space Powers was a key ingredient in that collective failure. Against that background, Brazil has decided to support a bottom-up approach, with the gradual development of voluntary norms, rules and principles to strengthen the basis for a deeper conversation on normative elements. Brazil therefore hopes that the ongoing Open-ended Working Group will help us reach a common understanding on what constitutes responsible behaviour in outer space. We are of the view that by fostering much-needed mutual trust, we will gradually pave the way for a future binding instrument to supplement the existing legal framework. The shortest distance between two points is not

always a straight line. In fact, the existing divisions in perception among members would suggest that we take a less direct approach.

Without trust and compromise the agenda on the prevention of an arms race in outer space will hardly progress. Without transparency and displays of actual responsible behaviour, we will fail in our task of protecting outer space as a global commons that should be accessible to all countries and used with due regard to the interests of all States. For those reasons, we welcome initiatives aimed at protecting the safety, security and sustainability of outer space. In our view, one of the most pressing initiatives on that front is the ban on all destructive anti-satellite tests. The testing, development and use of destructive anti-satellite weapons represent the most serious threat to the security and sustainability of outer space. Such weapons are key drivers of mistrust and instability in space, and their testing generates significant persistent debris, leading to the contamination of the orbital environment and heightening the risk of collisions. We hope that the commitment to ending such tests will be a first and a significant step towards an improved environment for the negotiations on outer-space security, especially the prevention of an arms race in space. Brazil firmly believes that with concrete steps such as this, we can revitalize the agenda and achieve our long-standing goal of curbing the weaponization of outer space and preserving its global commons for the benefit of humankind.

**Mr. Balouji** (Islamic Republic of Iran): My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/77/PV.21).

We reaffirm our principled position that outer space is humankind's common heritage and should be used only for peaceful purposes, as well as for the benefit of all countries, regardless of their economic or technological progress. Given the ongoing related deliberations in various forums, including the First Committee, we consider transparency and confidence-building measures an interim step towards formulating a legally binding instrument on preventing an arms race in space. Such measures cannot be a substitute for a legally binding instrument and are of a purely temporary as well as auxiliary nature, in particular serving as an element for a verification mechanism. Furthermore, it is important to ensure

that transparency and confidence-building measures will be among the main elements of a legally binding instrument. The issue was raised in the latest Group of Governmental Experts on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space. However, due to the United States opposition, an agreement was not reached.

The prevention of an arms race in outer space is also a long-standing agenda, having been one of the four main agendas of the Conference on Disarmament for which a special negotiating committee should have been established to negotiate a legally binding instrument over the past 20 years. However, that has not happened, owing to United States opposition. In that context, the discussion on preventing space threats by creating norms of responsible behaviour is a deviant and directional discussion that will distort the main agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. The only effective and practical option is therefore to establish a special negotiating committee at the Conference on Disarmament to conclude a legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space as soon as possible.

In addition, long-term stability can be established in the area of the prevention of an arms race in outer space if outer space is not militarized, which would lead to an arms race. A vivid example in that case is the United States building a space army and weaponizing space, which is a dangerous undertaking that should be avoided. That objective can be met if a legally binding instrument is created — one that explains the norms of responsible behaviours in action. The militarization of space will not help the long-term sustainability of space security and is likely to exacerbate conflict. As previously stated, threat reduction through responsible behaviours is a completely abstract means, topic and notion of a diverging political character, rather than a goal in itself. We believe that transparency and confidence-building among Governments are necessary and meaningful in the form of a legally binding instrument.

From another perspective, contrary to the accepted principles governing outer space, the United States has imposed illegal sanctions against Iranian space agencies despite the fact that they are all civilian space entities in nature. That move by the United States is in clear contradiction of the principles of international outer space law, including the right of free access to outer space and international cooperation

in space activities. In our view, despite all its actions, the United States cannot and will not be able to dominate outer space. Iran considers the suggestion to undertake a political commitment not to conduct destructive, direct-ascent, anti-satellite missile tests as discriminatory, insufficient and a major deviation from the right approach to guarantee the exclusively peaceful uses of outer space, as well as the long-awaited goal of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. At the same time, the Hague Code of Conduct is an exclusive and discriminatory export control regime that inadmissibly imposes restrictions on many of the goods, equipment, technology and know-how that have peaceful applications. We insist that the monopoly of a few countries or attempts to restrict the peaceful use of outer space and the transfer of space-related science, expertise, technology and services to developing countries should be rejected.

**Mr. Louafi** (Algeria) (*spoke in Arabic*): My country's delegation stresses that outer space and other space objects are a common human heritage and should be used for peaceful purposes, in the spirit of cooperation and for the well-being of humankind. The militarization or the outbreak of any military conflicts in outer space will have harmful consequences. It is therefore crucial to prevent an arms race in outer space, which would greatly jeopardize international peace and security. All Member States, in particular those with major space capabilities, must make real contributions to preventing an arms race in outer space in order to encourage and promote international cooperation in the area of outer space exploration and its use for peaceful purposes for the benefit of all. The current legal regime that governs the use of outer space is of great importance for preventing an arms race in outer space. However, there are legitimate concerns about the inability of that regime to prevent the militarization of outer space or an arms race there. That is why there is a need to strengthen that regime and increase its effectiveness through the adoption of a legally binding international instrument that ensures no arms race in outer space whatsoever.

My country's delegation believes that the revised draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects, which was co-authored and presented to the Conference on Disarmament by the Russian Federation and China in 2014, constitutes a good foundation for continuing negotiations with

a view to adopting such an international instrument. We call on the Conference to launch negotiations on preventing an arms race in outer space, as it is the multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community that plays a major role in conducting objective negotiations on priority disarmament issues. The increased use of outer space requires all countries to take measures to ensure more transparency, build confidence and provide information more effectively. My country's delegation stresses the priority of negotiating a legally binding instrument to promote an international legal system for outer space. We recognize that the global comprehensive measures reached through broad international consultations could compliment the important measures related to activities in outer space. However, they will remain voluntary measures and cannot be a substitute for a legally binding treaty on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

My country's delegation commends the consistent adoption by the General Assembly of resolutions entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space", "No first placement of weapons in outer space" and "Further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space". We also commend the work of the Open-Ended Working Group established in resolution 76/231, entitled "Reducing Space Threats through Norms, Rules and Principles of Responsible Behaviours". However, we welcome once again the deliberations undertaken in 2018 and 2019 by the Group of Governmental Experts on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, the comprehensive and substantive discussions of which were welcomed by the General Assembly in resolution 74/32.

In conclusion, my country's delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the Group of African States and the representative of Saudi Arabia on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/C.1/77/PV.21).

**Ms. Hendriksen** (United Kingdom): Space systems underpin life in the twenty-first century. They have a vital role to play in global prosperity, development and security. As space technology continues to develop, it has the potential to bring greater benefits to our societies and economies and to drive cooperation among nations to address shared challenges. However,

the international security context is characterized by persistent, systematic competition among States. That has led to the development by several countries of both kinetic and non-kinetic counter-space capabilities that can threaten all segments of space systems — on the ground, in outer space and in the signals between them. The range of options available to States to disrupt and deny others' use of space is increasing, and some capabilities are within the reach of non-State actors. Disruption to or loss of service, damage to or destruction of outer space systems could have far-reaching consequences, including the loss of humankind's access to outer space. It could drive uncontrolled escalation, potentially leading to the loss of strategic stability and even to conflict.

Last year, 150 Member States voted in favour of resolution 76/231 (see A/76/PV.54 (Resumption 1)), which established the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on Reducing Space Threats through Norms, Rules and Principles of Responsible Behaviours. That demonstrates broad international support for tackling threats to outer space systems and developing a shared understanding about what might constitute responsible behaviour in outer space. At the meeting of the OEWG, the United Kingdom was pleased to note the widespread acknowledgement by Member States of the fact that international law, including the Charter of the United Nations and international humanitarian law, applies to activities in space and the use of space systems. At the second meeting of the OEWG, we learned that the characteristics of the outer space environment and outer space systems present us with some unique technical challenges in devising measures to improve transparency and predictability in order to reduce the chance of miscalculation or escalation, leading to conflict.

