



General Assembly

Seventieth session

First Committee

13th meeting

Thursday, 22 October 2015, 3 p.m.
New York

Official Records

Chairs: Mr. Bowler/ Mr. Van Oosterom (Malawi/Netherlands)

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

Joint ad hoc meeting of the First and Fourth Committees on possible challenges to space security and sustainability

International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space

Co-Chair Van Oosterom: I warmly welcome all representatives to this joint ad hoc meeting of the First and Fourth Committees, convened pursuant to General Assembly resolution 69/38 of 2 December 2014.

It is a pleasure and a privilege to co-chair this meeting with the Chair of the Fourth Committee, His Excellency Ambassador Brian Bowler, who is also a good friend of mine. We have agreed to take turns in guiding the proceedings of this meeting. Accordingly, I will chair the first half of our proceedings, while co-Chair Bowler will chair the second half. Members' attention is kindly drawn to the programme of the joint ad hoc meeting circulated in advance and background documents available in PaperSmart.

I now give the floor to co-Chair Bowler to make his opening remarks.

Co-Chair Bowler: I thank all representatives for participating in today's exciting joint ad hoc meeting. I am honoured to co-chair today's meeting with Ambassador Van Oosterom of the Netherlands, who is also a very good friend of mine. This joint ad hoc meeting is an innovative effort to bring our respective Committees to deal with the possible challenges to space security and sustainability. It is clear that security and

safety concerns for the operations of space activities in their long-term sustainability perspectives need to be addressed actively, especially in the context of the global development agenda objectives. Any action to meet space security concerns in their broader perspectives must relate to the fundamental development needs of all nations and people.

The newly adopted 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) and its main pillars of people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership all find ample connections to the possible challenges to space security and sustainability. We need to ask ourselves the basic questions on what we need to do in a collective global manner to secure the future use of space assets in order to safeguard that operational space activities can continue to be safe and secure and deliver uninterrupted for the sustainable development of our societies, people and the planet Earth and its near-Earth environment as a whole.

The broader concept of space security encompasses measures of building trust, confidence and sustainability, as well as mechanisms for the safety of space operations and the handling of hazardous situations, which are the result of either natural causes, such as asteroids and space weather phenomena, or man made, for example, by orbit collisions, emergency situations, the loss of control of spacecraft and the re-entry risks of space debris re-entering into the atmosphere.

As we address those areas of concern, we should equally keep in mind the outstanding role of space applications in areas related to poverty eradication, food security, health education, energy, climate change,

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).

15-32932 (E)



Accessible document

Please recycle



marine resources, biodiversity, disaster management and so on. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals give us a unique opportunity for reflection on how the future role of the space exploration science and technology should be further manifested as indispensable tools in our efforts to address global challenges.

Development sustainability and space security go hand in hand in forming global space governance for the benefit of all humankind. With that in mind, I look forward to a meaningful discussion carried out by representatives from both Committees in addition to experts working in the field who will enlighten us all. In my capacity as Chair of the Fourth Committee, which is responsible for the item on international cooperation on the peaceful use of outer space, I look forward to an engaging dialogue at this unique joint and ad hoc meeting for the First and Fourth Committees.

Co-Chair Van Oosterom: I thank co-Chair Bowler for his statement. Please allow me to now make some opening remarks as well.

As early as the 1950s, efforts started within the framework of the United Nations to maintain outer space for peaceful purposes. While outer space has provided us with ample opportunities for United Nations activities in development, it also remains a fragile environment. To address that, the relevance of transparency and confidence-building measures for outer space activities was initially explored at the global level in 1993. Twenty years later, the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities (see A/68/189) recognized that the advancement of transparency and confidence-building measures requires coordination and support across the full range of United Nations bodies that deal with the security and sustainability of outer space.

Following the Group of Governmental Experts recommendations, the General Assembly decided during its sixty-eighth session to refer the report to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament for consideration. At its following session, the Assembly decided to convene today's joint ad hoc meeting to address possible challenges to space security and sustainability. The need for effective coordination is demonstrated by the various ongoing initiatives that address many of the issues contained in the Group of Governmental Experts

report. Such initiatives include the continuing efforts within COPUOS to develop guidelines on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities. They also include other efforts of the type endorsed by the Group of Governmental Experts for the pursuit of political commitments to encourage responsible action in and the peaceful use of outer space.

Today's meeting provides the General Assembly with the means to contribute to proper and effective coordination across international efforts aimed at ensuring space security and sustainability. I am therefore pleased that our esteemed panellists will share their expertise in that regard and I hope that their views will give an impulse to our collective debate.

We will turn first to the keynote introductory statements, as announced in the programme and as I just mentioned, and then we will hear statements by member States. Let me introduce the speakers. They are, first of all, the Chair of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities, His Excellency Ambassador Victor Vasiliev; secondly, the Chair of the Working Group on the Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Mr. Peter Martinez, who will join us from Cape Town via video-teleconference — I am glad to continue to see him there; thirdly, the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs, Ms. Simonetta Di Pippo; and the Acting High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Kim Won-Soo.

In accordance with the programme for this meeting, introductory speakers are kindly requested to respect the time limit for their statements, which for the first two speakers is seven minutes and for the last two speakers is five minutes.

I now begin by giving the floor to Mr. Vasiliev.

Mr. Vasiliev (Russian Federation) Chair, Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities: I thank the Chair of the First Committee and the Chair of the Fourth Committee. I would also like to welcome the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs and the Director of the Office for Outer Space Affairs.

When the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures got together for its first meeting in July 2012, we had

almost the same feelings as members do today, because the members of the Group of Experts came with different expertise — diplomatic, military, scientific and legal — and represented countries with contrasting space interests and experience. Some of us, like myself, were only familiar with such abbreviations as CD, UNDC and the First Committee, and space security was mainly associated with arms control issues. Others, like Peter Martinez, who is in front of me, were mostly familiar with such other abbreviations as COPUOS, its subcommittees and the Fourth Committee, and they considered those bodies to be the centre of the universe.

It took us only a couple of meetings to arrive at the very first conclusion, namely, that the ultimate goal of space security and sustainability could be achieved only through synergy and interaction among different actors and bodies. Later, that conclusion was transformed into the recommendation by the Group to consider the holding of a joint meeting of the First and the Fourth Committees. I am very pleased that it was unanimously supported and that we are in this Hall today.

The Group of Governmental Experts did not have the goal of inventing anything or coming up with a new initiative. Our primary task and aim were to take stock of the existing instruments and practices, identify lacunas and propose ways of enhancing space security and sustainability. Indeed, a lot is already in place. The Group recognized five major international instruments and treaties on outer space that contain a number of transparency and confidence-building measures: the Outer Space Treaty of 1967, the Rescue and Return Agreement of 1968, the 1972 Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects, the Registration Convention of 1976 and the Moon Treaty of 1984. There are several bilateral arrangements and agreements among space-faring nations on exchanges of information, and organizations such as the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) maintain their own procedures for regulating their spectrum of space assets.

The Group also noted the work under way on several tracks, including, of course, that of the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities of the Vienna-based United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), the European Union-led work promoting an international code of conduct, and the debates and proposals in the General Assembly First and Fourth

Committees. We also have initiatives led by some States or groups of States undertaking, for example, not to be the first to deploy weapons in space. The Conference on Disarmament (CD) also has an agenda item on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, and the draft of a treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat of use or use of force against outer space objects was introduced in that forum.

As an outcome of three sessions of discussions and extensive intersessional work, the Group of Governmental Experts came up with a report (see A/68/189) that contained both an overview of the general characteristics and basic principles of outer-space transparency and confidence-building measures as well as a series of measures for enhancing them. To recall a few basic aspects in that regard, the Group identified categories and criteria for such measures and agreed that the proposed measures should be voluntary and non-legally binding, without prejudice to the implementation of measures that are already part of existing obligations for States parties to such arrangements. They cannot serve as a substitute for legally binding arrangements, and States should still consider acceding to all relevant treaties.

The report contained specific recommendations for enhancing the transparency of outer-space activities, including, for example, information exchanges on space policies and States' outer space policy principles and goals, and on major outer space military expenditures and other national security space activities; more technical measures, such as providing information exchanges and notifications on issues such as the orbital parameters of outer space objects and potential orbital conjunctions, natural hazards forecast in outer space and spacecraft launches; and risk-reduction notifications, including on scheduled manoeuvres, uncontrolled high-risk re-entry events and other emergency situations.

The Group also acknowledged that while we are ambitious we must also be realistic. With that in mind, we tried to put forward proposals that were practical and implementable, and that did not undermine States' sovereign rights or security. From that perspective, I should reiterate and stress once again that the measures proposed in the report and by the Group are of a voluntary nature, and some are part of existing instruments.