We heard about the difficulty of verifying what capabilities satellites might possess and determining whether they are designed for civilian or military purposes or both. We also learned about the challenge of attributing hostile actions against space systems to specific actors. But we also heard from the experts about what could be observed in outer space, such as patterns of movement, and what that might tell us about the functions of satellites. In short, understanding the behaviour patterns of satellites is easier than understanding the capabilities of those systems. Those first two meetings of the OEWG provided valuable context and insights ahead of the critical third meeting,

to be held in February 2023, at which we will discuss specific proposals for norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviours.

We acknowledge that many States are in favour of a legally binding instrument to prevent an arms race in outer space. We also recognize that an increasing number of States see value in first establishing the norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviour, which complement existing international law. And while they may be non-legally binding, they can act as practical and pragmatic steps towards legally binding measures in the future. As the Secretary-General pointed out in his report on reducing space threats through norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviours (see A/76/77), a combination of binding and non-binding norms is needed, and both can be pursued through the OEWG.

We note the proposal of the Russian Federation to establish a Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) limited to 25 participants. One of the virtues of the OEWG has been its inclusive character, and we do not understand how reverting to a very limited format would help make progress. The United Kingdom is not convinced that a new GGE is merited at the present time. We are heartened by the voices of pragmatism that we have heard at OEWG meetings. We believe that there is now a real opportunity for the international community to reach an understanding of outer space behaviour that helps to reduce misunderstanding or escalation, as well as prevent an arms race in outer space. That task is increasingly urgent, and we encourage as many Member States as possible to participate in the remaining meeting of the OEWG.

**Mr. Gunaratna (Sri Lanka):** Sri Lanka aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/77/PV.21).

Sri Lanka's position on the peaceful uses of outer space and its commitment to the prevention of an arms race and the weaponization of outer space has been clear and consistent and dates back to the 1980s, when in collaboration with like-minded countries we called for the preservation of outer space as a common heritage of mankind. We may recall that one of the major questions presented to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space was the legal status of outer space. The preamble of resolution 2222 (XXI) of 19 December 1966 reaffirmed the importance of developing the rule

of law in this new era of human endeavour. Although satellites were placed in orbit without the permission of other States, there were no significant protests, as they did not infringe on countries' "sovereignty" as they circled Earth. It was an acknowledgment that the new frontier did not have the elements of sovereignty under the principles of international law, as is the case for land, sea and airspace.

There is a substantial body of law dealing with various aspects of the use and exploration of outer space, such as the United Nations space treaties, General Assembly resolutions, bilateral arrangements, determinations by intergovernmental organizations, national legislation and decisions of national courts. That jurisprudence needs to be further developed for the common benefit of humankind. Sri Lanka therefore rejects any doctrine that seeks to categorize outer space as a warfighting domain or the next battlefield, as such doctrines are based purely on the desire to dominate and exploit without recognizing that all of us are mere creatures on planet Earth, which is a minuscule celestial body in comparison to the vast expanse of the universe. Today we live in an interconnected world, in which technologies, including space technologies and the services they provide, have overarching reach and reliability and are used not only by those States that have the capacity for spacefaring. Accordingly, conflict in space affects not just the spacefaring nations but all of us, and must be avoided lest its catastrophic consequences befall us all.

The desire for a legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space has been expressed by a large majority of delegations in this forum and elsewhere over the years. Sri Lanka, along with Egypt, has traditionally sponsored a draft resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space and will do so again this year. It is our expectation that this year's draft resolution will continue to garner wide support from delegations, as was the case in previous years. We remain fully committed to that goal and re-emphasize the urgent need for the commencement of substantive work on the subject at the Conference on Disarmament, including through the establishment of an ad hoc committee. In that regard, Sri Lanka believes that the draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects, which was submitted jointly by Russia and China to the Conference on Disarmament on 12 February 2008 and updated in

2014, should be taken into account, along with the discussions of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) established pursuant to resolution 72/250. It is regrettable that the consensus on the final draft report of the GGE was blocked by a State party.

While there is a common understanding of the applicability to outer space of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations and international humanitarian law, it is clear that the existing legal framework should be strengthened to respond to the unprecedented challenges caused by developments such as the advancement of outer space technologies, the proliferation of actors and activities in outer space, and the dual use of outer space infrastructure. A war in outer space cannot be won and must not be fought. The only way to prevent a possible arms race in outer space is to develop comprehensive binding regulations to address the current threats to the safety and security of outer space. It is important that such regulations be based on and strengthen the existing legal framework on outer space, which remains applicable and relevant to date.

We remain concerned about the implications of the continued development and deployment of anti-ballistic missile defence systems, which erode trust, escalate mutual suspicion and create an international climate that threatens international security. In addition to our own annual resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, Sri Lanka welcomes General Assembly resolutions that aim to promote the peaceful uses of outer space, including the resolutions on no first placement of weapons in outer space and on transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities. There is also the problem of outer space debris, which poses a significant risk to operations in outer space. We must avoid the phenomenon of the Kessler syndrome if we are to preserve humankind's capacity to use the Earth's orbit.

While we welcome the ongoing deliberations relating to norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviours in outer space as a useful measure on enhancing common understanding, it is imperative that those deliberations lead towards the eventual establishment of international legal instruments and provide binding limitations on the potential weaponization of outer space. Such norms, principles and responsible behaviours should be an interim step towards the negotiation and development of a comprehensive, legally binding treaty on the prevention

of an arms race in outer space, and the common understanding and progress achieved by a near majority of States on that issue should not be disregarded. Sri Lanka supports any initiative on the promotion of the peaceful and safe use of outer space and welcomes the recent commitment by several States not to conduct direct-ascent anti-satellite missile testing, which we believe is a positive initial step in the right direction.

In conclusion, we reiterate the need for multilateralism to come to the fore in carving out a sustainable legal framework that will serve to prevent the imminent possibility of a catastrophic arms race in outer space and secure a peaceful outer space for our future generations. We believe that it is incumbent on all stakeholders to chart a course forward in order to meet the challenges of the twenty-second century. We are now in the era of a cold peace. This century has presented us with new spacefaring and companies and individuals that have the capacity to utilize space technology without the confines of a regulated industry. The need to find and craft an appropriate regulatory regime is therefore an imperative. It is our belief that the development of customary international law in relation to space-specific principles will in the long term create more binding obligations and decrease the current threat that outer space assets pose to global security. Until a mature and responsible regulatory framework for outer space is put in place, we must remain conscious of, and continue to hold on to, the fundamental sentiment of humanity that underpins space law in order to avoid scenarios that would be beyond our imagination.

**Mr. Jotterand** (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Outer space is becoming increasingly congested, contested and competitive. At the same time, outer space is characterized by increased military competition among some States. In that context, we are particularly concerned about security-related challenges that affect the stability of outer space.

First, the placement of weapons in outer space increases the risk of turning space into a domain for waging war and has a negative impact on its use for peaceful purposes. Furthermore, the adoption of military doctrines that consider outer space to be a domain for waging war also raises concerns and can contribute to increasing tensions. Restraint in that area is essential.

Secondly, the development, testing and possible use of anti-satellite weapons are a particular cause of concern, specifically because of their immediate and

direct effects on the operational orbital environment. Those weapons have clear risks, such as the generation of long-term debris, which poses a threat to the security, safety and sustainability of outer space activities, including those that are civilian in nature. Measures to prevent the development and use of such capabilities should be a priority. As an urgent first step, we welcome the announcements made by some States not to conduct destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile tests in space. In that regard, I am pleased to announce that Switzerland will also make that commitment.

Thirdly, our concerns are not only limited to the development or deployment of certain capabilities but also extend to the way in which some activities are conducted in outer space. Unfriendly space rendezvous and proximity operations pose a threat to the safety and security of space systems. A surprise close approach to foreign satellites, without notification, coordination and consent, may be interpreted as a hostile act and can contribute to the weaponization and instability of outer space. Adopting and respecting transparency and safety measures are therefore key when conducting such operations.

Because of those and many other concerns, strict respect for existing obligations under international law is of paramount importance. In that regard, Switzerland welcomes the successful commencement of the work of the Open-ended Working Group on Reducing Space Threats through Norms, Rules and Principles of Responsible Behaviours. A better understanding of the application of the existing international normative framework with regard to space security is of particular importance and allows for the identification of gaps and areas that potentially need to be strengthened. Given the inherent challenges associated with assessing space activities, let alone the challenge of assessing the intention behind certain actions, focusing on behaviours and their consequences enables us to assess the outcomes of a given action regardless of its supposed or actual intent. The development of common understanding about what constitutes responsible behaviours in outer space is a promising approach that could complement the existing legal framework in important ways.

Many of those challenges can be addressed by respecting the existing obligations under international law by improving transparency measures and notification mechanisms, as well as by enhancing situational awareness capabilities and international

collaboration in specific areas. Switzerland believes that many of those elements and approaches could be further developed and brought to fruition. In the light of the adoption in 2019 by the General Assembly of 21 guidelines for ensuring the long-term sustainability of outer space activities and the ongoing work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on the topic, we would like to emphasize the relevance of those efforts to space security and confirm their complementarity with the work of the Open-ended Working Group on Reducing Space Threats through Norms, Rules and Principles of Responsible Behaviours.

**Mr. Sánchez de Lerin** (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Spain aligns itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/77/PV.21).

Outer space is a global commons, in the use of which all humankind has a stake. An increasing number of activities are carried out in outer space by a growing number of governmental and private actors, with an ever-greater impact on activities conducted on Earth, whether civilian, commercial or military in nature. The emergence of those new actors and the development of new technologies, the majority of which are dual-use technologies, coincide with an environment in which there are serious international tensions. All that means that outer space is congested, contested and competitive, with increasing risks for and threats to assets in orbit, as well as those on Earth.

Events in recent years show that reflecting on the security aspect of outer space is critical. It forces us to speed up and intensify our efforts to create an outer space environment that is peaceful, secure, stable and sustainable for all. Activities such as anti-satellite missile tests are incompatible with that goal and should be condemned in the strongest possible terms. Spain welcomes the commitment made by a growing number of States not to conduct destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile tests. We welcome draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.62, submitted by the United States, which we believe is a step in the right direction. We hope that it will win the support of a broad majority of States, including those that wish to continue discussions towards a legally binding instrument.

From the start, my delegation has supported the Open-ended Working Group on Reducing Space Threats through Norms, Rules and Principles of Responsible Behaviours, established pursuant to resolution 76/231. That Group is tasked with revitalizing negotiations

on outer space, including the invaluable contributions of civil society and industry, which have borne their first fruits. At its first two meetings, it contributed to a better understanding of the current and potential risks and threats in, from and to outer space. It addresses not only anti-satellite missiles but also undue interference, lasers, cyberattacks and approaches and coupling manoeuvres conducted without States' consent, among other activities that can threaten the responsible use of outer space.

There is also an opportunity to examine the current legal framework to consider its shortcomings and opportunities for development and reaffirm the applicability of international law to outer space, including the Charter of the United Nations and the major outer space treaties that complement the guidelines on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities adopted in the context of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The Group has already begun drafting measures to which all actors must adhere in order to be considered responsible and a contributor to security in outer space. Furthermore, it serves to advance the elaboration of a framework for dialogue and trust, in which States can share their concerns and priorities with respect to outer space as an environment that is undergoing accelerated changes. My delegation hopes that the work of the Open-Ended Working Group will contribute to preventing a potential arms race in outer space.

Allow me to conclude by announcing the imminent establishment of Spain's space agency, which will apply our space policy by adhering to the principles I have outlined. In times of serious tensions, maintaining international peace and security requires, now more than ever before, forums and measures that contribute to bolstering transparency and confidence-building.

**Mr. Abd Aziz** (Malaysia): Malaysia associates itself with the statements made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and by the representative of Malaysia on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (see (A/C.177/PV.21)).

Malaysia reaffirms the importance of the use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes and the need to protect that domain in the common interests of mankind. We recognize the contributions of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs in

promoting international cooperation on the peaceful use of outer space. Those bodies have undertaken capacity-building programmes with a particular focus on developing countries and space education initiatives. They have also worked to enhance compatibility and interoperability among global and regional space-based positioning, navigation and timing systems.

Against the backdrop of a constantly shifting geopolitical and socioeconomic landscape, it is imperative for the global community to continue promoting the peaceful uses of outer space. Malaysia believes in the need for greater transparency and exchange of information among all actors in the outer space context, with due regard to the legitimate safety and security interests of all States.

Space-based assets play an important role in our daily lives. The international community has benefited immensely from enhancements to telecommunications and data connectivity that have shaped our global economy, made possible by space-based technology. As such, it is more vital than ever that we work to prevent the militarization of outer space. Malaysia has been consistent in our call for the avoidance of behaviour that could be construed as threats in outer space.

We remain concerned about the possible placement, testing and use of weapons and the use of space objects as weapons in outer space. Such actions may lead to an escalation of tensions and an arms race in outer space. Malaysia has consistently supported all draft resolutions submitted with a view to preventing an arms race in outer space, and we reiterate the need for increased confidence-building measures in outer space in accordance with resolution 75/69.

Furthermore, it is important for States to build a common understanding of the principles of threatening versus non-threatening behaviour in order to avoid miscalculations and the escalation of tensions and conflict in outer space.

We welcome the establishment of an Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on Reducing Space Threats through Norms, Rules and Principles of Responsible Behaviours, pursuant to resolution 76/231. Cognizant of the increase in the number and variety of actors involved in issues related to outer space, as well as the development of related technologies, we support the mandate of the OEWG to develop rules, norms and principles of responsible behaviour that can contribute to a legally binding instrument.

Malaysia remains committed to ratifying and acceding to international treaties governing the use of outer space that uphold the legal principles adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 1962 (XVIII) of 1963. In that regard, Malaysia endorsed its National Space Policy 2030 and recently gazetted the Malaysian Space Board Act 2022, Act 834, on 25 January 2022. That act will ensure that space activities in Malaysia are carried out responsibly, safely, securely and in compliance with international guidelines.

We will continue to advocate for the sustainable use of science, technology and outer space for peaceful purposes for the benefit of human welfare, development and research. Malaysia looks forward to working together with all States in order to accomplish those goals.

**Mr. Bae** (Republic of Korea): The Republic of Korea is firmly committed to ensuring a secure, safe and sustainable space environment. While we all share the goal of maintaining peace in outer space, we also need to face the reality that there are divergent views on how to reach the common goal and what should be the urgent priorities in those collective efforts.

Given the dual-use characteristics and cross-cutting nature of space technology, it is not easy for States to be clear about the intentions of their space activities and the systems of others. That could lead to the escalation of tensions and even to an arms race. In that regard, resolutions 75/36 and 76/231, submitted by the United Kingdom and adopted by an overwhelming majority in 2020 and 2021, respectively, allow us to deliberate on a holistic and comprehensive approach necessary to address various dimensions of threats. They offer a viable venue for a more forward-looking and action-oriented platform to address this matter of ever-increasing urgency.

Korea therefore fully supports the draft resolution and has been actively taking part in the Open-Ended Working Group process over the past year. In furtherance of those ongoing international efforts, Korea organized a virtual conference in May with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and the Secure World Foundation in order to foster dialogue with the member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations towards reaching a common understanding on threats pertaining to the space domain. We also supported the development of an infographic on anti-satellite weapons in order to raise the international community's awareness of such weapons and their impact on space sustainability.