Of course, the main question, after all the deliberations and studies of all the Groups of

Governmental Experts, is about what comes next. When our Group was working on its recommendations, we had the same doubts about whether the report would serve a purpose or would be just another file in the archive. The latest developments in the promotion of space security and sustainability and, of course, the fact of today's meeting prove that we were on the right track. I believe our meeting will add to the synergy between the various United Nations bodies dealing with space security and result in a greater understanding of what is going in the various bodies in Geneva, Vienna and New York and of how they can complement one another's work.

Another important task is that of universalizing all the existing arrangements, five of which I have cited, and ensuring that they are strictly implemented. In that regard, to the aforementioned five major international instruments I should add the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, The Hague Code of Conduct, and the Conventions of the International Telecommunication Union and the World Meteorological Organization. We believe that the General Assembly should call on States that have not yet acceded to the international treaties governing the use of outer space to consider doing so.

In preparing its report, the Group of Governmental Experts and its Chair cooperated with other international organizations and bodies, including COPUOS, ITU and WMO. We received responses and proposals from more than 50 States pursuant to the relevant First Committee resolutions on transparency and confidence-building measures, as well as those sent directly to the Group. We cooperated closely with non-governmental organizations. I gave briefings on the Group's deliberations to the Space Conference of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, the First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament and COPUOS, and we considered everyone's input.

Ultimately, of course, the report was the product of its 15 experts, representing Brazil, Chile, China, France, Italy, Kazakhstan, Nigeria, the Republic of Korea, Romania, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, the United States and Russia. Although it was later given approval and adopted by consensus in General Assembly resolution 68/50 — the first consensus reached on the issue in decades — I share the view that further work on transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space should continue within universal or established United Nations bodies. That also applies, among other things, to the draft

international code of conduct, which has the same roots as the transparency and confidence-building measures. In order for the code of conduct to make progress, it is important that we find an appropriate procedure and platform to advance it, as was demonstrated this summer at the most recent meeting in New York.

The introduction in 2014 at the Conference on Disarmament of a revised or updated version of a draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space indicates that we are also moving towards establishing a legally binding treaty banning weapons in space. The CD may also consider transparency- and confidence-building measures in outer space under its agenda item on the prevention of an arms race in outer space and as a complement to the aforementioned draft treaty. Let us make it possible for that body to agree on its programme of work and start substantive work. In anticipation of a legally binding treaty banning the placement of weapons in space and the use of force against outer space objects, the undertaking made by some countries and regional organizations not to be the first to place weapons in space is very important, and I strongly encourage broader support to that initiative.

Of course, I do not want to encroach on the territory of Mr. Peter Martinez, who will be making his presentation via video link, and will simply limit myself here to welcoming the important work that is under way at COPUOS and its sub-committee on space security.

In conclusion, I would like to make a comparison. I think we can compare the task of achieving space security and sustainability to a puzzle. The puzzle has many fragments, big and small, but if is missing even a single element the picture is incomplete or bleak. Transparency and confidence-building measures are not necessarily just one fragment of the puzzle; rather, confidence forms a background for the entire picture. I hope today's meeting can bring us closer to being able to fully assemble the puzzle that we call space security and sustainability. The text of my statement has been circulated.

Co-Chair Van Oosterom: I thank Mr. Vasiliev for his statement.

The Committee will now hear from Mr. Martinez.

Mr. Martinez (South Africa) Chair, Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities: I would like to thank the Chairs of the First and Fourth Committees for the invitation to address

today's joint ad hoc meeting. While I regret not being able to be with the Committees in New York in person this afternoon, it is my sincere pleasure to be addressing the meeting via video link from Cape Town.

I am particularly pleased to be sharing the podium today with Ambassador Victor Vasiliev, Chair of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities, and with whom I had the pleasure to work closely in 2012 and 2013. Under his excellent chairmanship, the Group of Governmental Experts achieved a consensus report (see A/68/189) that recommended a number of proposed transparency and confidence-building measures aimed at enhancing the safety, security and sustainability of space activities, including some for promoting greater coordination and cooperation among entities in the United Nations system that deal with outer-space affairs. Indeed, today's joint meeting of the First and Fourth Committees is a realization of one of the recommendations of the Group's report.

As we are all aware, space science and applications are now an integral part of the daily lives of people around the world. Their contributions are seen in such activities as meteorological forecasting, climate modelling and satellite navigation systems. In fact, space applications support the communications technology that enables me to speak to the Committees right now. However, as the amount and diversity of space activities increase, so do the challenges to space security and sustainability. I would like to take this opportunity to share with the Committees an overview of the work being done within the framework of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) to address in particular the challenges to the safety and sustainability of outer-space activities. They are inherently multilateral, and I truly believe that in multilateral space diplomacy the international community has the opportunity to work together to find ways not only to expand access to the benefits of space, but also to ensure that the space environment is preserved and protected for use by future generations.

Building on previous efforts to address this topic, in 2010 the COPUOS Scientific and Technical Subcommittee established a new Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities. The Working Group's objectives and desired outputs include identifying areas of concern regarding the

subject, and proposing measures in the form of a set of voluntary, non-legally binding guidelines that could enhance the safe and sustainable use of outer space for peaceful purposes and for the benefit of all countries. To expedite its work, the Working Group established four expert groups to focus on four different thematic areas. Expert Group A addressed sustainable space utilization supporting sustainable development on Earth, mainly dealing with the link between sustainability in outer space and sustainable development on Earth; Expert Group B addressed space debris, space operations and tools for supporting collaborative space situational awareness; Expert Group C addressed space weather; and Expert Group D addressed regulatory regimes. Each Expert Group compiled information and provided analysis on current practices, procedures and cross-cutting issues associated with its topic. They also identified gaps in existing approaches, proposed candidate guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer-space activities and recommended topics for future consideration by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

The Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities recognizes that space activities are being conducted by an increasing number of non-State actors, and that those actors have accumulated valuable experience in the safe conduct of such activities. In that regard, in 2013 a workshop was organized at which representatives of national non-governmental organizations and private-sector entities were given an opportunity to share their experiences with members of the Working Group. By mid-2013, the Working Group had a compilation of candidate guidelines proposed by the four Expert Groups. In 2014, the Working Group consolidated the candidate guidelines proposed by the Expert Groups in order to reduce duplication and overlaps. Several Member States proposed additional draft guidelines for consideration by the Working Group, which also agreed to extend its work plan to 2016.

As this is a joint ad hoc meeting of the First and Fourth Committees, it would be instructive to consider the correspondences between the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities, which was carried out under the auspices of the First Committee, and the work of the COPUOS Working Group, which is done under the auspices of the Fourth Committee. The Working Group was tasked in

its terms of reference to consider appropriate linkages with the work of the Group of Governmental Experts. To that end, in February 2013 the Chair of the Group of Governmental Experts was invited to share his Group's deliberations and progress with the COPUOS Working Group.

Although the draft guidelines are still under discussion, it is already possible to identify some interlinkages between those emerging guidelines and the recommendations of the report of the Group of Governmental Experts. Paragraph 39 of the report refers to exchanges of information on the orbital parameters of outer space objects and potential orbital conjunctions. Reference is also made to the registration of space objects. Those are matters that are addressed in a number of the draft guidelines currently being considered by the Working Group.

In paragraph 40, the report refers to exchanges of information on forecast natural hazards in outer space, and, indeed, the Working Group's draft guidelines on sharing operational space weather data, forecasts and best practices address that issue. Paragraph 42 of the report refers to notifications relating to scheduled manoeuvres that may result in risk to the flight safety of space objects. The Working Group's guidelines for national regulatory frameworks address such matters. Section V of the report refers to international cooperation and, among other things, touches on capacity-building. A number of the Working Group's draft guidelines under consideration also address international cooperation in capacity-building. With such examples, I hope to illustrate how the work we in COPUOS are doing is picking up on the recommendations of the report of the Group of Governmental Experts and seeking to provide some guidance for States to implement them. During 2015, the Working Group has worked on the draft guidelines, streamlining them to eliminate overlaps and identify gaps that need to be addressed. The Working Group has also discussed the structure and format of the guidelines, as well as considering additional guidelines and new substantive proposals made by Member States.

Earlier this month, the Working Group held a week-long intersessional meeting in Vienna, where it continued productive discussions on the policy and regulatory framework for space activities; the safety of space operations; international cooperation, capacity-building and awareness and scientific and technical research and development, as well as the implementation and updating of the proposed guidelines. Its next session

will take place in Vienna in February 2016, at the 53rd session of the COPUOS Scientific and Technical Subcommittee. The Working Group will review its progress and assess the work that still remains to be done to complete the guidelines.

While the Working Group has yet to reach consensus on all 28 draft guidelines currently under its consideration, and differing opinions were expressed during the intersessional meeting, the very appetite for those discussions, the continued active interest in the Working Group, and the engaged participation of Member States from all geographical regions are indicative of a global acknowledgement of the need for a voluntary multilateral instrument for guiding the safe and sustainable conduct of outer-space activities that represents a balance of the interests of nations at different levels of development of their space activities.

I wish everyone a fruitful discussion and look forward to hearing the outcomes of today's debate in due course.

Co-Chair Van Oosterom: I thank Mr. Martinez for his statement.

I now give the floor to Ms. Di Pippo.

Ms. Di Pippo (United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs): It is my pleasure to address today's joint ad hoc meeting of the First and Fourth Committees on the topic of possible challenges to space security and sustainability.

Since I am following Mr. Martinez's statement at this joint meeting, I would like to take the opportunity to mention that the Office for Outer Space Affairs, in its secretariat function, takes great pleasure in working closely with the Chair of the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities.

In line with resolution 68/50 on transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) has agreed on the importance of considering the broader perspective of space security and associated matters that would be instrumental in ensuring the safe and responsible conduct of space activities. With the evolution of space awareness in society, COPUOS is positioning itself at the forefront of the overarching global sustainable development process, including by addressing also challenges to space security and sustainability.

Under the newly established process of the fiftieth anniversary of the first United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in 2018, the Committee will review efforts for space cooperation and coordination towards stronger space governance and global partnership.

The Office for Outer Space Affairs serves as the substantive secretariat to COPUOS and its subsidiary bodies. The Office managed the United Nations Programme on Space Applications; the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response, better known as UN-SPIDER; and serves as the executive secretariat to the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems. The Office leads and coordinates the inter-agency coordination mechanism on space-related activities in the United Nations system, better known as UN-Space, and carries out capacity-building activities in space law and space policy. That broad range of areas under the Office's mandate and competence should be noted within the context of our meeting today.

The report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities (see A/68/189) addresses several concrete measures to achieve the security, safety and stability of outer space activities. The safety of space operations is at the core of its recommendations on information exchange and notifications procedures, including on risk reduction notifications. In that context, the role of the Office for Outer Space Affairs in providing one of the most important existing tools for enhancing transparency and confidence in space activity should also be noted.

For decades, the Office has been mandated with maintaining the central United Nations Register of Objects Launched into Outer Space under the obligation of the Registration Convention of 1975. The Register functions as the core mechanism for treaty-based transparency and confidence-building. In that regard, it is important to recognize the impact of resolution 62/101, adopted in 2007, on the practice of registration, where we note that several States increasingly use the recommendation of that resolution to provide additional and voluntary registration data for the purpose of the United Nations Register, including on the change of status of space objects in orbit, information on re-entry events in the de-orbiting of space objects, and similar information they deem important for the purpose of the

registration regime and, as appropriate, to enhance the safety of space operations.

I mentioned specifically the registration regime because, together with the established procedures of discharging the responsibilities of the Secretary-General under United Nations treaties and principles on outer space, the Office for Outer Space Affairs is vested with a mandate to assist in global efforts to enhance international governance in the long-term sustainability of outer space activities.

At its fifty-eighth session in June 2015, COPUOS requested the Office for Outer Space Affairs to issue a special report of UN-Space for consideration at its fifty-ninth session next year on the implementation of the Group of Governmental Expert's report as it pertains to the United Nations system, and to lead and coordinate the preparation of that report with relevant United Nations entities. The report is requested to note how United Nations entities support the implementation of transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities in accordance with their existing mandates and to identify how United Nations entities could assist Member States in implementing the recommendations of the Group. The report will also address the means to coordinate the work of United Nations entities in line with the overall recommendations of the report, as endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 68/50.

The Office for Outer Space Affairs stands ready to cooperate with relevant United Nations entities, in particular the Office for Disarmament Affairs, in furthering cooperation and coordination within the United Nations system to support Member States. Enhancing capacity-building and increasing outreach and awareness are fundamental pillars in addressing transparency and confidence-building measures. Our respective Offices are well suited to make joint efforts, in particular for the benefit of developing countries. The Office for Outer Space Affairs is therefore ready to fully support and implement the decisions taken by Member States. I look forward to further guidance.

Co-Chair Van Oosterom: I thank Ms. Di Pippo for her statement.

I now give the floor to Mr. Kim Won-Soo.

Mr. Kim Won-Soo: I thank Ambassador Karel van Oosterom, Chair of the First Committee. I also thank all the panellists who spoke before me for their

comprehensive presentations. I think I can therefore be very brief.

I welcome the decision of Member States to convene this joint meeting. I understand that this format of a joint meeting is unprecedented and very exceptional in United Nations history. I believe that it reflects a growing recognition among Member States of the need to address the cross-cutting aspects of security challenges in outer space and to do so in a comprehensive manner. The Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities, which finished its work in 2013, was the first such Group to be convened on that issue in 20 years. Given the importance of the issue, that is far too lengthy a gap.

I congratulate Ambassador Vasiliev and the other members of the Group on their ability to produce a consensus report. As Ambassador Vasiliev has said, the Group was also able to achieve a first — consensus among members on recommendations for voluntary transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space. The Group also recognized the importance of removing silos and the need for cooperation across United Nations entities. The relevant United Nations entities, including my Office, have already followed that instruction by starting to work together across our respective portfolios.

Member States have also continued their discussions in various forums to find a consensual way forward. Most recently, last July the meeting convened by the European Union ended with the common understanding that future meetings should be conducted within the framework of the United Nations. But it still seems that Member States have yet to find common ground about what should be the right modalities for such future meetings. We at the Secretariat fully respect Member States' prerogatives and will be guided by Member States' decisions.

In the meantime, we will not be idle in facilitating the implementation of transparency and confidence-building measures. In accordance with resolution 68/50, our Office transmitted the Group's report to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament for their consideration. We also circulated the report to all other relevant United Nations entities.

My Office and the Office for Outer Space Affairs have held regular meetings, including between Ms. Di Pippo and myself, in order to ensure effective coordination on the implementation of transparency-building measures within our respective mandates. We have mapped out our respective roles. In short, we are fully prepared to put in place the cooperative mechanism envisaged in the Group's report (see A/68/189) that is needed to facilitate the implementation of transparency and confidence-building measures. We will accelerate our joint work as soon as States agree on how they would like us to proceed.

I would also like to take this opportunity to remind all Member States to provide information on military expenditures related to outer space activities so that we can include it in the United Nations report on military expenditures. Eight States with known military assets operating in outer space have made their submissions to the military expenditure report. However, unfortunately, none has provided any information on their related space expenditures.

In conclusion, I would like to remind all States why we need to have transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities. At a time of growing uncertainty in the international security environment, these measures are needed more than ever to reduce the risk of any unintended conflict by mitigating misunderstandings. I appeal to all States to build on the considerable work that has been done so far, and find common ground for a way forward. And I hope today's unprecedented joint meeting can be a starting point for this effort rather than a one-time event.

Co-Chair Van Oosterom: On behalf of all delegations, I would like to thank our keynote speakers for their introductory statements.

We will now hear statements by Member States inscribed on the list of speakers for this meeting. As announced in the programme for this meeting, all delegations taking the floor are kindly requested to limit their statements to three minutes. In that regard, delegations are encouraged to deliver summarized versions of their statements, if needed, and to submit the full written statements to the Secretariat to be posted on the Papersmart portal on Quick First.

Mr. Isnomo (Indonesia): First and foremost, I would like to thank both co-Chairs for leading this joint meeting. I would also like to extend thanks and appreciation to all keynote speakers on the podium.

I have the honour and privilege to speak on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM) in this important joint ad hoc meeting.

NAM shares the desire of the international community to strengthen the safety, security and long-term sustainability of outer space activities, as well as to ensure that outer space is used for peaceful purposes and for the benefit of all States, irrespective of the degree of their social, economic or scientific development.

NAM recognizes the common interest of all humankind and the sovereign rights of all States in the exploration and use of outer space for exclusively peaceful purposes, and emphasizes that the prevention of an arms race in outer space, including a ban to deploy or use weapons therein, would avert a grave danger to international peace and security. NAM further emphasizes the paramount importance of strict compliance with existing arms limitation and disarmament agreements relevant to outer space, including bilateral agreements, and with the existing legal regime concerning the use of outer space.

The Movement recognizes the relevance of the idea of elaborating a multilateral code of a voluntary nature, which would contain rules of conduct in outer space that are acceptable to all States, without prejudice to the necessity to negotiate a legally binding instrument in the Conference on Disarmament on questions relating to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, which must remain a priority. NAM reaffirms its position that the elaboration of such a code should be consistent with the respective mandate of all relevant United Nations bodies, and should take place in the context of inclusive, transparent and consensus-based multilateral negotiations within the framework of the United Nations, based on a proper and unequivocal mandate, without specific deadlines and taking into account the interests of all States, irrespective of their level of development, in order to reach a balanced outcome that addresses the needs and reflects the concerns of all participants. NAM underlines that such a code should actively promote international cooperation in the uses of outer space for peaceful purposes and should not be discriminatory. It should include provisions that would set thresholds that would equalize the right of exploration and use of outer space by developing countries and emerging space-faring nations. As such, the Movement calls on all States to adhere to these principles while elaborating a multilateral code on outer space activities.