We look forward to continuing the process next year to find common ground and draw recommendations on responsible behaviours. While we continue on the journey towards the ultimate destination of a legally binding and effectively verifiable space security treaty, we recognize that leaving the vacuum of norms, principles and regulations unattended could be irreversibly detrimental.

In that regard, Korea is proud to be one of the first countries committing not to conduct destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile testing. We also welcome and support the draft resolution submitted by the United States on this very subject (A/C.1/77/L.62). Indeed, such testing is one of the most significant threats, as the use of such weapons could create long-lived debris that could not only endanger human lives and space assets but also prevent the future use of space orbits by others. We believe that the relay of commitments and support for the relevant draft resolution would be the first step towards drawing up norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviours.

We should never forget the primary role of the Conference on Disarmament — the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects. We welcome that the Conference on Disarmament has held debates within the subsidiary body established this year and that this subsidiary body was able to reach consensus on its report, notwithstanding a serious shortfall on the annual report of the Conference on Disarmament itself.

The Republic of Korea also welcomes the efforts pursued through the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space as well as the report issued by the GGE on Transparency and Confidence-building Measures in Outer Space Activities. We believe that those efforts have contributed in valuable ways to the fostering of a deeper shared understanding spanning a range of views and approaches.

In conclusion, the Republic of Korea wishes to reaffirm its strong commitment to international efforts to ensure that space activities do indeed ultimately prove to promote global peace, safety and security, and indeed that they can be tapped and channelled in such a way as to further improve the lives of people all around the world.

**Ms. Bakytbekkyzy** (Kazakhstan): The issues related to outer space are becoming increasingly relevant for ensuring international peace and security,

as space provides unlimited opportunities for both peaceful use and military expansion — the latter representing a grave threat to all of humankind.

Confidence-building measures are essential in formulating general considerations and measures for preventing the militarization of outer space. We therefore see great value in draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.67, on no first placement of weapons in outer space. We are also supportive of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.71/Rev.1, on transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities.

Kazakhstan fully endorses the draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space, introduced by China and Russia at the Conference on Disarmament in 2008 and 2014. However, political hurdles and the impasse in the Conference on Disarmament have thus far impeded all attempts to achieve a legally binding international agreement.

Kazakhstan hosts the Baikonur Cosmodrome space launch site on its territory and actively participates in peaceful space exploration programmes with Russia, France and other countries. We believe that it is vital to have further discussions on the issue of the prevention of an arms race in outer space by involving other international bodies engaged in that issue. To facilitate the start of those negotiations, we support the draft treaty prepared by China and the Russian Federation on preventing the placement of weapons in outer space.

As a country that chaired The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation in 2016 and 2017, Kazakhstan considers the Code to be an important element of the non-proliferation regime. We also underscore that the proliferation of sensitive missile technology constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security. At the same time, the Code should not act as an impediment to the peaceful uses of space technologies.

In that regard, the latest proposal by the United States on the prevention of destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile testing is an interesting initiative. However, we believe that it could benefit from a more detailed discussion on a technical level with all interested stakeholders. Kazakhstan supports all initiatives aimed at the promotion of peaceful uses of outer space, as long as they are not politicized or aimed at singling out or excluding any particular State or group of States.

In conclusion, as a responsible international actor and a unilateral adherent to the principles and guidelines of the Missile Technology Control Regime, Kazakhstan would like to reiterate that our common goal is to ensure that space remains a sphere of cooperation free from weapons. It is our firm conviction that space should be used only for the benefit and progress of humankind.

**Mr. Ogasawara (Japan):** While our society is increasingly relying on space systems, the outer space environment has been rapidly changing, with an influx of new actors and the diversification of activities. As a result, risks to the stable and sustainable use of outer space are more serious today than ever before, as outer space is becoming increasingly congested, contested and competitive.

In that regard, Japan supports our common efforts for preventing an arms race in outer space as our unwavering fundamental position. We have participated in substantive discussions on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in the Conference on Disarmament and the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space on further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space, held in 2018 and 2019. Japan attaches great importance to the current Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) on Reducing Space Threats through Norms, Rules and Principles of Responsible Behaviours, created by resolution 76/231.

The dual-use nature or dual-purpose use of space objects adds complexity to defining a weapon in outer space and makes it challenging to interpret and verify intentions behind certain outer space activities. In other words, it is difficult to distinguish civil activities and military activities or acts committed out of benevolence or malice.

The international community is required to develop ideas and approaches that enable us to overcome those challenges. Japan underscores the need to deepen the discussion on responsible behaviour and to establish a common understanding on patterns of responsible or irresponsible behaviours that could realistically endure in the face of changing circumstances. In that regard, in September, Japan announced its commitment not to conduct destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile testing. Japan also co-sponsors the draft resolution submitted by the United States to this Committee in that regard (A/C.1/77/L.62). Japan views the work of the

forementioned OEWG as a practical way forward in advancing the prevention of an arms race in outer space and stands ready to make proactive contributions to the discussion in order to maintain outer space as a safe, secure, stable and sustainable environment.

Japan also underlines the importance of transparency and confidence-building measures as pragmatic and short-term measures to increase trust and prevent misperceptions and miscalculations in outer space activities, which currently involve a wide range of actors and stakeholders. We believe that it is imperative to reaffirm the significance of transparency and confidence-building measures. The international community should reach a common understanding on ways and means to reduce threats to space systems. As a means to pave the way in that direction, Japan promotes the transparency and confidence-building measures contained in the recommendations of the 2013 GGE report, which are effective in relation to the goal of preventing an arms race in outer space. Japan also believes that the Disarmament Commission could contribute to that endeavour. Further discussions on transparency and confidence-building measures and on how we can reduce threats to space systems will help States deepen mutual understanding and allow them to have a more profound understanding of both threats and risks to space systems and of what could be acceptable parameters for responsible outer space activities.

In conclusion, Japan would like to reiterate its strong commitment to ensuring the safety, security, stability and sustainability of outer space activities.

**Mr. Padilla** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): We align ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/77/PV.21).

Outer space must not and cannot become a theatre of military operations. Member States have a duty to promote its responsible use for strictly peaceful purposes. We oppose the development of an arms race in outer space, the continuous refinement of space weaponry and the presence and stationing of war materials in space. We reject any threat or use of force in outer space. Space technologies cannot be used as a means to infringe on the sovereignty of nations. We are concerned about the large network of existing spy satellites, which is incompatible with the peace and development of peoples and continues to clutter the geostationary orbit with space debris.

There is an urgent need to strengthen the legal regime applicable to outer space. We support the negotiation and early adoption of a multilateral treaty providing for the prevention and prohibition of placement of weapons in space. Such an instrument should also prohibit the use or threat of force against satellites or other space objects.

The draft treaty presented by Russia and China in the Conference on Disarmament is a good basis for negotiations on a legally binding international instrument.

We support and promote the policy of no first placement of weapons of any kind in outer space. In that regard, we believe that voluntary transparency and confidence-building measures in this area are important, but are not a substitute for the adoption of a legally binding instrument.

The legitimate right of all States to have equal and non-discriminatory access to outer space and to benefit from cooperation in training and transfer of space applications and technology must be respected. Space technologies must contribute to the genuine aspirations of all peoples for peace and development and to the fulfilment of the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The present generations have a moral duty to preserve outer space as the common heritage of humankind and to promote its peaceful use for the benefit of future generations.

**Mr. Pereira Sosa** (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): Paraguay, as a member of the international community and as a new actor and nation in the space arena, reiterates its recognition of the rights and obligations arising from the exclusively peaceful use of outer space, including the moon and other celestial bodies, in accordance with international law, and its sustainable use for the benefit of all humankind, whatever its level of social, economic, scientific or technological development.

Paraguay is advancing in the development of both space engineering and Earth observation applications, with emphasis on capacity-building for the implementation of an indigenous and sustainable space programme. We fully subscribe to the principles of the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, especially with regard to the peaceful use of outer space, which since 2016 has been part of the national legal system, pursuant to the National Development

Plan 2030 of Paraguay and the Paraguayan space policy in force since 2019, the principles of which are capacity-building, national development and the strengthening of the country's international cooperation.

Paraguay also reaffirms its position on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, bearing in mind that outer space could become a theatre of armed conflict, in contravention of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. In that respect, we stress the need to achieve a binding and appropriate legal regime that guarantees the aspirations of all members of the international community to enjoy this common heritage. Also, while working towards an international instrument to regulate this matter, we consider of utmost importance the adoption of international transparency and confidence-building measures on outer space and the observance of existing United Nations guidelines and resolutions on the subject.

In that regard, we cannot fail to note our support for the work carried out this year by the Open-ended Working Group on Reducing Space Threats through Norms, Rules and Principles of Responsible Behaviours, established by resolution 76/231, of December 2021, with the understanding that it is a concrete contribution to identifying existing, current and future threats, as well as actions and activities that could be considered irresponsible. It also serves to work on the definition of measures for the prevention of conflicts in outer space. Lastly and very importantly, it also serves as an input to the process to achieve an international instrument for the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

As is well known, one of the pillars of the 1967 Outer Space Treaty is international cooperation in the space sector. In that regard, Paraguay has carried out activities that have resulted in significant progress in space development, thanks to international cooperation, having concluded more than 70 cooperation agreements at the national and international level and communicating its space activities to the United Nations. This includes the registration of the first Paraguayan satellite, GuaraníSat-1, and the activation of the International Charter on Space and Major Disasters on two occasions, which allowed access to satellite data free of charge in order to improve decision-making in disaster risk reduction and humanitarian aid.

It should also be noted that the Republic of Paraguay, in 2021, supported and participated in the drafting of the convention establishing the Latin American

and Caribbean Space Agency — as an international organization with its own legal identity — to act as a regional mechanism for cooperation between member States and the international community.

Understandably, regional and international cooperation, the exchange of information and experiences, and the definition of joint programmes and projects, among other initiatives, are tools of fundamental importance on the road towards building trust and synergies in order to understand and measure the benefits that space science and technology can bring to the sustainable development of our countries and our peoples.

**Mr. Vidal (Chile)** (*spoke in Spanish*): Chile endorses the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/77/PV.21).

Outer space, its threats and challenges know no limits, and it is necessary and imperative to join efforts towards a common path that allows us to move forward in a concrete manner. As we pointed out in the general debate (see A/C.1/77/PV.3), Chile advocates the existence of norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviour in relation to States' threats to space systems, including, as appropriate, the negotiation of legally binding instruments to prevent an arms race in outer space. We stress the need to preserve outer space for peaceful exploration and use and reaffirm the objective of preventing an arms race in outer space. Consideration should be given to current and future State threats to space systems and to actions, activities and omissions that could be considered irresponsible.

We are aware of the different perceptions of threats that relate to the nature and risk of environmental damage from outer space, such as those that may result from the destruction of satellites, including destructive testing of direct-ascent anti-satellite missiles. We also cannot allow hostile behaviour resulting in the disruption of space systems, with the elevated risk of escalation and in the absence of transparency and confidence-building measures, nor behaviour that might have consequences for the security of people and property. We reiterate that the main threat is the placement of weapons in outer space. That risk must be avoided, as outer space cannot become a launching pad for aggression and war or a place to threaten and secure superiority and supremacy.

We highlight the urgency of negotiating an international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The development and testing of anti-satellite systems and the creation of long-lived debris must be avoided. We express our concern about interference and malicious cyberactivity directed at navigation and communication satellites.

For all of the above, we commend the draft resolutions in this cluster, which are aimed at strengthening the existing international framework applicable to outer space in order to effectively address space security concerns and rapid technological advances. Of course, none of these should hinder the full access of developing nations to the benefits of the peaceful uses of outer space.

Finally, we support the further development and implementation of transparency and confidence-building measures.

**Mr. Makarevich** (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The Republic of Belarus considers the prevention of an arms race in outer space to be one of the top priorities in the field of international security, arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament. We reaffirm our support for the strict implementation, universalization and development of existing international legal instruments regulating the outer space activities of States.

In particular, Belarus underscores the importance of the initiative on no first placement of weapons in outer space and calls on States Members of the United Nations to support that initiative. Universal support for that initiative would guarantee that there would be no second placement of such weapons. Belarus notes the need for coordination among existing platforms, including the First and Second Committees, in order to avoid duplication and unburden the agendas of the relevant bodies of issues that do not directly concern them.

Another year has gone by in which we have seen the situation evolve towards a more active development of weapons technologies capable of attacking outer space objects or conducting other combat operations in outer space. The world is on the brink of an arms race in outer space. In that regard, the call to preventively fill the existing legal gaps is more pertinent than ever. It is particularly important to step up efforts to draft an international treaty prohibiting the militarization of outer space.

We reaffirm our support for the Russian-Chinese draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force

against outer space objects. Belarus is confident that the draft treaty could serve as the most appropriate basis for the start of negotiations on the relevant international legal instrument.

**Ms. Quintero Correa** (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Technological developments must be applied for the benefit of humankind, for the achievement of our shared purposes and goals as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, and in strict adherence with international law, including international humanitarian law. That extends to all areas and spheres of activity, whether physical or virtual, and therefore applies to both cyberspace and outer space. Outer space technology has contributed to transforming humankind's way of life thanks to its applications for information management, communications, navigation and research, as well as in a fast-growing number of other areas, including socioeconomic development and security. As outer space technology advances, so do States' concerns that such technological advances could undermine their national and global security and interests. States are therefore taking measures to counteract such vulnerabilities. In that connection, while it is necessary to ensure that all States have access to the benefits of space technology, an updated international regulatory framework is also required, as are confidence-building and cooperation measures.

Colombia reiterates its principled position on and commitment to the use and exploration of outer space for exclusively peaceful purposes. We highlight the need to adopt measures to guarantee the long-term sustainability of activities in outer space, and we also share the concerns about a potential arms race. Efforts need to be focused on avoiding such a scenario and preserving the outer space environment for future generations. We deem it necessary to continue fostering dialogue and the exchange of information on the work and deliberations under way in the various multilateral forums on the subject — including the Conference on Disarmament and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space — based on their respective spheres and mandates, with a view to increasing transparency and confidence-building measures and promoting international dialogue and the exchange of information among States.

It is also important to work towards the adoption of voluntary measures, such as guidelines on best practices, transparency and confidence-building measures, risk reduction measures, and norms, rules

and principles of responsible behaviours. It was in that conviction that we supported the creation of the Open-ended Working Group on Reducing Space Threats through Norms, Rules and Principles of Responsible Behaviours in 2021. We appreciate the leadership and efforts of the Group's Chilean chairpersonship under Ambassador Hellmut Lagos Koller. We value the work being carried out in that framework and will continue to participate constructively therein.

We also welcome the fact that after four years, the Disarmament Commission — the fundamental deliberative body within the disarmament machinery — was able to hold a substantive session and to consider, as part of its agenda, the preparation of recommendations to promote the practice and implementation of transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities with a view to preventing an arms race in outer space.

We wish to emphasize that the discussion on the norms of the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, as well as subsequent agreements on the peaceful uses of outer space, should be conducted at the multilateral level. Although the 1967 Outer Space Treaty prohibits the use of weapons of mass destruction in outer space, there is a legal vacuum that needs to be addressed, particularly in relation to technological advances and the eventual use of other types of weapons that do not fall into that category.

Finally, Colombia has participated constructively in multilateral forums and discussions addressing the security and sustainability of outer space activities. We trust that with political will, dialogue and joint efforts, we can preserve outer space as what it was originally — a peaceful environment essential for the flourishing of life on our planet, our common home.