Co-Chair Van Oosterom: I call on the observer of the European Union.

Mr. Bylica (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 28 Member States.

The candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania; the country of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina; and the European Free Trade Association country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, align themselves with this statement.

Let me welcome the convening of the first-ever joint meeting of the First and the Fourth Committees. I congratulate the co-Chairs. The diverse benefits and complex challenges connected with human activity in outer space merit the bringing together today of these two Committees. This meeting is taking place in the same year in which our leaders met to agree on the visionary and transformative 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). Space technologies will be essential to addressing many of the challenges that will need to be overcome in order to deliver this rightly ambitious agenda.

Space is a driver of economic growth and innovation for the benefit of all people. Space activities and technologies contribute to the tackling of major challenges such as climate change, disaster management, health and the protection of the environment and of scarce resources. They are important in conflict prevention and management, as well as the protection of human rights. They also boost the competitiveness of industry well beyond the space sector, thereby contributing to job creation and socioeconomic development in almost all economic areas worldwide.

In the EU, we have developed strong and unique space capabilities, allowing us to take part in major space endeavours. Key priorities for European space policy lie in the area of global navigation and earth observation with flagship programmes, Galileo and Copernicus, as well as in the area of space research.

Today, the space environment faces significant challenges arising from the proliferation of dangerous orbital debris, which increases the likelihood of destructive collisions, the crowding of satellites, the growing saturation of the radio-frequency spectrum,

as well as the threat of deliberate disruption or destruction of satellites. These challenges call for the serious and timely involvement of States to ensure greater safety, security and sustainability in outer space. The EU therefore attaches great importance to the development and implementation of transparency and confidence-building measures as a means of strengthening security and ensuring sustainability in the peaceful use of outer space. This is why we have proposed the international code of conduct for outer space activities, which is not legally binding.

The meeting — convened here at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 27 to 31 July at the initiative of the EU, and with the assistance of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, under the rubric “Multilateral negotiations on an international code of conduct for outer space activities” — was very well attended, with delegations from 109 States and eight intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. We regret that negotiations could not commence after so many years of consultations, but we are confident that the rich and substantial discussions in New York both on the substance and on the process will help the international community to move forward.

General scientific progress has developed so rapidly that, these days, many military activities rely on the civilian technologies deployed in space. The deeply integrated nature of human activity in outer space demands that we consider future measures to improve international governance in outer space in a holistic manner, as envisaged in the proposed code. The European Union continues to believe that voluntary rules of the road for activities in outer space, such as the international code of conduct, would strengthen the safety, security and sustainability of the outer space environment. We stand ready to contribute to such efforts.

Mr. Rose (United States of America): Fifty-two years ago, at the beginning of the space age, the General Assembly adopted the Declaration of Legal Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space. The Declaration laid out the key principle that outer space is free for exploration and use by all States on the basis of equality and in accordance with international law. Just over three years later, these and other elements of the Principles Declaration formed the core for the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, which remains the foundation of the international legal framework for space activities.

Today we find more than 60 nations and numerous Government consortiums, scientists and commercial firms accessing and operating satellites for countless economic, scientific, educational and social purposes. This situation has elevated international space systems and activities to a global scale — that is, they are of benefit not only to their immediate users, owners and operators, but also to the global economy and security environment.

In this dynamic environment, how do we address the challenges associated with orbital congestion, collision avoidance and the continued development by some nations of destructive counter-space capabilities? It is clear that no one nation can address those challenges alone. Therefore, international cooperation to address the challenges can and must occur through practical means. Under the capable chairmanship of Ambassador Victor Vasiliev of the Russian Federation, the July 2013 consensus report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities (see A/68/189) recommended a range of measures to enhance stability in space in the form of national commitments, as well as through bilateral, regional and multilateral cooperation. The report offers a solid starting point for discussions on addressing challenges to space security and sustainability, and also provides useful criteria for the consideration of new transparency and confidence-building concepts and proposals.

The report endorses efforts to “encourage responsible actions in, and the peaceful use of, outer space” (A/68/189, para. 69). In this regard, the United States has, for example, pursued a range of bilateral space security exchanges and offers support to all spacefaring nations to reduce the chances of accidental satellite collisions. The report also recommends that States review and implement, on a voluntary basis, the specific transparency- and confidence-building measures contained in the report. The United States is already implementing many of these measures, including information exchanges, risk reduction notifications, contacts and visits, international cooperation, outreach and coordination.

The United States also supports efforts in multiple forums to translate the Group of Governmental Experts recommendations into results by encouraging responsible actions on the part of all nations in their peaceful use of outer space. In particular, the United States was pleased to join Russia and China in

co-sponsoring resolutions 68/50 and 69/38. We are also pleased to be co-sponsoring another transparency- and confidence-building measures draft resolution this year in the First Committee.

These resolutions encourage Member States to review and implement, to the greatest extent practicable, the proposed transparency- and confidence-building measures contained in the Group of Governmental Experts report, and to refer the report's recommendations for consideration by the Conference on Disarmament, the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS). Now, the international community should focus on practical and pragmatic forms of international cooperation that advance the recommendations contained in the Group's report.

It is particularly noteworthy that, at its June 2015 session in Vienna, COPUOS considered the Group's report's recommendations, including a review of submissions by its members. The United States submission highlighted the implementation of the transparency- and confidence-building measures contained in the Group's report, in particular those with relevance to the work of the Committee's Working Group on the Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities.

Finally, the United States also supports improved coordination on the implementation of space transparency and confidence-building measures across the United Nations system.

Mr. Quinn (Australia): I thank the co-Chairs and keynote speakers for their enlightening presentations. I shall read out a shortened version of my statement in view of your three-minute request, Sir.

Let me say that Australia welcomes the opportunity to meet in this innovative and exceptional setting to discuss the cross-cutting nature of space issues. We, too, recognize that the space domain — from orbital debris to anti-satellite weapon threats — is becoming increasingly congested and contested. We recognize that there is a range of tools available that the international community can use to preserve a stable and secure space environment for all.

There have been useful exchanges on the key principles of the norms of behaviour that help preserve outer space for the global common good, including to advance the Sustainable Development Goals. One

option is to pursue a legally binding treaty. While this is a worthwhile longer-term ambition, there are important non-legally binding transparency- and confidence-building measures that we should undertake as soon as practicable before launching into what will be a complex and protracted negotiation on a legally binding treaty. These transparency- and confidence-building measures cover both civilian and military uses of outer space.

The value of developing transparency- and confidence-building measures has already been recognized by the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities in its valuable report (see A/68/189). We very much welcome the prominence given to transparency- and confidence-building measures in our discussions today. We would also like to urge completion of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space guidelines on the long-term sustainability of space, which was discussed by Mr. Martinez.

For Australia, the proliferation of space debris is a major concern. Orbital debris affects not only increasing numbers of spacefaring States, but now all States, as we all rely day-to-day to varying degrees on a range of space-enabled services that depend on satellites. We are concerned that, if the proliferation of space debris is left unchecked, we will reach a tipping point that will render space too expensive or dangerous for our collective use. Therefore, strengthening the current norm against creating further space debris could be one very useful cause for the international community to rally behind. Australia will actively consider all the issues and ideas that are raised in today's joint meeting. We remain flexible, pragmatic and open-minded on the best way forward.

In conclusion, let me say that a key objective for us is to pursue practical initiatives in an exclusive and consultative manner and to avoid the polarization that has bedeviled space security issues in the recent past. We would therefore very much welcome further United Nations attention to space issues in this spirit.

Mr. Saito (Japan): First of all, I would like to express my sincere welcome of the convening of the very first joint ad hoc meeting of the First and Fourth Committees to address possible challenges to space security and sustainability. This joint meeting is quite important because the structure of multilateral

forums has not caught up with the reality of outer space activities. The boundaries of civil and national security activities in outer space are becoming more blurred. In particular, the problem of increasing space debris cannot be clearly attributed to either civil or national security activities. Moreover, space debris does not distinguish between civil and national security activities when it hits satellites or space stations. We therefore need to address such challenges in outer space in a comprehensive manner. In that regard, the joint ad hoc meeting is timely and offers great potential.

The development of an international code of conduct for outer space activities, led by the European Union, is a good example of how to address space issues in a comprehensive manner. As a transparency- and confidence-building measure, the code would address all activities in outer space, including both civil and national security activities, and would stipulate measures to prevent the further creation of space debris, regardless of intended purposes. Moreover, among other things, the code would establish an international norm that would restrain any action that directly or indirectly causes damage or destruction to space objects, such as satellites. Other important items of additional value are the notification/information-sharing mechanism and the consultation mechanism. We have seen steady progress with three rounds of open-ended consultations and, most recently, multilateral negotiations at the United Nations in New York in July.