**Mr. Brady** (Ireland): Ireland aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/77/PV.21).

Ireland is firmly committed to the preservation of a safe, secure and sustainable space environment and the peaceful use of outer space on an equitable basis for all. As such, Ireland was pleased to participate in and engage with all Member States on the two sessions held to date of the Open-ended Working Group on Reducing Space Threats through Norms, Rules and Principles of Responsible Behaviours, convened under resolution

76/231. Outer space is a global common good and therefore requires global rules. Outer space activities must be conducted in accordance with international law. The Charter of the United Nations, the principled United Nations treaties on outer space, in particular the Outer Space Treaty itself, and international humanitarian law comprise the cornerstone of international law applicable to outer space.

Space systems, in particular navigation and communications satellites, are essential for the proper functioning of critical civilian infrastructure. As the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has rightly pointed out, such systems enable the provision of the essential services that civilians depend on for their survival, such as food supplies, water, electricity, sanitation, waste management, telecommunications and health care. They are also essential for making progress in combating climate change and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Irresponsible behaviour affecting those systems could have significant humanitarian consequences and threaten development gains.

Threats to space security arise not only in space but can come from weapons and capabilities based on Earth, as well as threats to ground-based infrastructure and data links. In addition, non-State actors are also capable of threatening space-based assets and systems, most notably through cyberattacks. It is clear that space-based risks are growing and will continue to grow as orbital congestion worsens. Ireland remains very concerned about the development and proliferation of anti-satellite weapons, whether deployed from orbit or launched from Earth. There are particular risks associated with those weapons, including the generation of long-lived debris. Apart from the possible direct effects of such activities, the development and testing of such systems are dangerous and highly destabilizing and could lead to a decline in confidence between parties. In that regard, we condemn the Russian Federation's conduct of a kinetic direct-ascent anti-satellite weapon test against Kosmos 1408, one of its own satellites, which resulted in its destruction by a missile. No States should launch anti-satellite weapons. Ireland supports a comprehensive approach within the multilateral system that can produce legally binding rules on such weapon systems.

Ireland is concerned about cyberattacks, jamming and other electromagnetic interferences or direct-energy weapons that can affect the use of space assets or

impair the services of targeted satellites for their users and ground stations. Ireland considers such behaviour irresponsible, as it jeopardizes the security of people and goods. If we are to facilitate equitable access to outer space, we need stronger commitment to avoid potentially harmful interference with the peaceful exploration and use of outer space. In order for the implementation of norms, rules and principles to be effective, there must be trust and confidence between all space actors. Ireland is supportive of voluntary transparency and confidence-building measures in outer-space activities. We support increasing States' cooperation with one another regarding their space surveillance and tracking and their space situational-awareness services. Given the dual-use nature of space assets, we also consider certain actions or omissions relating to information and operations — such as conducting or knowingly supporting rendezvous operations that affect another State's space system without the prior consent of that State — to be irresponsible.

Finally, Ireland continues to emphasize the importance of the participation in our discussions of diverse stakeholders, including researchers and academics, civil society, the ICRC and the commercial sector. Our discussions can benefit from the valuable technical knowledge and experience that those stakeholders bring to the table. We must work collectively to make space more safe, secure and sustainable for all.

**The Chair:** I now give the floor to the observer of the Holy See.

**Monsignor Quirighetti (Holy See):** For the past few decades the Holy See has continued to follow the discussion on the peaceful use of outer space attentively. In fact, Pope Pius XII said that the common effort of all humankind towards a peaceful conquest of the universe must contribute to imprinting a greater sense of community and solidarity on people's consciousness, so that all may feel more deeply that they are part of our great family. Outer space is indeed part of our common home, and all States have a duty to safeguard it responsibly as stewards for present and future generations.

Outer space has so far been spared from the introduction and stationing of weapons. The Holy See believes it is essential that outer space remain permanently non-militarized and preserved for peaceful purposes for the benefit of all. That was partially

ensured by the Outer Space Treaty, which entered into force in 1967, just 10 years after the first satellite was launched into orbit, and which prohibits States from stationing nuclear weapons or any other weapon of mass destruction in outer space or on celestial bodies, or from putting them into orbit around the Earth. Nonetheless, the challenges are well known. Despite the fact that outer space has been formally on the agenda of the Conference of Disarmament since 1985, the international community has not yet succeeded in negotiating an agreement on prohibiting all types of weapons in outer space, and that prohibition is more urgent than ever. The Holy See notes with alarm that various States have expended resources on researching, developing and testing orbital and space-based weapons. Not only do those developments risk an arms race in outer space, but they also hamper the growing use of outer space for peaceful purposes, including dual-use technologies with a military dimension, such as communications, observation, the monitoring of activities on Earth and weather forecasting, as well as the verification of arms-control agreements.

With the number of orbiting objects in the thousands and deployment planned for many more, outer space is increasingly becoming a more fragile environment, with an ever-greater risk of collisions and the creation of long-lasting debris. In that regard, the Holy See notes with concern that several States have launched tests of anti-satellite weapons that have created debris clouds, putting space objects at risk. Such testing at any altitude is incompatible with caring for our common home. We therefore welcome the fact that the First Committee is considering the adoption of a draft resolution introducing a moratorium on such tests (A/C.1/77/L.62). The delegation of the Holy See believes that a multilateral agreement on refraining from launching direct-ascent tests should be buttressed by other transparency and confidence-building measures. In that regard, the Holy See welcomes both the United Nations Disarmament Commission's consideration of transparency and confidence-building measures on outer space and the convening in Geneva of the Open-ended Working Group on Reducing Space Threats through Norms, Rules and Principles of Responsible Behaviours.

The formulation of transparency and confidence-building measures and norms in outer space does not preclude but rather lays the groundwork for the development of a legally binding agreement prohibiting

the weaponization of outer space and weapons that threaten space objects, which would help to prevent an arms race in outer space and definitively ensure that activity in that shared environment remains rooted in cooperation for the benefit of all humankind.

**The Chair:** We just heard the last speaker on the cluster “Outer space (disarmament aspects)”. As decided earlier, we shall hear all statements in right of reply at 6 p.m.

The Committee will now begin its thematic discussion the cluster “Disarmament machinery”.

**Ms. Kristanti** (Indonesia): It is my honour to speak on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM).

NAM is concerned about the continuing erosion of multilateralism in the areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. NAM is determined to continue promoting multilateralism as the core principle of negotiations in those areas and the only sustainable approach to addressing those issues in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. Enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations disarmament machinery is therefore a shared objective. Based on its existing rules of procedure and methods of work, that machinery has produced landmark treaties and guidelines. NAM believes that the main difficulty lies in the fact that some States lack the political will to achieve progress, particularly on nuclear disarmament.

NAM reaffirms the importance of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) as the sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament and reiterates its call to the CD to agree by consensus on a balanced and comprehensive programme of work without further delay, while taking account of the security interests of all States. In that regard, NAM reaffirms the importance of the principles contained in the final document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (resolution S-10/2) that the adoption of disarmament measures should take place in an equitable and balanced manner that ensures the right of each State to security, and that no individual State or group of States should obtain advantages over others at any stage. NAM firmly rejects any politicization of the work of the CD and calls on all Member States to fully respect its rules of procedure and agreed methods of work.

NAM also underlines the importance and relevance of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC), with its universal membership, and as the sole specialized and deliberative body within the United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery for considering various problems in the area of disarmament and submitting concrete recommendations to the General Assembly. NAM further calls on Member States to display the political will and flexibility needed to enable the Commission to agree on recommendations for achieving the objectives of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. NAM welcomed the convening of the substantive session of the UNDC between 4 and 21 April 2022 and underscores its full support for its work, which should be intensified by reinvigorating our collective political will with a view to achieving meaningful outcomes that can advance global disarmament and non-proliferation. We look forward to its 2023 session, in hopes that the Commission can fulfil its mandate by agreeing on and adopting substantive recommendations.

For its part, NAM stands ready to engage constructively on advancing the issues on the United Nations disarmament agenda, as well as ways and means of strengthening the disarmament machinery. We underscore the importance of convening a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which would offer an opportunity to review the most critical aspects of the disarmament process from a perspective more in tune with the current international situation. It would also help to mobilize the international community and public opinion in favour of eliminating nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction and controlling and reducing conventional weapons. In that regard, NAM welcomes the General Assembly’s endorsement of the report of the Open-ended Working Group on a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (A/AC.268/2017/2) and its substantive recommendations. NAM also stresses the need to continue consultations on the next steps for convening a fourth special session.