I would like to conclude my statement by emphasizing the need for space debris mitigation measures as an urgent issue to be addressed in the very near future. Space debris is an actual threat to any type of entity conducting any kind of activity in space. Japan will intensify its efforts in the field of space situational awareness and in developing space debris removal technology. As stated in Japan's most recent basic plan on space policy, which was approved in January, Japan intends to construct space situational awareness-related facilities and an operational framework required for security situational awareness by the 2020s. As such, Japan is committed to securing a safe space environment.

Mr. Yermakov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The fact that we are here today at a joint meeting of our two Committees demonstrates the importance of the issues of outer space activities and the inherent link of all matters related to the use of outer space, without exception. If we are to conduct

a serious intergovernmental discussion on security in outer space, the first question that we must answer for each other is: Will weapons be deployed in space or not? How we deal with that key issue will determine the substance and momentum with which we address all outstanding issues related to security in outer space.

In today's world, a growing number of States are using outer space for an ever-increasing number of civilian and defence purposes. However, our common heritage is the fact that we have so far been able to keep outer space free of all weapons and of inter-State military confrontation. An absolute majority of Member States support the prevention of an arms race in outer space, of the deployment of weapons in space, and of the threat or use of force in space. However, with the development of military technologies and the military and political aspirations of some States, the threat of the deployment of weapons in space is growing.

We must not forget that in the past there were clear agreements between the two leading space Powers — the Soviet Union and the United States — regarding the unacceptability of the weaponization of outer space. One obstacle to deployment was the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. However, in 2001 the United States withdrew unilaterally from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, thereby allowing itself the possible deployment of weapons in outer space. In order to avert a nuclear disaster in space should the United States have used nuclear weapons and unleashed a nuclear arms race, Russia, with a view to preventing an arms race in space and after the United States left the Treaty, initiated transparency- and confidence-building measures in outer space and globalized the political commitment to not being the first to deploy weapons in space in order to promote the eventual conclusion of a legally binding treaty to prevent the deployment of weapons in space and the threat of the use of force against space objects.

We call on all States to use common sense and, before it is too late, to join the international initiative on no first deployment of weapons in space and, in so doing, to make a significant contribution to a legally binding treaty to prevent the deployment of weapons on outer space. We must not repeat the mistakes of the past. The appearance of weapons in space could undermine the existing system of international security. I will be frank. We understand the position of the United States. The United States is the only State that has clearly stated in its national space doctrine that it seeks to dominate

all other States in outer space and to be able to use force against orbital space objects of other States.

But it is very different with the countries of the European Union, Australia, Canada, the Republic of Korea and Japan. We do not understand how such respectable States can claim to support the prevention of an arms race in outer space, yet undermine —

Co-Chair Van Oosterom: I apologize to the representative of the Russian Federation and ask for his kind cooperation, in the interests of all of us, in sticking to the agreed time limit.

Mr. Yermakov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): In conclusion, we still need to agree on security in outer space activities and we need to answer the question regarding weapons in space. The Russian Federation therefore calls on all States to grasp the obvious. Unless we resolve the problems of weapons in outer space, settling all other matters of space security will be problematic. We therefore call on all States to pursue the comprehensive in-depth dialogue on security in outer space and to join the international initiative on no first deployment of weapons in outer space.

Mr. Laggner (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Switzerland welcomes this extraordinary joint meeting of the space and disarmament communities to address together issues that are essential to the future use of outer space. The Swiss delegation thanks the Chairs of the First and Fourth Committees for their involvement in convening this meeting. It encourages the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs to pursue closer cooperation, as recommended by the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities, so as to enable the work of the disarmament and space communities to move forward in a coherent and coordinated manner.

At a time when the uses of outer space are becoming increasingly crucial to the development, the economies or the security of States, the challenges posed to the sustainable use of outer space are increasingly varied and numerous. Cooperative approaches are necessary to meet these challenges, and Switzerland believes that it is essential to develop politically and legally binding norms to make outer space a sanctuary and ensure its stability and use over the long term. As with any process to strengthen an international normative framework, discussions should be held to clarify certain pending

questions and to reach common understanding of the concepts linked to the use of outer space, the nature of the norms to be developed and the forums in which to develop them.

In the view of the Swiss delegation, the security and stability of outer space and the long-term safety and sustainability of space activities are interdependent matters that should be addressed holistically. To that end, my delegation welcomes the opportunity provided by this joint debate of the space and disarmament communities this afternoon. It also wishes to express its hope and desire for additional opportunities for global and cross-cutting reflection to be scheduled in order to respond to new challenges posed by the use of outer space. Certain specific topics that currently are not subject to extensive deliberations in any forum — for example, the right to legitimate self-defence in outer space — deserve the joint consideration of our two communities.

The transparent and inclusive pursuit within the United Nations of the development of an international code of conduct on outer space activities on the basis of the project proposed by the European Union would give shape to the synergies emanating from this meeting. We represent two communities meeting here today that must adopt a pragmatic and constructive approach if we intend to overcome the obstacles facing certain initiatives in the space domain. It is our duty and our common interest to find solutions that will allow future generations to continue to use outer space for peaceful purposes.

Co-Chair Bowler: Before we hear the next speaker on my list, I would just like to remind all speakers to kindly observe the time limit. So far we have done very well. It is in the best interests of both Committees, the First and the Fourth, to hear every speaker this afternoon.

Mr. Sobral Duarte (Brazil): My delegation welcomes this joint ad hoc meeting of the First and Fourth Committees and thanks the guest speakers for their important remarks.

As a developing country with a peaceful space programme, Brazil fully shares the view outlined in the 1967 Outer Space Treaty that space activities must be carried out in conformity with international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, in the interest of maintaining international peace and security and promoting international cooperation

and understanding. In that regard, it is our view that effective and efficient legal solutions negotiated in the framework of the United Nations that can contribute to preserving space as a peaceful environment.

We reaffirm our commitment to the ongoing work done by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space towards achieving that goal by establishing a set of guidelines that aim to guarantee the peaceful nature of outer space activities and avoid the potential use of weapons in space. We also stress the importance of developing countries having full access to the benefits of space technologies and applications by promoting data democracy policies and the use of open-source software applications.

The world we live in greatly depends on space-based resources. These provide essential services to a myriad of peaceful activities. Any use of force in outer space, including weaponization, is incompatible with the long-term sustainability of outer space activities. It is Brazil's long-standing position that the Conference on Disarmament should negotiate a legally binding instrument on preventing an arms race in outer space. Such a treaty should not interfere with the unimpeded peaceful use of outer space. It should also be sufficiently clear to ban the placement of weapons and the use of satellites as weapons and prohibit any sort of attack on devices in orbit. In this context, we considered the revised proposal for a treaty on the prohibition of the placement of weapons in outer space, presented by Russia and China, to be a positive development with a view to starting negotiations.

Together with a growing number of countries, Brazil has been advocating the importance of high-level commitment to a policy of no first placement of weapons in outer space, an effort that should be interpreted as an interim step pending the adoption of a legally binding instrument. In that sense, Brazil co-authored resolution 69/32, entitled "No first placement of weapons in outer space", and expects that more Member States could consider voting in favour of the current edition of that resolution at this session.

Mr. Fu Cong (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): This joint meeting was mandated by resolution 69/38, on the basis of proposals made by the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities in 2013 report on its study of space transparency- and confidence-building measures (see A/68/189). It is a clear demonstration

that, with the advancement of space exploration and utilization, space security is being affected by multiple factors and that the international community is gaining deeper understanding of outer space security and long-term sustainability.

In-depth discussions on space security and sustainability can be conducted only on the basis of a full and comprehensive understanding of space security threats. On the one hand, the challenges posed by space environmental degradation, space congestion and space debris are on the rise. On the other hand, as the strategic importance of outer space becomes more pronounced, the ever more obvious trend of space weaponization is having an increasing impact on space security and international strategic architecture. That is the greatest challenge to space security and sustainability. Therefore, the fundamental guarantee of space security and sustainability is to negotiate a new legally binding instrument on space arms control to further consolidate and reinforce the existing space legal regime so as to ensure that outer space is used solely for peaceful purposes.

During this joint discussion, we should work above all for tighter connection and synergy among relevant United Nations mechanisms and institutions covering different aspects of the space issue. More importantly, we should arrive at a more comprehensive understanding on space security and sustainability. China is of the view that efforts should be made to reach consensus on the following aspects.

First, maintaining the peaceful nature of space is the fundamental guarantee for security and sustainability of outer space. China and Russia introduced the draft treaty on prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects (CD/1839) to the Conference on Disarmament in 2008 and submitted an updated version (CD/1985) in June last year. Attaching high importance to the subsequent comments made by some countries, and after careful study, China and Russia submitted another working paper (CD/2042) in response to those comments in September. China calls on all parties to conduct discussions in an open and constructive manner so that the negotiation of a multilateral arms control treaty can start at an early date. That would be a fundamental way to ensure the security and long-term sustainability of outer space.

Secondly, as useful complements to legally binding arms control treaties, transparency- and confidence-building measures in outer space are important means of enhancing space security and sustainability. Appropriate and feasible transparency- and confidence-building measures can complement efforts to prevent space weaponization and an arms race by enhancing mutual confidence, reducing misperceptions and misjudgements, and regulating space activities. Transparency- and confidence-building measures can also serve as the bases for verification of a future space legal instrument.

It must be emphasized, however, that countries at different levels of space capabilities may have different concerns about transparency- and confidence-building measures, and that their abilities to accept a specific transparency- and confidence-building measure may also vary. Therefore, multilateral discussions in this field must be conducted in an open and equal manner so as to ensure that agreed transparency- and confidence-building measures can be implemented smoothly and effectively.

Thirdly, the pragmatic promotion of international space cooperation is indispensable to attaining space security and sustainability. Space is the common heritage of all humankind, and the fruits of space exploration should be shared by all. Spacefaring nations should take up the responsibility of providing public goods and help nations with limited or no space capabilities to enjoy the benefits of space exploration. China has done much work in that regard. China has entered into 97 bilateral space cooperation agreements with 30 countries, provided satellite launching services to more than 10 countries and made great efforts for the international application of the BeiDou Navigation Satellite System. China is willing to expand and deepen cooperation and exchanges in peaceful uses of outer space with interested countries, and to continue to work with the international community for a more equal and equitable environment for utilization based on win-win cooperation.

This joint meeting is a good start for enhanced exchanges and coordination among different United Nations institutions and mechanisms covering different aspects of space issues. We hope that this joint meeting will promote understanding and communication of all United Nations agencies and we can explore effective ways to address challenges to space security and

sustainability. China stands ready to make further contributions to the attainment of this common goal.

Mr. Mati (Italy): We welcome this joint meeting of the First and Fourth Committees. We believe that it is a good opportunity to continue exchanging views on outer space issues, which are prominent on our foreign policy agenda.

Italy fully aligns itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union. I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Italy promotes the use of space technology as a driving force for economic growth and innovation to the benefit of all. We are very aware of our societies' increasing reliance on the use of outer space. In that regard, we underscore the need to guarantee the peaceful use of outer space and to address potential escalation dynamics and security risks that these might entail. We feel a sense of urgency in this respect.

Italy is a party to the core United Nations treaties on outer space and to more than 60 bilateral agreements with both spacefaring and developing countries, and actively participates in different regional and international organizations and inter-agency committees whose work is relevant to the development and peaceful use of outer space. We have also actively participated in the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities, and fully support its 2013 report (see A/68/189). We continue to look forward to its concrete implementation, and in that respect our attention has focused primarily on the European Union-led proposal for an international code of conduct.

We trust that well-designed voluntary measures for outer space activities, such as those included in the draft code of conduct, can usefully complement existing international legal frameworks without undermining standing obligations. Such measures are not intended to hamper the lawful use of outer space; on the contrary, they would benefit and preserve such use, particularly in the interests of emerging space actors.

Italy remains convinced that the code of conduct would be a useful confidence-building measure in line with the recommendations of the Group of Governmental Experts, as endorsed by the General Assembly. We firmly believe that transparency- and confidence-building measures today provide a first step towards ensuring the communication necessary

to prevent misunderstandings and avoid unnecessary tensions. Its implementation can provide the momentum for the creation of reinforced legal frameworks in the longer term, paving the way for more stringent and legally binding rules.

Italy believes that the code should be a pragmatic instrument that is based on a preventive approach to fostering international cooperation in outer space in order to enhance its safety, security and sustainability, to the benefit of spacefaring and non-spacefaring countries alike. For those reasons, we highly value the useful elements derived from the debate among the 109 States that attended the multilateral meeting in New York in July. This confirms the continued importance of and interest in the subject of a space code of conduct. We are confident that the outcome of the New York meeting will foster further positive developments.

Ms. Guitton (France) (*spoke in French*): France fully concurs with the statement made by the observer of the European Union. We would like to make a few brief additional remarks in my national capacity. The complete version of our statement will be available online.

We welcome the holding of this joint meeting, whose unprecedented format leads us to the conclusion that space is now a vital resource with many peaceful uses. Space is also fundamental to international security. At the same time, this growing use of space also demonstrates that our dependence on space means is becoming increasingly important. Our ability to make full and free use of space has come up against a number of challenges, such as its growing deterioration as a result of accidents and deliberately destructive acts. This situation carries risks for all space activities and therefore calls for a global response covering all civilian and military aspects.

We must seek to establish a climate of confidence and transparency among all space nations, current and potential. This is a key condition for pursuing the development of space activities. It will also contribute to averting the risk of an arms race in space. France is therefore open in principle to developing instruments and initiatives to that end as part of a programme of work agreed and prioritized by the Conference on Disarmament.

We must first and foremost develop responsible practices by designing voluntary transparency- and confidence-building measures. France welcomes the

progress made in this respect, in particular in the context of ongoing work on the long-term viability of space activities conducted by the relevant Committee. France is actively involved in such work in order to finalize operational guidelines as soon as possible. The draft code of conduct on outer space activities also meets the twofold need for a global approach and measures based on confidence and transparency.

We must act quickly and reactively. We believe that this joint meeting offers value added for a number of reasons. First, the question of the sustainability of space activities is fundamental to economic growth and the development of a growing number of countries. We must prevent the degradation of the conditions of space use if we wish to extend the benefit of its application to the largest possible number of countries, in particular developing countries. This will require maintaining access for future generations to space while developing knowledge of this area. To that end, we need a collective response. We also believe that the question of transparency- and confidence-building measures is essential to the long-term viability of space activities. An ad hoc format such as that of today's meeting has a number of advantages in that regard. The essentially dual nature of space activities and the interlinkage of civilian and military applications for space calls for a cross-cutting response to cover all the relevant aspects.

In conclusion, specific problems related to outer space, especially the crucial question of space debris, could benefit from targeted and cross-cutting treatment. For all those reasons, we would favour the holding of such joint meetings on a more regular basis. I believe that this would promote dialogue and progress in an area where our work is closely linked.

Mr. Krasna (Israel): We welcome the convening of this joint meeting of the First and Fourth Committees as the issue of space in all its various aspects is dealt with in both Committees. It is therefore quite useful to hold this meeting so that we can clarify the unique aspects of each one's work and at the same time highlight issues that may be of interest to both. We believe that both Committees play important and unique roles that are crucial to allowing fair, professional treatment and promotion of the broad spectrum of issues within both.

We cannot afford to delay the advancement of scientific initiatives and the cooperation of research that will allow us to reap the benefits of space to humankind. We share the goal of the promotion of a

series of voluntary, non-legally binding pragmatic and timely measures that are essential to the long-term sustainability, safety, stability and security of the outer space environment.

Space can make real contributions to international security and, at the same time, sustainable development and communications for all nations. Space needs to remain accessible and sustainable for the future of all nations. It is of vital importance that we address the issue of space debris and orbital congestion. Furthermore, we support the international effort to draft a voluntary code of conduct, which must remain as non-legally binding through all its parts, including the consultation mechanism.

As noted in our remarks before the Fourth Committee earlier this week, Israel is proud to be a long-standing spacefaring nation and a producer and user of space technologies and applications. That is manifest in our cooperation with the professional United Nations bodies that deal with outer space and disaster relief. Furthermore, at that meeting we enumerated how Israeli satellite technology stood to support a new Facebook initiative to improve communications technology in Africa. While understanding that with regard to space there should be improved coordination information and confidence-building measures across the United Nations system, that must be fostered as a means to an end and not an end unto itself. We commend the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities, as well as the timely completion of a concrete set of United Nations guidelines of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space for sustainability that can serve as a key contribution to broader efforts to enhance stability in outer space.

Mr. Forés Rodríguez (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is the responsibility of all Member States to ensure that outer space does not become the next goal of the arms race. The militarization of outer space constitutes a serious threat to the future of the human species. The only way to effectively curb the threat of the militarization of outer space is to adopt international legal norms that prohibit the placement of weapons in space. Current international legislation in this area is insufficient or in-existent. That is why we reiterate our call on all States to negotiate and adopt a legal instrument guaranteeing the strictly peaceful use of outer space. In order to achieve a legal and effective instrument, a constructive dialogue is necessary between the Committee on the

Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), especially through its Legal Subcommittee, and the Conference on Disarmament. The Conference on Disarmament should play a key role in preventing the militarization of outer space, as it is the only multilateral forum for negotiating disarmament treaties.

The growing concern about the possible militarization of outer space has led to the promotion of transparency and confidence-building measures to find a definitive solution. In that respect, we recall resolution 43/78 H, which underscores that this type of measure is not a substitute for weapon-limitation agreements. All States must fully comply with international treaties in effect on outer space, as they include various transparency and confidence-building measures.