NAM is deeply concerned about the continued lack of adequate representation of NAM countries in the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and requests that the Secretary-General and the High Representative take steps to ensure proper, balanced and equitable representation in that Office. We call for transparency and the strict application of the principle

of equitable geographical representation, especially in the composition of any groups of governmental experts established in the field of disarmament and international security. NAM also underlines the importance of transparency and openness in the work of such groups.

Under the cluster under consideration, NAM is presenting two draft resolutions, for which it will welcome everyone's support. The first is entitled "United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament" (A/C.1/77/L.9) and the second, "Convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament" (A/C.1/77/L.6).

Lastly, NAM notes with concern the increasing trend towards introducing competing proposals addressing the same topics under the same agenda items, and emphasizes that it could undermine the credibility and consistency of the outcomes and functioning of the United Nations disarmament machinery. It could also send confusing signals to Member States, the Secretariat and the international community with regard to the implementation of the relevant resolutions. NAM encourages all Member States to cooperate in a constructive manner to reach agreement on the relevant topics with a view to preserving the principles and objectives of multilateral diplomacy. We urge all countries to work together cooperatively and demonstrate their political commitment concretely, including here in the First Committee, in order to ensure that the disarmament machinery can fully achieve its potential for fostering global peace and security.

**Mr. Al-Taie** (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, the Group of Arab States aligns itself with the statement just delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The endeavours of the Arab Group to ensure the universalization of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) are an integral part of its principled commitment to nuclear disarmament in a world free of nuclear weapons. That is our highest priority in our efforts to achieve disarmament and international security, as adopted in the final document (resolution S-10/2) of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, held in 1978. The Arab Group would like to remind the Committee that the disarmament activities and mechanisms of the United Nations are based exclusively on those special sessions and cannot be modified except through the holding of a new special session of the General

Assembly devoted to that purpose. Our Group awaits the convening of a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which we hope can achieve concrete results and address the various developments on the international stage regarding the increasing threats posed to international security.

The Arab Group stresses that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, whose negotiations the Group actively participated in, constitutes a new source of the customary international law governing disarmament. The existence and acquisition of nuclear weapons, and their use or threat of use, run counter to the most basic rules of international humanitarian law. They also pose a direct threat to international peace and security. The Arab Group regrets the failure to agree on a final document at the ninth and tenth Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 2015 and 2022, which has cast a shadow over the disarmament and non-proliferation regime at the international level. It will be important to facilitate the success of the eleventh Review Conference by reaching a comprehensive and balanced final document that includes clear measures to enhance the credibility and sustainability of the NPT through the implementation of the agreed commitments, especially relating to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, the universalization of the Treaty and the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

The Arab Group reaffirms the importance of enabling the Conference on Disarmament to play its role as the only forum specifically established for negotiating disarmament treaties. The current deadlock in its work is not necessarily due to the dysfunction of the Conference's mechanisms but rather to a lack of political will on the part of some countries. The Arab Group therefore stresses the need to expedite the activation of the role of the Conference on Disarmament in implementing its negotiating mandate, especially with regard to nuclear disarmament, based on a comprehensive, balanced programme of work. We believe that the issues on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament are consistent with the internationally agreed objectives and priorities in that field. The only way to address them is by first reaching agreement on operational steps to eliminate nuclear weapons, not by focusing on imposing new non-proliferation commitments at the expense of full nuclear disarmament, which could lead to greater imbalances

between nuclear States' commitments in the area of nuclear disarmament and those of non-nuclear States in the area of non-proliferation.

The Arab Group welcomed the convening between 4 and 21 April 2022 of the meetings of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, and we hope that the Commission will adopt final recommendations by consensus next year, given the years of its regrettable failure to adopt final recommendations through its Working Group on nuclear disarmament. The Arab Group has made significant efforts to achieve consensus-based results and has played a constructive role, especially in the context of multilateral initiatives to achieve the objectives of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

In conclusion, the Arab Group would like to commend the important research role played by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research. We stress the importance of ensuring that the Institute's research addresses the priority issues of all Member States in a balanced manner and that its activities do not prioritize the interests of donor countries alone.

**Mr. Smith** (Bahamas): I have the honour to deliver this statement on the subject of disarmament machinery on behalf of the 14 member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

CARICOM aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The current security climate of the international community is such that the existential threat of further provocations could worsen geopolitical instability. The United Nations has a critical role to play in the eradication of nuclear weapons. CARICOM therefore reaffirms the importance of our regional initiative regarding the United Nations disarmament machinery agenda, including through the First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission. CARICOM would like to highlight the significance of maintaining momentum on the progress made within the Conference on Disarmament. We express our support for the 2022 decision to adopt a decision on the Conference's work this year, which established five subsidiary bodies to further propel its substantive work on all agenda items in a comprehensive and equitable manner. However, CARICOM is disappointed that no agreement has yet been reached on a programme of work, which has kept the Conference at an impasse

for more than two decades. We welcome the prompt resumption of negotiations within the Conference and encourage delegations to commit to realizing progress on vital disarmament discussions.

CARICOM applauds the fact that after a three-year hiatus, the Disarmament Commission held its substantive session in April of this year. We are pleased to note that the draft reports on recommendations for achieving nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament and promoting the practical implementation of the transparency and confidence-building measures in related activities with the goal of preventing an arms race in outer space were both adopted by consensus. It is indeed inspiring that Member States have demonstrated a concerted effort to foster multilateral disarmament despite the onerous international armaments landscape.

We are grateful to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mrs. Nakamitsu, and her Office, for coordinating valuable regional and global disarmament initiatives. CARICOM also expresses its appreciation to the United Nations Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament, which aims to develop knowledge and greater expertise, not only in disarmament but also regarding States' concerns about international security. Our region has continued to benefit from the Programme.

CARICOM recognizes that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is paramount, particularly its Goal 16, which calls for peace, justice and strong institutions. In that regard, we believe that disarmament bridges the chasm between peace and sustainable development. CARICOM relies on regional and international collaboration to get that done. We commend the stellar contributions to our region of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC), in undertaking numerous technical, legal and training activities to support efforts in disarmament, arms control, non-proliferation instruments and adherence to international standards. The continued support extended to CARICOM States by UNLIREC is both encouraging and beneficial, and the centre's holistic focus on gender and the 2030 Agenda is even more noteworthy.

In the past year, CARICOM States such as the Bahamas, Barbados and Grenada benefited from training to restore serial numbers on firearms. Similarly, we also express our appreciation to UNLIREC for delivering its

double-casting course and kit to Trinidad and Tobago and for training more than 20 forensic experts and law-enforcement officers from Jamaica on how to conduct gender-sensitive firearms investigations. Lastly, following a series of preliminary session and round-table discussions organized by UNLIREC, this year Haiti was able to conclude its preparation of its national action plan and a baseline assessment for the road map for implementing the Caribbean priority actions on the illicit proliferation of firearms and ammunition across the Caribbean in a sustainable manner by 2030.

CARICOM likewise applauds the leadership of the International Atomic Energy Agency in re-establishing safeguards and radiation monitoring data, which have enabled Member States to provide crucial protective equipment to Ukraine. We also commend the work of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research for its independent research on disarmament affairs, which keeps States up to date on disarmament-related information. CARICOM sees nuclear-weapon-free zones as vitally important confidence-building instruments that strengthen nuclear non-proliferation and promote nuclear disarmament. With that in mind, we are proud States parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, and we encourage States to maintain their support to the triennial resolution on the Treaty. CARICOM also reaffirms its support for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, and it is our honour to inform the Committee that Barbados and Haiti have both signed the Treaty this year, bringing the total number of CARICOM signatories to 11, with 10 of our countries being States parties.