The report submitted by the Group of Governmental Experts (see A/68/189) refers to the importance of international cooperation for the use of outer space for peaceful purposes, although it does not include among its recommendations specific measures to that end. Including that type of measure would contribute to improving transparency and confidence-building on outer space activities. We note with concern the actions undertaken by some States to promote the development of international legal norms on outer space activities beyond the context of the United Nations. In that regard, any initiative must be based on a clear mandate and the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. We believe that it is timely and necessary to draft and implement international legal norms and other measures, such as transparency and confidence-building measures. But we reiterate that COPUOS is the only adequate forum to deliberate on ethical principles and legal instruments that guarantee the strictly peaceful use of space justly and without discrimination.

A geostationary orbit is a limited natural resource, and its use is in clear danger of reaching saturation. We therefore condemn the use of spy satellites to obtain information to the detriment of other nations and not for the benefit of humankind. Such practices lead to wasting such a precious resource and contribute to producing space debris. Our country highlights its concern about the increase in space debris and about collisions between debris and other space objects. The future of geospacial activities depends upon reducing waste to a minimum. We must guarantee access on an equitable basis to all States independently of their degree of scientific or economic development and pay

particular attention to the needs and the interests of developing countries.

The definition and delimitation of outer space is urgent for the international community. In order to achieve that, the Legal Subcommittee must step up its work and consider theoretical aspects and the existing legal gaps, and not limit itself to practical aspects, as some developed States would like to see. Such a stance does not favour the development and promotion of the peaceful use of outer space and creates a platform for potential militarization.

In conclusion, we emphasize the right of all States to explore and use outer space in a peaceful manner. However, today the exercise of that right is an illusion for the majority of developing countries. As such, it is increasingly urgent with each passing day to ensure bilateral and multilateral cooperation through the exchange of information and capacity-building and the transfer of technology. We emphasize the need to move towards close and coordinated cooperation among countries without discrimination in order to ensure the optimal and the responsible tapping into the unlimited potential of space research and applications.

Mr. Varma (India): I shall read out a shortened version of our statement.

We associate ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia.

This joint meeting is a unique opportunity to build common ground to address emerging challenges to space security and improve coordination across the United Nations system, even while respecting the specific mandates of the First and Fourth Committees, the Conference on Disarmament and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS).

India is a major spacefaring nation. We have a very successful space-launch vehicle programme that is also cost effective. We engage in international cooperation with 36 countries and 3 international organizations. We have sent a space craft to the Moon. We have sent a space craft to Mars on the first attempt, the only country to do so. We have sent a space-based observatory for multi-length observations — ASTROSAT — which was launched last month.

India is a party to all the major international treaties relating to outer space. It is therefore unfortunate that a major spacefaring country like India was not included in the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency

and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities. In our view, a more representative Group of Governmental Experts could have enhanced the content of the report. That is one example where the exclusion of a country like India actually led to the loss of the Group of Governmental Experts, and we are very confident that the Secretariat will convey that sentiment to the High Representative, who is no longer with us.

We are not against transparency- and confidence-building measures (TCBMs), but any TCBMs accord should be negotiated on the basis of consensus within the framework of the United Nations in an inclusive and transparent manner. Its objective should be to enhance space security for all space users based on transparency and confidence-building measures. We are prepared to give consideration to the Russia-China draft of the treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects. There are considerable gaps in the draft, but we are happy to engage for further in-depth examination of those questions.

Notwithstanding the fact that we were kept out of the Group of Governmental Experts, India already implements a number of TCBMs that are included in the report (see A/68/189) of the Group of Governmental Experts. We engage very actively with COPUOS and will be chairing the Committee in 2016. We look forward to the final report next year on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities. We supported the resolution on no first placement of weapons in outer space (resolution 69/32), but that is only a limited step that should not hinder consideration of substantive legal measures.

India supports the substantive consideration of the prevention of an arms race in outer space in the Conference on Disarmament (CD), which is the appropriate forum. The CD membership includes all the militarily significant States. As the nature of the threats to space security goes beyond space debris, the CD is ideal for integrating all concerns into a mandate for addressing them.

In conclusion, India shares the concerns about emerging threats to space security. It is important that Member States be given the incentive to protect their interests by investing in legally binding multilateral instruments, rather than resorting to national measures

or interim and partial steps that do not fully address the concerns of all space actors.

Ms. Huh Yoon-jeong (Republic of Korea): Space has become an essential part of our daily lives. Owing to wide-ranging applications, from telecommunications to navigation and weather forecasting, the world is increasingly dependent upon space-based services. A disruption of space-based services will instantly affect nearly all States around the globe. It is now obvious that the safety and the security of the space environment has become a global commons that needs to be protected by all States.

As many reported cases of potential space collisions show, one of the main challenges to the safety and the security of outer space comes from space debris. Outer space is becoming ever-more congested, contested and competitive, and a holistic approach is needed in order to effectively counter those threats. In that regard, the Republic of Korea welcomes this joint ad hoc meeting of the First Committee and the Fourth Committee to address possible challenges to space security and sustainability. It is important to have a practical, flexible and integrated approach in dealing with the issue of outer space. It is our belief that this joint meeting will serve as a starting point for a more structured discussion on how to respond effectively to space challenges by sharing the Committees' respective expertise and experiences, thereby maximizing synergy.

The Republic of Korea believes that it is in the common interests of all stakeholders to promote their space programmes in a responsible manner. It is necessary to elaborate and strengthen voluntary transparency- and confidence-building measures. In that vein, it is worthwhile to note the importance of the work carried out by the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities. We reiterate the importance of active implementation by Member States of the measures proposed in the Group's report (see A/68/189), to the extent possible.

Establishing an international code of conduct for outer space activities is undoubtedly a project of great importance. The international code of conduct could provide a new reference point by bringing together best practices on mitigating space debris, enhancing transparency and mutual confidence and sharing information to avoid collisions. It is our hope that we

will keep the momentum alive and find a way to continue negotiations on the international code of conduct.

In conclusion, the Republic of Korea reaffirms its strong commitment to the peaceful and sustainable use of outer space for the benefit of all humankind. We stand ready to further strengthen international efforts to that end.

Mr. Mazzeo (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): We welcome this joint meeting, which affords us a holistic view of the challenges related to outer space in all its aspects. Argentina recognizes the common interest of humankind and the sovereign right of all States to participate in the exploration and the exclusively peaceful use of space, just as we are certain of their benefits to human development.

We support the non-militarization of outer space and, as part of our heritage, its strict use to improve living conditions and peace among the peoples of our planet. We reaffirm the understanding of resolution 69/38, which states:

“Reaffirming the right of all countries to explore and use outer space in accordance with international law,

“Reaffirming also that preventing an arms race in outer space is in the interest of maintaining international peace and security and is an essential condition for the promotion and strengthening of international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes.” (*resolution 69/38, first and second preambular paragraphs*)

Argentina underscores that preventing an arms race in outer space and the prohibition of placing or using weapons there would avoid a severe threat to international peace and security.

Our country is aware that the increasing use of outer space by a growing number of actors could generate unpredictable impacts on the outer space environment. Problems such as the saturation of the geostationary orbit, the management of space debris and the use of nuclear energy in the Earth's orbit, as well as the placement of nuclear weapons and an arms race in space, are aspects that could affect the sustainability of space activities. In that regard, it is necessary to regulate and coordinate space activities in a manner that will make it increasingly secure and sustainable, which means that outer space should be used peacefully for the well-being of present and future generations of

all humankind, its peoples and its nations, even those who do not benefit from access to space and its peaceful uses. They should not carry the consequences and the costs of irrational or abusive use by those who currently use it.

Argentina recognizes the importance of the theme of sustainability and long-term space activities, whose study should not, under any circumstances, be turned into an instrument so that the countries that have traditionally managed space technology establish restrictions on other countries regarding their legitimate right, aspiration to the right and the use of space technology as a fundamental tool to improve the living conditions of their peoples.

Finally, I would like to highlight that international cooperation on space activities is a crucial aspect, which we believe should be strengthened while also promoting transparency- and confidence-building measures. As a fundamental pillar of the use of outer space, fostering international cooperation in the use of outer space must also include the exchange of knowledge and good practices and capacity-building at the national, regional and international levels. International and regional cooperation in the area of space activities allows for the generation of synergies and awareness-raising of the benefits that space science and technology can contribute to sustainable development.

Ms. Laggner (Sweden): My delegation stands firmly behind the statement made by the observer of the European Union. I will now make some additional comments in my national capacity.

While closing in on the sixtieth anniversary of the seminal Outer Space Treaty, we look upon a space environment and industry that is vastly different from those adventurous early days of space exploration. Today space-based infrastructure forms an integral part of our societies and daily lives, and it has provided tremendous benefits to human development. Yet the international space regime has not been able to keep pace with the ever-increasing number of actors and activities in outer space, the growing risk of conflict in the space environment or the proliferation of space debris.

An update is needed that takes into account the current realities of the use of outer space. Essential to that work is the realization that we cannot make a distinction between civilian and military satellites, or between the safety and security of space objects, owing

to the special nature of the space environment. Space debris can be created by both civilian and military activities, and it does not discriminate between them. Most, if not all, space assets have dual-use applications and capabilities. To mitigate the impact of space debris, therefore, and to keep outer space free from conflict, we must address military and civilian activities jointly. It is not possible to separate the two. Sweden welcomes today's timely joint meeting of the First and Fourth Committees on possible challenges to space security and sustainability, which goes some way towards bridging that gap.

Initiatives are being taken and important work done in the international community to address the challenges to the security and sustainability of outer space. The work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space are one such example. Another is the proposed international code of conduct for activities in outer space, which Sweden supports, not least because it provides a good way of dealing with space issues jointly, in that it focuses on actual behaviour in outer space. It thereby circumvents the artificial divide between civil and military definitions of space assets and use. However, we do not believe that a reference to the right to self-defence is appropriate in such a code, since that issue is already covered by the Charter of the United Nations. A code of conduct for space is an achievable first step, important in its own right but also as a stepping stone towards further work, including instruments of a legally binding nature. Sweden stands ready to work with partners in the United Nations community to find appropriate ways forward for transparency and confidence-building measures, and for the code.

Ms. Janjua (Pakistan): Outer space is our common heritage, and ensuring its safety, security and long-term sustainability should be our common objective. Against that backdrop, this joint meeting of the First and Fourth Committees, mandated in paragraph 6 of resolution 69/38, is very timely.

We would also like to express our complete support for the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Concerns about the weaponization of outer space and space debris are growing. The development and deployment of anti-ballistic missile systems and their integration into space assets has added to such concerns,

and there is an urgent need to address them. The weaponization of outer space would not only endanger its peaceful use but would also aggravate the intensity of conflicts on Earth, with potentially disastrous consequences for international peace and security. Pakistan has always stressed that outer space should be used solely for peaceful purposes. We support efforts to develop transparency- and confidence-building measures in outer-space activities. While important, however, such efforts are not a substitute for legally binding arrangements aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space to be negotiated in the Conference on Disarmament (CD), with the purpose of ensuring the safety, security and long-term sustainability of outer space.

The final document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly (resolution S-10/2) includes more than 30 paragraphs that relate to the dangers of the various aspects of an arms race and the importance of preventing them. Paragraph 80 specifically recommends undertaking appropriate international negotiations on preventing an arms race in outer space. The Conference on Disarmament has long been seized of the issue, and for more than two decades the General Assembly has recognized that the prevention of an arms race in outer space would avert a grave danger to international peace and security.

We appreciate the efforts of the European Union to identify areas relating to outer space that should be addressed. The meeting held in July on the proposed code of conduct gave a large number of countries a platform from which to express their views and concerns about the process, mandate, rules of procedure and forum for finalizing such a code. Pakistan believes that the best way to take forward approaches to developing transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space is through a United Nations process that is inclusive, transparent and consensus-based.

The draft text presented jointly by the Russian Federation and China for a treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer-space objects provides a useful basis on which to commence negotiations. We see no impediment to starting negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The only explanation there can be for any opposition to negotiations on the issue in the CD is that some States are seeking to protect their monopoly on the technology and maintain their full-

spectrum dominance in the area. Despite overwhelming support for negotiating a legal instrument in the CD on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, a handful of States have prevented it. Pakistan is a sponsor of the Russian Federation's draft resolution entitled "No first placement of weapons in outer space" (A/C.1/70/L.47). It urges that substantive work in the CD under the agenda item "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" be begun as soon as possible, based on a revised draft for a treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space. In line with our established position, we are also a sponsor of a draft resolution entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" (A.C.1/70/L.3) that is being presented by Sri Lanka in the First Committee during this session.

Ms. Alvarez (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to commend you, Sir, and your co-Chair for organizing today's joint ad hoc meeting of the First and Fourth Committees in order to discuss the challenges of security in space activities. Chile is pleased to participate in this meeting and commends the joint work of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs to bring about this significant effort to address the current challenges to security in outer space and long-term sustainability of outer-space activities.

Chile believes it essential to address those challenges, which affect us all and are global and shared responsibilities. That is why we joined the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities, whose work culminated in a report (see A/69/189) that made recommendations that the General Assembly adopted by consensus. The Group of Governmental Experts itself represents a transparency- and confidence-building measure and showed us how to overcome our initial differences and distrust in order to work towards our shared goals.

We believe that efforts must be made to implement the recommendations and conclusions of the report in all relevant forums, including the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS). We believe firmly that the recommendations of the Group of Governmental Experts on transparency- and confidence-building measures in outer space represent the results of the work being done in the Working Group on the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities, which can help to mitigate the problems of

space debris and ensure that outer space activities are conducted in a safer and more sustainable environment.

Chile also actively participated in the consultation process on the European Union's proposal for an international code of conduct for space activities, which has incorporated the considerations and concerns of many countries. The negotiations and option for the code should be inclusive, non-discriminatory and based on United Nations multilateralism. It should strengthen international cooperation on the peaceful use of outer space in order to ensure that all States can develop their capacity to participate in and benefit from outer-space activities. We also believe it is vital that we reach consensus in COPUOS on adopting a set of guidelines on the long-term sustainability of outer-space activities. As we have reiterated, such initiatives are voluntary and can be no substitute for legally binding instruments, including the need for a treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space. We believe that this type of instrument can serve as a basis for building an international climate of confidence and cooperation that allows us to make progress on our goal of strengthening the international legal regime.

The placement of weapons in outer space is the greatest threat to space security and the long-term sustainability of activities in space. That is why we must avoid the use of outer space for military purposes.

Mr. Combrink (South Africa): I will restrict my comments to the issue of a possible international code of conduct on outer space activities.

It is clear to my delegation that all participants in this discussion recognize that outer space is the common heritage of humankind and that all States have an equal stake in outer space activities. It therefore follows logically that any process towards effective measures in this area, particularly those of a voluntary nature, would require participation by the greatest number of States. In order to achieve a credible, effective and internationally acceptable instrument aimed at establishing cooperative measures in the conduct of outer space activities, based on agreed transparency and confidence-building measures that would contribute to preserving the safety, security and sustainability of outer space, the following elements could, in our view, be considered for a negotiated mandate within the United Nations framework.

Among other things, such a mandate could include a decision to commence negotiations on an

inclusive, non-discriminatory multilateral process on an international code of conduct of a voluntary nature that is based on transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities and addresses the needs and concerns of all States. Given the purpose of such a code, namely, to build confidence in outer space activities, we believe that a consensus-based process would be the most appropriate way to proceed.

Such a code should, in our view, first, aim at strengthening the safety, security and long-term sustainability of outer space activities, as well as ensure that outer space is used for peaceful purposes and to the benefit of all States, irrespective of the degree of the social, economic and scientific development. Secondly, it should actively promote international cooperation in the uses of outer space for peaceful purposes while taking into consideration the needs of developing countries and emerging spacefaring nations. Thirdly, it should actively promote the equal right of the exploration and the use of outer space by developing countries and emerging spacefaring nations, *inter alia* by including appropriate assistance mechanisms. Fourthly, it should complement, and not contradict or undermine, the existing international framework applicable to outer space activities. And fifthly, it should not duplicate or replace other initiatives aimed at strengthening the safety, security and long-term sustainability of outer space activities, including those of a legally binding nature.

Turning to modalities for such a negotiation, several options for negotiating such an instrument are available under the United Nations framework that could enable a wide level of participation and the use of relevant expertise within the United Nations system. Those include the Conference on Disarmament, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) and the First and Fourth Committees. While strong arguments can be made for the use of those forums as appropriate vehicles to pursue negotiations on a voluntary instrument on the code of conduct on outer space activities, it is suggested that a General Assembly plenary may also provide an appropriate platform for taking that issue forward. One advantage of using a plenary is that a negotiated mandate mandated by plenary would not prejudice the eventual scope of such an instrument on which consensus may not exist at present and which could be subject to future negotiations.

Those are just a few thoughts that my delegation wanted to share with this joint meeting, which we

hoped could assist further reflection by delegations on taking this issue forward.

Finally, while South Africa would be supportive of such negotiations and the conclusion of a voluntary instrument, that cannot substitute and should not negatively impact on the work of COPUOS on the long-term sustainability of outer space and, in the Conference on Disarmament, on legally binding measures aimed at the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Co-Chair Bowler: We have heard the last speaker for this meeting.

Before concluding our work this afternoon, I would like to thank all delegations for their insightful interventions and their excellent time management and for the cooperation and support extended to me and my Co-Chair, Ambassador van Oosterom, in our task of co-chairing this historical event.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.