CARICOM recognizes the valuable contributions of civil society, particularly non-governmental organizations, in fostering peace and security. We would also like to underscore that engagement is needed with all stakeholders in the arms industry, especially as we try to respond to the advent of new and emerging weapons technologies. A great deal of work has been done, and we support the initiatives. We call on all Member States to join in the collective action needed to build a safer and more peaceful world.

**The Chair:** The Committee has just heard the last speaker in the cluster “Disarmament machinery”. As we agreed, I am now going to release the interpreters and proceed to give the floor to those delegations that have asked to exercise the right of reply.

**Mr. Turner** (United States of America): I take the floor again to respond to comments made by the representatives of the Russian Federation and the People’s Republic of China.

As I said earlier, despite what some here may argue, the United States seeks to ensure that outer space remains free from conflict and has long advocated for a comprehensive approach to addressing issues that could lead to conflict in outer space, including all issues related to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. That is why, as a first step, the United States has proposed draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.62, with a view to addressing one of the most pressing issues related to space security, which is destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile testing. Yesterday (see A/C.1/77/PV.21), our Russian colleague made three very important comments about Russia’s November 2021 anti-satellite missile test. One was correct, one was correct but misleading, and one was incorrect.

First, our colleague said that the Russian military conducted the test in compliance with all the relevant laws. That is absolutely correct. There are no prohibitions against destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile testing. That is why the United States is proposing a draft resolution that calls on countries to commit to refraining from conducting destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missile tests. We hope that all countries will recognize that generating such debris is in no one’s interests, and it is time to identify this aim in the international community as an emerging norm.

Secondly, Russia noted that our draft resolution does not cover the development and production of such systems. That is correct. We are focusing on testing because we view it as an initial step that is verifiable. Irresponsible testing of destructive direct-ascent anti-satellite missiles threatens the outer-space environment. But Russia’s statement is also incredibly misleading. Last year’s test showed clearly that Russia is already developing an anti-satellite missile. If Russia is so concerned about the development and production aspects of the issue, I hope it will provide all of us with concrete assurances that it is not developing or producing ground-based anti-satellite missiles.

Finally, Russia said that the debris from the test was not a threat to any satellites. That is entirely incorrect. Just last Monday, 24 October — the day before we began this debate — the International Space Station was once again forced to manoeuvre out of the

way of debris from Russia's November test. Moving the Space Station is not done lightly and happens only when there is a significant risk to the lives of the astronauts on the Space Station. It is the second time this year that we have had to move it because of debris from Russia's anti-satellite test.

With respect to the statement by our Chinese colleague, I would note only that China already has an operational anti-satellite system, which it tested destructively in 2007 and whose debris remains in space to this very day.

All of that is why we reiterate that our draft resolution responds to that very threat and will ensure that we can prevent having to create greater risks in years to come. We encourage everyone to join us in supporting the draft resolution during the voting next week.

**Mr. Vorontsov** (Russian Federation): In connection with a number of insinuations regarding Russia's space activities made by the representatives of the United States and Ireland, we reiterate that we reject them as unfounded. We already gave detailed explanations on the matter yesterday (see A/C.1/77/PV.21). But I will repeat one more time that the Russian Federation's activities in outer space are conducted in strict conformity with international law, including the 1967 Outer Space Treaty. They are not directed against anyone and create no danger to anyone. At the same time, it is important to point out that since the 1950s the United States has consistently pursued a policy of using outer space for combat operations and deploying strike weapon systems in it in order to gain military superiority with a view to achieving total dominance in space.

In 2020 the United States Department of Defence adopted its Defence Space Strategy, which defines space objectives for the next 10 years, as well as ways to achieve them. And the United States considers outer space to be an arena for warfare activities, not only for defensive purposes and deterrence but also for defeating enemies through the hostile use of outer space. Similar tasks were confirmed in the first doctrinal document of the United States Space Force, *Space Power*, published that same year. In order to impose the will of the United States Space Force, the doctrine prescribes the use of force, including by physically destroying the military potential or capability of enemies or by threatening to use force in space, from space or against space. Similar documents have been developed by Australia, the United Kingdom, France and NATO in general.

In order to be able to follow those guidelines, Washington and its allies are implementing large-scale programmes to develop weapon systems designed to use force or the threat of force in space, from space or against space, including in a proactive manner. First and foremost, this means the creation of a space-based missile-defence group, including interceptors, as well as means of inflicting unauthorized impacts on objects in the orbital space infrastructure. As part of that activity, Washington is testing the latest strike weapons of various types in orbit without any prior warning, including with the destruction of its spacecraft. On 20 February 2008, an SM-3 anti-missile was used to destroy the American satellite USA-193, and we note that in the 1980s the Pentagon tested anti-satellite weapons on the platform of an F-15A aircraft. It is also known that the United States' reusable unmanned space shuttle X-37B, which is capable of staying in orbit for a long time, performing manoeuvres and carrying a payload, has the potential to use weapons in space. Our requests to the United States for clarification of the specific goals and tasks that are being worked out on the X-37B platform as part of its current mission have gone unanswered.

In connection with the much-promoted concept of responsible behaviour in space, we reiterate our concern about the fact that as long as there is no universal legal regime of international treaties on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, it would be counterproductive to adopt certain measures that de facto introduce new rules on the use of space. Questions about who, and based on what criteria, would determine the degree of States' responsibility are still unanswered. We see in that approach the risk of politicization and subjective judgments of a manipulative nature that are in the interests of a certain group of States. That is fraught with serious negative consequences for further efforts to keep outer space free of weapons. We believe that the launch of negotiations on an international legally binding agreement prohibiting the placement of any types of weapons in outer space, as well as the use or threat of use of force against space objects or with their assistance, is the surest way to reduce tensions and allay States' concerns in the context of ensuring the safety of space activities.

**Mr. Li Song** (China): I am not as much of an expert as Mr. Vorontsov of the Russian delegation, so I will just make some comments on the statement by the representative of the United States. I made the point in my remarks this afternoon that the United

States' draft resolution on anti-satellite missile testing (A/C.1/77/L.62) is a very narrow initiative that targets only one specific aspect of space security. My point is that it is indeed very necessary, especially for the United States, to join the international community in making general commitments regarding refraining from placing weapons in space and from using force against space objects. We believe — and not only because China and Russia have proposed a draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space — that the two key obligations suggested in that draft treaty target behaviour, and that it can therefore offer a very general and simple solution for ensuring space security. The problem is that the United States has always rejected that kind of general commitment regarding space security. That is our point.

I would also add that I believe that no other country is seeking dominance or intending to compete with the United States on seeking dominance in space. As far as I know, United States is the only country — the only super-Power — that has a strategy, programme and military activities aimed at achieving space dominance, along with a series of United States space policy papers, including its latest Department of Defence directive, published in August, *Space Policy*. The United States also has a strategy of space dominance. Even if it has not necessarily used that specific term, that is what its policy is aimed at, in essence. I do not believe that any other country is seeking that competition in space, and of course unlike the United States, China is not in a position to seek so-called dominance in space. But

the point is that where space security for the whole international security community is concerned, I think the international community should not accept a security situation where the United States has dominance in space. That is our point.

We believe that whether we are talking about responsible behaviour or treaty-based arms-control efforts in space, what we need is a general commitment to refraining from placing weapons in space and from using force against space objects, as well as a second obligation that can naturally cover and address the issue of anti-satellite missile testing. We do hope that the United States can join us in those law-based, as opposed to rule-based, space security arrangements. And we look forward to working together with Member States, including the United States, in the Conference on Disarmament for that purpose.

**The Chair:** We have exhausted the time available for this meeting. The Committee will reconvene tomorrow morning in this conference room for the joint panel discussion of the First Committee and the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) on possible challenges to space security and sustainability. I would like to remind delegations of my announcement earlier today that the General Assembly will consider agenda item 89, entitled "Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency", directly in its plenary meeting at 10 a.m. on 9 November.

*The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.*